**Embargo Counterplan**

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Summary

This counterplan advocates strengthening the embargo on Cuba rather than lifting it. In the status quo, Cuba is facing economic troubles that could result in an economic collapse. The negative argues that even though Cubans already face a great deal of hardships under the Castro regime, that an economic collapse in Cuba would make life unbearable enough that it would spur a revolt against the Cuban government. If the regime falls, the negative team believes a democratic revolution in Cuba will happen guaranteeing civil liberties, improved health care, and a better life.

Glossary

Embargo- A governmental order to cut commercial trade/relations with another country/region. The United States has had an embargo on Cuba since the Cold War. To this day, relations with Cuba have been cut.

Regime- The government that is in power

Totalitarian- An individual will complete rule over the government of a country.

### Strengthen the Embargo Counterplan 1NC

#### We advocate the following counterplan:

#### The United States federal government should strengthen its embargo on Cuba, specifically including a restriction on travel and tourism.

#### This is the best way to solve for government repression – economic pressure will spur civil unrest and regime change.

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.

### Embargo Solves – Promotes Civil Unrest

#### [ ]

#### [ ] Economic decline promotes public backlash against the Cuban regime.

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

(Juan, “Sanctions on Cuba Are Good, But Not Enough,” *Orbis*, Volume 44, Issue 3, June,

p. 345-362, EBSCOhost)

This growth of civil society is not due to the implementation of enclave capitalism in Cuba. Members of independent groups are routinely fired from their jobs in state institutions or enterprises, cannot obtain employment in joint ventures, and are denied licenses to operate as individual entrepreneurs. Activists depend for their subsistence on family members, friends, and support from abroad. Survey data show widespread dissatisfaction with microeconomic conditions, which is leading to louder criticism of the government.(n56) Many activities of opposition, including food riots, have arisen spontaneously from civil society as people have reacted to deprivation. Neighborhood residents have joined together to demand that the government provide them with resources to alleviate critical shortages of food, water, medical supplies, or other essential needs.(n57) Government workers, as well as self-employed individuals, have resorted to collective action to defend their economic interests from government abuses.(n58)

### Embargo Solves – Bargaining Chip for Changes

#### [ ]

#### [ ] The embargo is a key bargaining chip – it should only be lifted once Cuba implements serious changes.

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

(Jaime, “What If…the U.S. Ended the Cuba Travel Ban and the Embargo?,” Feb 26, Online: <http://interamericansecuritywatch.com/what-if-the-u-s-ended-the-cuba-travel-ban-and-the-embargo/>)

If the travel ban is lifted unilaterally now or the embargo is ended by the U.S., what will the U.S. government have to negotiate with a future regime in Cuba and to encourage changes in the island? These policies could be an important bargaining chip with a future regime willing to provide concessions in the area of political and economic freedoms. The travel ban and the embargo should be lifted as a result of negotiations between the U.S. and a Cuban government willing to provide meaningful and irreversible political and economic concessions or when there is a democratic government in place in the island.

### Embargo Solves – History Proves More Effective than Engagement

#### [ ]

#### [ ] 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

(Juan, “Sanctions on Cuba Are Good, But Not Enough,” *Orbis*, Volume 44, Issue 3, June,

p. 345-362, EBSCOhost)

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.

### Embargo Solves – Embargo Good for Public Health – Prevents Obesity

#### [ ] Strengthening the embargo will increase public health – increased food availability and shift to car culture would result in an obesity epidemic.

Cassimally, med student and blog manager at Nature.com, 2013

(Khalil, “The Only Positive Effect Of The Cuban Embargo? Weight Loss,” April 19, Online: <http://www.nature.com/scitable/blog/labcoat-life/the_only_positive_effect_of>)

Despite all the atrocity and machiavellianism that trail economic embargoes, science has somehow found a way to profit from the Cuban "special period." Thanks to the impressive Cuban healthcare system which diligently collected health data even during the "special period," Manuel Franco, at the University of Alcalá in Spain and colleagues from US and Cuban institutions, were able to analyse some of the health indicators of the time. What they found underlines the atrocity of the embargo on the Cuban people but does come with a surprising silver lining which they report in a paper published last week by the British Medical Journal (BMJ).¶ The shortage of food caused by the embargo led to a population-wide weight loss of about 5.5 kg. The food shortage was a direct result of Cuba's inability to import anything. Physical activity was another important contributing factor to the weight loss. The Cuban government somehow got its hands on more than one million bicycles for the population. During the "special period," Cubans were forced to walk or cycle, sometimes for kilometres, as public transport was saddled due to the virtual nonexistence of petrol.¶ Interestingly, the weight loss matched with declines in cases of diabetes and heart diseases. Essentially, the embargo spurred a mini health revolution. As the authors state in the paper: "so far, no country or regional population has successfully reduced the distribution of body mass index or reduced the prevalence of obesity through public health campaigns or targeted treatment programmes." Where campaigns and targeted programmes failed, the embargo succeeded.¶ But it gets more interesting. After 1995, the Cuban economy started to pick up again and has risen steadily since—especially post-2000. Coupled to this steady economic rise was a resurgence of obesity, and with it diabetes and heart diseases. The resurgence was predominantly due to an increased energy intake from food and drinks consumed since physical activity only marginally decreased. Energy intake reached pre-crisis levels by 2002 and obesity rates had tripled that of 1995 by 2011.¶ What the embargo tells us is that even meager loss of weight throughout a population, if sustained, can lead to a decline in non-transmissible diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases. How to achieve such sustained decline without having an embargo imposed however is another question. The usual strategies put forward include sensitisation through education and policy changes to promote physical activity, taxes on unhealthy food, etcetera.

### Embargo Solves – Embargo Good for Public Health – Prevents Obesity

#### [ ] The embargo has led to an overall reduction in obesity – people aren’t starving, they’re thriving.

Willett, Chair of the Department of Nutrition at Harvard, 2013

(Walter, “Weight Changes and Health in Cuba: Learning from Hardship,” *BMJ* Editorial, April 9th, Online: <http://www.bmj.com/content/346/bmj.f1777>)

Changes in food supplies and reductions in physical activity are fueling increases in overweight and obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease worldwide.1 We have had few opportunities to see a reversal of this process, which is continuing inexorably almost everywhere. One such opportunity was provided by the well developed public health surveillance systems in Cuba, which were maintained during a period of serious economic hardship in the early 1990s. In a linked study (doi:10.1136/bmj.f1515), Franco and colleagues used these systems to look at the effects of reduced energy intake and increased physical activity on body weight and the occurrence of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and death.2¶ In Cuba, decreased food availability and increased physical activity, supported by the distribution of more than a million bicycles during 1991 to 1995, led to an average 5.5 kg reduction in weight over five years, shifting the whole population distribution of weight downwards. Predictably, a profound and almost immediate reduction in the incidence of diabetes occurred, and a striking decline in cardiovascular mortality began, with a lag of about five years. These findings are consistent with those of the many epidemiologic and clinical studies that have examined the incidence of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.3 4 5 6¶ The economic crisis was followed by a slow recovery, increased food intake, reduction in activity, and an increase in the prevalence of obesity to three times higher than before the crisis. With weight regain, the trend in incidence of diabetes rapidly reversed, and a decade after the period of weight loss, the decline in cardiovascular disease had greatly slowed. Most troublesome, the continued rapid increase in obesity and diabetes predicts that the decline in cardiovascular disease, and thus total mortality, will be reversed because the full impact of diabetes on incidence of cardiovascular disease is not seen until several decades after diagnosis.5 The apparent lack of effect of weight loss on death from cancer seen in the current study is not surprising. Only some cancers are associated with obesity and disease latency can be decades.7 More detailed analyses by specific types of cancer would be useful.

### Answers to: Embargo Strengthens Cuban Regime

#### [ ]

#### [ ] Just because the embargo failed in the past, doesn’t prove it won’t work now – Cuba’s current economic crisis makes in uniquely weak to a democratic transition.

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

(Juan, “Sanctions on Cuba Are Good, But Not Enough,” *Orbis*, Volume 44, Issue 3, June,

p. 345-362, EBSCOhost)

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.(n33) 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.(n34) 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.(n35) 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.(n36) 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.(n37) 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.(n38) 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.(n39)

### Answers to: US Wealth Promotes Change

#### [ ]

#### [ ] Economic engagement won’t improve living conditions because the Cuban government receives all of the profits.

Jacoby, former columnist for The Urban Globe and JB from Urban University, 2010

(Jeff, “Lift Embargo on Cuba? Not So Fast,” *The Patriot Post*, August 26, Online: <http://patriotpost.us/opinion/6926>)

The transformative power of free trade is not to be denied, but trade with Cuba isn’t free. There is no Cuban parallel to the economic openness and flourishing private sector that has transformed China. Jerry Haar, a dean of business administration at Florida International University, observes in the Latin Business Chronicle that one unavoidable fact of life faces exporters to Cuba: "The entire distribution chain is in the hands of the Cuban military and intelligence services." Foreign investors are compelled to deal with the state and its subsidiaries, since they control the "hotels, foreign trade operations, equipment sales, and factories."¶ As long as the Castros maintain their stranglehold on the Cuban economy, enriching that economy enriches — and entrenches — them. The travel ban and embargo have not ended Cuba’s misery, but lifting them unilaterally will only make that misery worse. Rewarding the dictators who keep Cuba in chains is not the way to set Cubans free.

### Answers to: US Wealth Promotes Change

#### [ ]

#### [ ] Lifting restriction on trade and tourism will strengthen the existing totalitarian government.

Azel, Institute for Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami, 2008

(Jose, “Cuba: Snuff out the Embargo,” *Bloomberg*, February, Online: <http://www.businessweek.com/debateroom/archives/2008/02/cube_snuff_out.html>)

The embargo is not the cause of the catastrophic state of Cuba’s economy. Mismanagement and the fact that “command economy” models don’t work lie at the root of Cuba’s economic misery. Despite the existence of the embargo, the U.S. is Cuba’s sixth-largest trading partner and biggest food supplier.¶ Moreover, U.S. tourism will not bring democracy to Cuba. For years, hundreds of thousands of tourists from Canada, Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere have visited the island. Cuba is no more democratic today. On what mystical grounds do opponents of the embargo offer that American tourists will do the trick?¶ There are many negative unintended consequences to unilaterally lifting the embargo without meaningful changes in Cuba’s political and economic model. Most important of all, it would ensure the continuation of the current totalitarian regime by strengthening state enterprises that would be the main beneficiaries of currency inflows into business owned by the Cuban government.

### Answers to: Embargo Failed in Past

#### [ ]

#### [ ] Past failures only prove the embargo needs to be strengthened – it would be especially effective now that Venezuela has withdrawn support.

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)>

When thinking of U.S.-Cuba relations, the trade embargo, or el bloqueo, is first and foremost on people’s minds. In 2009, President Barack Obama eased the travel ban, allowing Cuban-Americans to travel freely to Cuba, and again in 2011, allowing students and religious missionaries to travel to Cuba, as recently demonstrated by American pop culture figures, Beyoncé and her husband Jay-Z. Despite a history of hostile transgressions, the U.S. is inconsistent with its implementation of the embargo, which sends mixed signals to Havana and displays our weak foreign policy regarding Cuba.¶ Undoubtedly, Cuba is capitalizing on this weakness by using the embargo as a scapegoat for all of its woes without any immediate fear of reinstated restrictions. Because the goal is to promote Cuban democracy and freedom through non-violent and non-invasive means while refraining from providing any support to the current oppressive Cuban government, the current legislation regarding the embargo and travel ban against Cuba needs to be modernized and strengthened. The need for an embargo has never been more important or potentially effective, even considering the current human rights and economic arguments against the embargo.