

Analyzing the US Embargo of Cuba: A Search for a Better Solution

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

In 1959, at the height of the Cold War, Fidel Castro seized control of Cuba from a totalitarian dictatorship headed by Fulgencio Batista, an individual who lacked domestic support from the Cuban people. However, what Batista lacked in popularity on the island was not missing in regard to his foreign popularity, especially when it came to the United States¹. In fact, the United States supported Fulgencio Batista for two major reasons. The first being that he peacefully overthrew the government, which subsequently allowed him to run for presidential election unopposed, ratifying the Cuban Constitution from 1940 in the process². Secondly, the United States supported the Batista regime in large part because it was very much anti-socialist and anti-Marxist. However, to the Batista government, the support from the U.S. came at a high cost as they effectively destroyed Cuba's lucrative sugar industry through the Sugar Act of 1956³. It was this destruction of Cuba's agricultural industry that paved the way to the rise of Fidel Castro.

Initially, Castro was not a Marxist, despite having friendly ties to the Soviet Union. However, the revolution that he led in Cuba was a leftist one, and upon his arrival to power, he began to nationalize American-owned infrastructure without providing compensation. Essentially, Castro wanted Cuba to be free economically from America⁴, whereas at the same

¹ Guevara, D. J. F. (2019). Constructing Legitimacy in "Stone" and "Words" during Cuba's Second Republic: Building and Contesting Fulgencio Batista's José Martí. *History and Memory*, 31(2), 117-154.

² Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020, November 18). Cuban Revolution. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Cuban-Revolution>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Halperin, M. (1972). *The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro: An Essay in Contemporary History*.

time, it was clear that the U.S. had economic interests in Cuba. Once Fidel Castro realized that the United States would not support his regime, he quickly reached out to the Soviet Union for aid. It was this marriage between the Soviet Union and Cuba that effectively made Fidel Castro and his regime a threat to the United States foreign policy that sought to contain the spread of communism⁵.

Toward the end of Fulgencio Batista's regime, during a series of armed conflicts between the Cuban military and guerillas led by Fidel Castro, the United States imposed the first trade embargo on the island nation⁶. This initial embargo prohibited the sale of arms to Cuba through the 1947 Rio Treaty, which only permitted the sales of arms to Latin American countries as long as the weapons were not used for hostile purposes⁷. This ultimately forced the guerillas that were led by Fidel Castro to purchase their arms from the Soviet Union. However, following Castro's nationalization of Cuba's economy in 1960, the United States expanded the initial embargo on arms to include all goods except for food and medicine. It is important to note that at this time, Castro was yet to proclaim Cuba as Marxist, but following the Bay of Pigs Invasion in April of 1961, that finally changed as the Cuban leader formally announced a partnership with the Soviet Union.

Following Cuba's alignment with the USSR, a major piece of legislation in regard to the Cuban Embargo was signed by U.S. President John F. Kennedy. This piece of legislation is called the Foreign Assistance Act. This act served to provide that no assistance be given to any

⁵ Halperin, M. (1972). *The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro: An Essay in Contemporary History*.

⁶ Wiskari, Werner (April 3, 1958). "[U.S. Embargo Set on Arms to Cuba; Shipment Halted](#)". *The New York Times*. Retrieved February 8, 2017 – via [latinamericanstudies.org](#).

⁷ *Ibid.*

communist country or states that provided aid to Cuba⁸. In addition to the Foreign Assistance Act, there were three other major pieces of legislation on which the Cuban embargo is grounded on. The oldest bits of legislation are sections 5 and 16 of the Trading with the Enemy Act, which identified Cuba as an enemy due to their relationship with the USSR and thus prohibited trade with them⁹. During the 1970s and 80s, there was some relaxation of restrictions regarding trade with Cuba, but then the 1990s saw a large uptick. The Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 strengthened the embargo on all counts except for food and medicine and clearly stated that if the Cuban government held fair elections for their leadership positions, the embargo would be subsequently terminated¹⁰. After the Cuban Democracy Act came the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996. This act instituted sanctions against foreign companies that traded with Cuba and maintained that the embargo would remain solid in place until Cuba embraced a democratic government. Essentially, the act forced international businesses to choose between trading and operating with Cuba or the United States¹¹.

Fidel Castro transferred power to his brother, Raul Castro, due to his failing health in 2008. During the presidency of Barack Obama, the “Cuban Thaw” took place. This is the thawing of hostile relations between the U.S. and Cuba that resulted in the easing of travel and trade restrictions. However, any steps toward a normalization of relations between the United

⁸ Cornell University (2021). Foreign Assistance act of 1961. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from https://www.law.cornell.edu/topn/foreign_assistance_act_of_1961

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Torricelli, R. (1992, October 01). H.R.5323 - 102nd CONGRESS (1991-1992): Cuban Democracy act of 1992. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/5323>

¹¹ Burton, D. (1996, March 12). H.R.927 - 104th Congress (1995-1996): CUBAN liberty and DEMOCRATIC Solidarity (LIBERTAD) act of 1996. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/927>

States and Cuba made during the Obama administration were negated almost immediately once Donald Trump was elected to office. In fact, it was made apparent by President Trump and his cabinet that the United States would end any economic practices that benefited the Cuban government, reintroduce a tourism ban, and revert back to the policy instated by the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996¹². Currently, the Biden administration has not given any clear indications on his plans regarding the embargo. However, considering he served as vice president to Barack Obama, it is fair to assume that his feelings regarding the Cuban embargo are very similar, so the potential easing of restrictions may not be far on the horizon.

Statement of the Problem:

The embargo, first and foremost, does not harm the Cuban government as the United States intended; instead, it harms the innocent people of Cuba. Furthermore, the Cuban government maintains that their nation's economic struggles are due to the United States and their strict policy regarding the embargo. The main issue at hand is that the embargo is still in place today despite all the ground made during the Obama administration toward normalizing relations with Cuba. Moreover, it is important to take into account the fact that the Cold War is over, and the Soviet Union does not exist. Fidel Castro has passed away, and it is clear that Cuba does not pose a threat to the United States, nor are they our enemy. Furthermore, the school of thought that created our foreign policy regarding Cuba is no longer prominent, nor relevant.

¹² Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

Today, the United States government does not invoke sanctions on other nations due to human rights violations or the lack of a democratic constitution. This is evident in the fact that we still actively trade with China, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, and various other non-democratic, authoritarian regimes. This paper will serve to argue that the embargo should be lifted because Cuba poses no domestic threat to the United States due to the lack of Soviet presence and the very ideology that the embargo represents is no longer a popular one in the United States. Furthermore, the United States and Cuban governments should have a positive diplomatic relationship.

Background and Need:

In the past, there have been papers and even books written for the advocacy of ending the Cuban embargo. In fact, the PEW Research Center found that in 2016 over 60% of Americans were in favor of ending economic trade sanctions and re-establishing a diplomatic relationship with Cuba¹³. However, one of the first major decisions made during the Trump administration in 2017 was to go in the opposite direction of public opinion. This has created a need for a new push against the sanctions placed on Cuba. With the current state of the nation in 2021, one of the last things on people's minds is the implications of Cold War policy on the U.S. today. The ulterior purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of the issue at hand, ultimately

¹³ PEW Research Center. (2020, May 31). Growing Public Support for U.S. Ties With Cuba – And an End to the Trade Embargo. Retrieved April 18, 2021, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2015/07/21/growing-public-support-for-u-s-ties-with-cuba-and-an-end-to-the-trade-embargo/>

arguing against the decisions made by the Trump administrations in the hope that the economic sanctions against Cuba are lifted.

Outline Questions:

- What are the negative impacts the embargo has had on the U.S. and Cuba historically?
- What are the effects of the embargo on the people of Cuba?
- What are the negative economic impacts of the embargo for both the U.S. and Cuba?
- What are some potential downfalls to the lifting of sanctions and re-establishing of diplomatic relations with Cuba?
- What are the projected positive impacts for the ending of the embargo?
- What argument do those who support the Cuban embargo pose?

Significance to Field:

This study has significance to two fields. It provides significance to the History field as it seeks to rectify major issues within our nation's past that are still major issues today.

Furthermore, this study is significant to the political science field as it examines an issue within the United States' foreign policy and looks at providing a logical solution that benefits all parties involved. Furthermore, as stated earlier in this chapter, this study also serves to raise awareness on an important issue that does not get much coverage by mainstream medias.

Chapter 2

Introduction

As stated previously, the issue that this paper looks to address is the current standing of the Cuban embargo. Essentially, the very presence of economic sanctions against the nation represents old Cold War-era policy that should have long since been abandoned. Additionally, this paper looks to argue in favor of a positive economic relationship between the United States and Cuba. This is a controversial topic because in 2017, during the first year of his presidency, Donald Trump issued a statement that heavily echoed the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996. That is, it stated that his administration would never support the Cuban government so long as it remained under the control of an “oppressive Communist regime”¹⁴. This effectively negated any positive ground made by the Obama administration toward the removal of sanctions.

When one takes into account the fact that Cuba is only about one-hundred miles from the United States, it is unclear as to why the embargo is supported, because as stated earlier, the embargo was initiated at the height of the Cold War as an attempt to quell any communist regime in the United States’ hemisphere. When the Soviet Union began providing aid to Cuba, essentially establishing a proxy state in the process, the argument for continued sanctions made sense from a diplomatic standpoint in regard to U.S. foreign policy at the time. However, the Cold War has been over for thirty years, and Cuba no longer poses a threat to the United States

¹⁴ Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

due to the lack of a Soviet partnership. Yet it is still important to note that throughout the timeline of foreign relations between the U.S. and Cuba there have been numerous instances where the United States has refused to pursue a friendly relationship with Cuba; subsequently paving the way for foreign interference from a nation in which we compete with. There is evidence to this in the alliance between the Soviet Union and Cuba that formed in the early 1960s and in the fact that in 2017, the same year as the Trump administration's statement regarding the revival of economic sanctions, China became Cuba's number one trading partner¹⁵.

This chapter will contain a review of literature pertaining to the issue regarding the existence of economic sanctions against Cuba. This will be accomplished in three distinct parts with the first seeking to examine the side of the opposition. That is, the position of those who support economic sanctions against Cuba will be analyzed and argued against. In addition to analyzing the arguments of this paper's opposition, the legality under international law and various negative impacts of the Cuban embargo will be discussed. Lastly, potential impacts of positive economic and diplomatic relationships with Cuba will be looked at also.

Analyzing the Argument for a U.S. Embargo of Cuba

Source: Smugula, J.W., *“Redirecting Focus: Justifying the U.S. Embargo against Cuba and Resolving the Stalemate”* (1995)

¹⁵ Angelo, P. J. (2020, October 26). There goes the neighborhood: US hegemony in the Hemisphere in an era of great Power Competition. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/there-goes-the-neighborhood-us-hegemony-in-the-hemisphere-in-an-era-of-great-power-competition/>

First and foremost, this article presents a critical issue for those who advocate for the dismissal of economic sanctions against Cuba. As stated previously, one of the reasons for initial sanctions against Cuba came in the early 1960s when Fidel Castro came to power and began to illegally confiscate and nationalize U.S.-owned properties without providing any due compensation. Essentially, the argument is presented by the author that until the U.S. is compensated by Cuba, the economic sanctions that remain in place are completely legal and should remain in place¹⁶. Furthermore, the author states that the total value of such a compensation would be about \$13 billion in 1995, and it is important to note that due to inflation and interest accumulation, this number would be higher today¹⁷. The justification provided by this article for the imposing of economic sanctions on Cuba logically holds true; however, in former President Donald Trump's Memorandum¹⁸, there are no mentions of Cuba's debt as instead justifications are inaccurately pointed toward the Cuban government's treatment of its people.

Although it is true that the United States is owed some form of compensation for the properties lost at the hands of Fidel Castro's regime, it is unclear that an embargo is the best means for attempting to get that compensation. The total estimated cost of the embargo as stated

¹⁶ Smugula, J. W. (1995). Redirecting Focus: Justifying the US Embargo Against Cuba and Resolving the Stalemate. *NCJ Int'l L. & Com. Reg.*, 21, 65.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

by Cuban officials is set at roughly \$144 billion¹⁹, yet the sanctions have still failed to accomplish any of the goals set by U.S. legislation to ensure a democratic government in Cuba nor brought about any compensation for the confiscated properties. Moreover, the U.S. government could not realistically expect Cuba to be able to pay off their debt as they were cut off from the largest market in their region: the United States. Essentially, the only way that the compensation could be paid would be if the embargo was lifted and Cuba was allowed to trade with the U.S.

Exploring the Negative Impacts and Illegality Under International Law of the Cuban Embargo

Source: Margot Pepper, “*The Costs of the Embargo*,” (2009)

When studying the Cuban Embargo, it is impossible not to consider the negative impacts it has on the Cuban economy. Of course, the economic sanctions imposed on Cuba do cost the United States money, but since it is in the hands of the U.S. government to lift said sanctions, negative economic impacts of the embargo on the United States will not be considered for this paper. With that being said, it is important to understand that the estimate provided prior in this paper pertaining to the total cost of the Cuban embargo on the Cuban economy to the tune of \$144 billion²⁰ is a modest estimate. As the author of “*The Costs of the Embargo*” points out,

¹⁹ Acosta, & Marsh. (2020). Cuba says U.S. trade Embargo cost more than \$5 billion last year. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2020-10-22/cuba-says-us-trade-embargo-cost-more-than-5-billion-last-year>

²⁰ Acosta, & Marsh. (2020). Cuba says U.S. trade Embargo cost more than \$5 billion last year. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2020-10-22/cuba-says-us-trade-embargo-cost-more-than-5-billion-last-year>

there have been expensive negative impacts to the Cuban economy that are difficult to quantify²¹. For example, sanctions imposed on Cuba prohibit the transfer of Cuban medical research from reaching the Western world. A vaccine for meningitis B, groundbreaking treatment for an eye disease, new cholesterol-reducing medication, and the first therapeutic treatment for lung cancer are just some of the breakthroughs made by Cuban researchers that failed to receive global recognition and thus were not justly compensated for²².

When looking at the estimation regarding exactly how much the embargo has cost the Cuban economy, supporters of the embargo are always quick to note that in terms of raw dollars, economic sanctions have cost the United States more than Cuba²³. At the thirty-year anniversary of the embargo, estimates show that the United States lost approximately \$30 billion, whereas Cuba lost about \$28.6 billion²⁴. Although the United States' total fiscal hit is more than Cuba's in terms of raw numbers, the idea that the United States was proportionately disadvantaged is ridiculous when you take into account Cuba's size relative to the United States in regard to money, resources, and population²⁵. It is thus clear based on the information presented that the embargo has disproportionate negative impacts on the Cuban economy and, subsequently, the Cuban people.

²¹ Pepper, M. (2009). The Costs of the Embargo. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2009/0309pepper.html>

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Source: Shneyer, P.A., and Barta, V., “*The Legality of U.S. Economic Blockade of Cuba Under International Law*” (1981)

This source serves to identify exactly what international law is grounded upon. In addition, the authors seek to apply traditional instances of violations against international law to the issue regarding the United States’ embargo of Cuba. In defense of the argument provided by the Cuban government in regard to the illegality of the embargo under international law, this source highlights the work of scholars who have found that actions taken by the United States constitutes a violation of such law. Furthermore, the authors of this source argue that the start of illegal acts of economic aggression committed by the U.S. government began as soon as Fidel Castro came to power²⁶, which was before Cuba’s alliance with the USSR and before he ever proclaimed the Cuban government to be a Marxist regime.

Essentially, the U.S. involvement with Cuba turned illegal in the eyes of the United Nations when the Sugar Act was restructured in 1960 in response to Fidel Castro’s leftist revolution²⁷. Fundamentally, the United States understood that Cuba’s economy relied heavily on the monocrop production of sugar; so, by intentionally and drastically reducing the amount of sugar being bought and sold in the U.S., the United States government was intentionally destroying Cuba’s economy²⁸. More importantly, international law states that unwarranted acts of economic aggression are to be considered illegal; and once the Soviet Union fell, Cuba no longer posed any domestic or foreign threat to the United States. Because of this, it is clear that the United States’ economic sanctions on the island nation are unwarranted. And when one looks

²⁶ Shneyer, P. A., & Barta, V. (1981). *The Legality of the US Economic Blockade of Cuba Under International Law. Case W. Res. J. Int’l L., 13*, 451.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

at the various negative economic impacts that the embargo has had on the Cuban economy, it is impossible not to view the actions taken by the United States against Cuba as examples of economic aggression. Thus, it is clear that the U.S. embargo of Cuba is in direct violation of international law.

Potential Impacts of a Positive Economic Relationship Between the United States and Cuba

Source: Christy M. DeMelfi, “*Nothing but the Facts: An In-Depth Analysis of the Effects of Economic Sanctions Against Cuba*” (2006)

This source contains much of the information already highlighted within this paper. However, what sets this work apart is its commentary from pages twenty-six and twenty-seven on what a potential post-embargo world could look like in regard to relations between the United States and Cuba. First and foremost, it establishes that many scholars believe that a relieving of economic sanctions against Cuba would most certainly bolster economic growth and reform²⁹. An interesting position that this source takes is that it argues that the economic sanctions imposed on Cuba make Cuban political leaders look like brave, anti-capitalist freedom fighters in the eyes of their leftist supporters³⁰. Essentially, this statement argues that in order for change to occur within the Cuban government in regard to human civil liberties, much like supporters of the embargo ultimately want, the embargo must first be lifted to allow for such change to take

²⁹ DeMelfi, C. M. (2006). *Nothing but the Facts: An In-Depth Analysis of the Effects of Economic Sanctions Against Cuba*. *J. Int'l Bus. & L.*, 5, 137.

³⁰ Ibid.

place³¹. However, it is also important to note that many of the aforementioned potential results that come from the lifting of economic sanctions are completely reliant on the willingness of those in the Cuban government to relinquish the authoritarian control of the Cuban people. Essentially, if sanctions are lifted, the Cuban government could very well be the sole beneficiaries of the act, as there is no guarantee that they would give civil liberties to their people.

Despite the fact that the positive impacts being felt by the Cuban people if sanctions were to be lifted remains in question, what can be described quite accurately are the potential positive impacts in regard to the U.S. economy. It has been estimated that a lifting of economic trade sanctions with Cuba could lead to a \$1 to \$2 billion increase of exports for the United States³². Furthermore, increases in all aspects of the United States economy would take place if the embargo would be lifted. This is because a large amount of market share in the Cuban economy would be regained by U.S. companies that was once lost³³. Despite the fact that, due to the relative sizes of the two nations' economies, Cuba would receive the greater positive economic impacts in regard to growth and GDP, the United States would still enjoy economic growth if the embargo were to be lifted. The main issue arises in whether or not the Cuban government would use an economic increase for their nation as a means to further the prosperity of its citizens.

Source: James McWhinney, “*The Impact of Ending the U.S. Embargo on Cuba*”, (2020)

³¹ Ibid.

³² DeMelfi, C. M. (2006). Nothing but the Facts: An In-Depth Analysis of the Effects of Economic Sanctions Against Cuba. *J. Int'l Bus. & L.*, 5, 137.

³³ Ibid.

This source serves to point out potential outlets for economic growth in Cuba if the embargo were to be lifted. First and foremost, it is established early in the article that distribution of Cuban products in the United States would be in the hands of foreign distributors that have maintained trade relationships with Cuba throughout the timeline of the embargo³⁴. This means that in order for the United States to maintain control of their own hemispheric hegemony in regard to product distribution, foreign contracts would need to be bought out, which could, in turn, make Cuba more money as they could drive up the price for distribution rights in the United States, forcing the U.S. to pay top dollar. Furthermore, the opening of tourism to Cuba for a market as large as the United States will surely make the small island nation substantial profits. Lastly, the article also points out that food, clothing, agricultural exports and implementations, and advancements in medical research could all make Cuba large amounts of capital³⁵. However, as stated earlier in the chapter, potential economic gains for the Cuban economy raises a key question: will the growth in Cuban economy be shared with the people of Cuba or will it simply be controlled by the authoritarian regime that is Cuba's government?

Source: Lynch, T., Aydin, N., and Harrington, J., *“Estimation of Alternative Economic Scenarios of the Future Emergence of Cuba into the Global Economy in a Post- U.S. Trade Embargo Era- Economic Impacts on the U.S. Economy*

This source seeks to identify exactly what the global trade system would look like if Cuba was free of economic sanctions and able to actively participate in the global economy. First

³⁴ McWhinney, J. (2020, January 22). The impact of ending the U.S. embargo on Cuba. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/022415/impact-ending-us-embargo-cuba.asp>

³⁵ Ibid.

and foremost, it is established in the paper that Cuba is currently economically underperforming in regard to total imports and exports in comparison to GDP³⁶. The reasoning provided as to why this is pushes the blame on U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba. This idea does make sense as how could a country reach its economic potential if it is cut off from trade with its largest potential market, that is, the United States. Furthermore, this source cites Russia as being Cuba's largest post-Cold War trade partner. However, it is also pointed out that the trade relationship underperforms in regard to its potential due to the long distance between the two nations³⁷. It has been established that an ending of economic sanctions against Cuba would bring about economic growth for the United States due to the addition of 11 million potential new consumers of American goods. Now imagine how much economic growth would be fostered in Cuba if they were granted a consumer base as large as the United States. Essentially, the liberalization of trade between the United States and Cuba would foster great economic increases for both parties in the form of GDP growth and an increase in imports and exports³⁸.

Chapter 3

Examining the Trump Administration's Argument for the Application of Economic Sanctions against Cuba

³⁶ Lynch, T., Aydin, N., & Harrington, J. (2004). ESTIMATION OF ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC SCENARIOS OF THE FUTURE EMERGENCE OF CUBA INTO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IN A POST U.S. TRADE EMBARGO ERA – ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON THE U.S. ECONOMY. Retrieved April 4, 2021, from <https://its.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/imported/storage/original/application/9401862706cd8640a3bdb6b52fd67c0a.pdf>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

It is apparent based on the information provided by the sources examined in the literary review that an opening of trade between the United States and Cuba would foster economic growth for both nations. In terms of raw dollars, it is easier to extrapolate and estimate the potential economic growth that the United States might enjoy if sanctions against Cuba are lifted. However, it is still the general consensus that due to its size relative to the United States in terms of GDP and resources, Cuba will enjoy much greater economic growth. This, however, raises an important question that needs to be answered. Essentially the ethicality and effectiveness of sanctions must be examined. Additionally, the effects that the embargo has on the Cuban people must also be examined.

In the presidential memorandum regarding policy toward Cuba, it was asserted that the actions taken by the Obama administration that involved the lifting of sanctions were to be immediately reversed³⁹. Essentially, the Trump administration set policy calling for the end of economic practices that benefit the Cuban government. In addition, travel and tourism bans were implemented, effectively ratifying the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996⁴⁰. In his presidential memorandum, one of the first things that the Trump administration asserted is that the Cuban government represents a communist regime that suppresses the rights of its people to freedom and prosperity⁴¹. This is a claim that can be supported, as the Human Rights Watch's 2019 World Report cited Cuba on various civil liberty violations such as the suppressing and punishing of those with alternate political views, the controlling of the media,

³⁹ Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

restriction of access to information from outside of Cuba, and overall suppression of basic freedoms and rights to individual expression⁴².

Despite the overall freedom and prosperity of Cuba being a major problem in contemporary times, a nation's "freeness" is not what determines whether or not the U.S. will foster a trade relationship or impose sanctions. This is evident in the fact that under the Trump administration, the United States actively traded with China, Saudi Arabia, and Russia⁴³, all of whom exhibit similar levels of freedom as Cuba. Essentially, Trump and his cabinet attempted to justify their imposing of sanctions against Cuba by claiming that they will not support their regime on the grounds it suppresses the freedoms of its people. However, such reasoning does not hold up as this precedent was not actively applied to trade relations with other nations that represent similar authoritative regimes as Cuba. The deeper issue at hand when looking at this problem is that U.S. actions taken by the Trump administration simply serve to display a degree of control over Cuba that could not be exercised on the likes of China, Russia, or Saudi Arabia. Fundamentally, it could easily be inferred that the Trump administration sought to send a message through its re-imposing of sanctions upon Cuba, a message that showed the world that the United States would not tolerate communist authoritarian regimes so close to home.

Analyzing the Effects of the Embargo on the Cuban Economy

⁴² Human Rights Watch. (2019, January 17). World report 2019: Human Rights Trends in Cuba. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/cuba#>

⁴³ Office of the United States Trade Representative. (n.d.). Countries & Regions. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions>

According to the Cuban government, the sanctions on Cuba's economy have greatly inhibited the nation's capacity for economic growth⁴⁴. Furthermore, Cuba claims that the United States has effectively made it so that private banks and third-party countries do not want to risk doing business with Cuba by threatening sanctions against those who trade with the small island nation⁴⁵. This is one of the major issues with the embargo altogether; the fact that the United States not only cut off its own trade with Cuba but effectively made it so that other nations who are allied with the U.S. will not trade with them either. The Cuban government argues that such moves made by the United States are extraterritorial and violates international trade laws⁴⁶. Based on the information provided earlier in this paper, all of these claims are true. Furthermore, it is safe to infer that the consequences of the embargo are not being felt by those in the Cuban government, but rather, by the people of Cuba who suffer from the lack of economic prosperity within the nation.

In 1990, at the end of the Cold War, Cuba's per-capita GDP was at \$2,700 and the United States was almost \$24,000. Today, this large gap still exists, despite Cuba exhibiting some economic growth⁴⁷. Per-capita GDP is a metric that is perfect for comparing the economies of two nations that are vastly different in regard to population as it breaks down a nation's economic output per person. Essentially, based on comparisons of per-capita GDP between the

⁴⁴ Cuban National Government. (2016, June). INFORME DE CUBA Sobre la resolución 70/5 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, titulada "Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos de América contra Cuba"-Report of Cuba – On Resolution 70/5 of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/sites/default/files/InformeBloqueo2016ES.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ World Bank. (2021). GDP per capita (current US\$) - Cuba, United States. Retrieved April 18, 2021, from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=CU-US>

United States and Cuba, it is overly clear that the general level of prosperity for each citizen in Cuba is significantly lower than those who reside within the U.S. As stated earlier, the United States was Cuba's largest trading partner before the implementation of the embargo, with some estimates stating that 75% of Cuba's imports and exports could be attributed to the U.S.⁴⁸.

Furthermore, once the embargo was imposed, Cuba was forced to trade with the Soviet Union and the Eastern European nations through a trade network known as the Community for Mutual Economic Assistance. However, once the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, the vast majority of the deals established through the network fell through for Cuba, leading to a \$6.3 billion loss in imports⁴⁹.

Effects of the Embargo on the Cuban People

It is obvious that the Cuban embargo was successful in its quest to effectively harm the Cuban economy. This, however, has had a negative impact on the citizens of Cuba and the nation's overall infrastructure. One of the major issues with the sanctions imposed by the United States is that they put a tremendous amount of strain on the nation's healthcare system. During the Cold War, the USSR was able to keep Cuba's healthcare system fed with a near-constant flow of medical supplies and technologies and up until the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba's healthcare system was actually at the top of global rankings⁵⁰. However, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 was passed after the fall of the USSR and asserted that medical supplies would not

⁴⁸ Kuntz, D. (1994). The Politics of Suffering: The Impact of the U.S. Embargo on the Health of the Cuban People. Report to the American Public Health Association of a Fact-Finding Trip to Cuba, June 6-11, 1993. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 15(1), 86-107. doi:10.2307/3342609

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

be shipped to Cuba⁵¹. This caused a shortage of medicines within the nation that heralded a sharp decline in healthcare capabilities⁵². In addition to damages done to the Cuban healthcare system, the embargo also created shortages in almost every single manufactured commodity. Animal protein is one of the rarest goods on the island due to a lack of feed for livestock, agricultural production is minimized due to a lack of fertilizers, and there is an energy deficit due to a shortage in oil⁵³. The impacts of these shortages are unfortunately felt by the innocent citizens of Cuba rather than by those in the Cuban government that refuse to establish a democratic constitution. When former President Trump re-affirmed the embargo following the period of relaxed sanctions brought about by the Obama administration, he did so as an attempt to show strength. However, in this attempt to show the world that the United States will not tolerate the communist government of Cuba, the wellbeing of Cuban people is sacrificed.

In the 2017 presidential memorandum that sought to tighten economic sanctions on Cuba, the Trump administration asserted that any interaction between the United States and Cuba would be in the best interest of the Cuban people and the United States⁵⁴. Essentially, the Trump administration stated that the embargo serves to benefit the Cuban people. However, based on the information provided in this chapter this is simply not the case. It is overly clear that the

⁵¹ Torricelli, R. (1992, October 01). H.R.5323 - 102nd CONGRESS (1991-1992): Cuban Democracy act of 1992. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/5323>

⁵² Kuntz, D. (1994). The Politics of Suffering: The Impact of the U.S. Embargo on the Health of the Cuban People. Report to the American Public Health Association of a Fact-Finding Trip to Cuba, June 6-11, 1993. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 15(1), 86-107. doi:10.2307/3342609

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

sanctions imposed on Cuba are overly harsh and are detrimental to the well-being and overall prosperity of the Cuban people.

Chapter 4

Introduction

If the embargo against Cuba were to be lifted, it is obviously clear that the standard of living and overall prosperity of the small island nation would be increased. Moreover, it is also clear that the lifting of sanctions against Cuba would also foster economic growth for the United States economy. Despite this, it is still important to note that the Cuban government represents an oppressive regime that goes against everything that the United States stands for in regard to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Essentially, the issue in Cuba is extremely complex in that the United States should show compassion and mercy for the Cuban people; but at the same time, the oppressive communist regime that controls every aspect of Cuban society must also be stopped. In regard to this issue, however, it must be plainly stated that the sanctions put in place do not properly serve their purpose. This is because the sanctions were meant to force the Cuban people into a war of attrition in which Cuba would be bled of wealth and resources until they submit to the United States. This, of course, has not come to be because the Cuban government has had just enough help from the likes of China and Russia to get by without the United States.

As stated within the previous chapter, the sanctions against Cuba do not serve to benefit the people of Cuba in any way. The embargo has been in place in some form or capacity for the last 60 years and still, the Cuban government has not backed down to the United States. This is because the effects of the economic sanctions are largely unfelt by those in power in the Cuban

government. It is the extremely impoverished people of Cuba who suffer due to the embargo; and while the people suffer, the Cuban government seeks to effectively blame all of their economic issues on the United States, painting them to be seen as the enemy and sole cause of the country's misfortunes⁵⁵.

Despite the long and complex history between the United States and Cuba, it is clear that during the second term of the Obama administration some progress was being made toward a free and democratic Cuba. After Fidel Castro stepped down from power in 2008 due to an illness, his brother, Raul, took his place. Unlike Fidel, who thought economic freedom for Cuban businesses and citizens to be detrimental to the success of his regime, Raul was supportive of such endeavors⁵⁶. In fact, one could argue that Raul sought liberation and economic freedom for the Cuban people. However, it is also important to realize that any gains made for the Cuban people during the negotiations between Raul Castro and Barack Obama were effectively stifled by decisions made during the Trump administration⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Cuban National Government. (2016, June). INFORME DE CUBA Sobre la resolución 70/5 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, titulada "Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos de América contra Cuba"-Report of Cuba – On Resolution 70/5 of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/sites/default/files/InformeBloqueo2016ES.pdf>

⁵⁶ Frank, M. (2018, April 17). Explainer: The State of Raul Castro's Economic Reforms in Cuba. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-politics-castro-changes-explaine/explainer-the-state-of-raul-castros-economic-reforms-in-cuba-idUSKBN1HO0CL>

⁵⁷ Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

Economic Liberation Under Raul Castro and What it Meant for the Cuban People

The presidential memorandum published by the Trump administration served to strengthen anti-Cuban legislation in response to the steps taken by the Obama administration to relieve sanctions on Cuba. However, many of these steps taken by the Obama administration served well in regard to the benefits they brought about for the citizens of Cuba. Despite the fact that Cuba is still effectively ruled by an unelected communist regime, many of the steps taken under Raul Castro have brought about positive benefits for the Cuban people and have been positive steps forward in the pursuance of a democratic regime.

Starting in 2010, Cuba began to allow some small businesses to function within the nation as a byproduct of state budget cuts⁵⁸. Technically, small business owners and entrepreneurs were defined as self-employed; but under new reforms, they were allowed to hire employees that were non-family, which greatly increased their potential economic output. Today, it is estimated that there are over 500,000 legally licensed self-employed citizens in Cuba, and there is a newly established private sector of the economy that consists of over 400 firms, most of which used to be state controlled⁵⁹. Essentially, the Cuban government, through frequent talks with former President Barack Obama and members of his cabinet, sought to allow for private companies to not only exist, but thrive under new economic conditions in which private firms would be taxed and regulated rather than operated and controlled. In addition to the allowance of

⁵⁸ Frank, M. (2018, April 17). Explainer: The State of Raul Castro's Economic Reforms in Cuba. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-politics-castro-changes-explaine/explainer-the-state-of-raul-castros-economic-reforms-in-cuba-idUSKBN1HO0CL>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

private companies to exist and operate within Cuba, individual citizens were allowed to buy and sell their own homes and vehicles starting in 2011⁶⁰. Under the rule of Fidel Castro during the period of Soviet influence, this was never allowed. However, it is important to note that the Cuban government still actively maintains a much higher degree of control over the economy than many Americans would like⁶¹.

It is clear that the implementation of private property and private business is a positive step in the right direction for the betterment of Cuba. In addition to the development of the private sector, Cuba also has recently begun opening itself up more to foreign investment⁶². However, despite all of these reforms that seem to be steering Cuba in the right direction economically, the Trump administration still cut all ties and revamped sanctions in 2017 due to the fact that the nation's government is not democratically elected. Cuba is such a small nation with such little natural resources at its disposal that it needs a larger trading partner to stay afloat. From this, it can be inferred that without the cooperation of the United States, which Trump so vehemently denied, the reforms made and proposed by the Cuban government will most likely fail.

Under Raul Castro, the Cuban government was willing to reform itself and give up a good deal of its control over the national economy. The establishment of a private sector was certainly a step in the right direction, and other reforms, such as the implementation of private ownership and an allowance of wealth accumulation, also served well to grant liberties and

⁶⁰ Frank, M. (2018, April 17). Explainer: The State of Raul Castro's Economic Reforms in Cuba. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-politics-castro-changes-explaine/explainer-the-state-of-raul-castros-economic-reforms-in-cuba-idUSKBN1HO0CL>

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

opportunity to the citizens of Cuba. The overall goal for the sanctions is to grant the people of Cuba freedom and democracy, but in reality, they do quite the opposite. During the Obama administration, more was done in regard to Cuban democratization and liberation by reducing economic sanctions than was done in the history of the embargo.

The Issue with Removing or Reducing Sanctions

The removal or severe reduction of sanctions against Cuba is imperative for the wellbeing of Cuban citizens. Not to mention the United States would also make more money if a positive economic relationship were to be fostered between the two nations. However, one issue still remains, and it is an important issue in regard to the global politics of today. Essentially, the problem with Cuba, and the only thing that gives the embargo any shred of legitimacy is the fact that the Cuban government is an authoritative regime that does not prioritize the liberty and wellbeing of its people. If the Cuban national government were to hold fair elections and establish a constitution with a bill of rights, the embargo would effectively be ended in accordance with the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity act⁶³. The likelihood of such instances, however, is low considering the recent hostilities between the United States and Cuba that took place during the Trump presidency.

It may be true that Cuba will never achieve the level of freedom that the United States asks for whilst under such strict economic sanctions; but the approach of easing sanctions and gradually implementing freedoms within the communist structure like the Obama administration worked. However, this does not mean that as a nation we should give the authoritative regime

⁶³ Burton, D. (1996, March 12). H.R.927 - 104th Congress (1995-1996): CUBAN liberty and DEMOCRATIC Solidarity (LIBERTAD) act of 1996. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/927>

that controls Cuba a free pass to continue their unopposed rule. One critique of the Obama administration's dealings with the Cuban government is that they were too soft in their negotiations, as there are many individuals within our nation that truly believe Cuba should be cut off from the United States economically until they begin to democratize. However, it must be constantly remembered that the United States currently does not own Cuba and strongarming the Cuban government at the expense of the people is not the best solution; and has been established by the United Nations as being illegal under international law.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Proponents of the U.S. embargo of Cuba argue that the strict economic sanctions against the nation are in the best interest of the Cuban people. However, it is overly clear that the embargo has put tremendous strain on almost every aspect of the small island nation's essential infrastructure, which has, in turn, greatly harmed the wellbeing of the Cuban people. Of course, it is true that the Cuban government continuously commits various civil rights violations against its own people, but as seen during the Obama administration, the easing of economic sanctions did directly guarantee some basic economic liberties for the citizens of Cuba. However, ever since the Trump administration reinstated the embargo in full force in 2017, there have been little gains in Cuba's economic freedom.

A relieving of sanctions on Cuba brought about some growth and economic freedom for the Cuban people during former President Barack Obama's second term. Furthermore, it is apparent that if the Cuban thaw lasted longer, and if Donald Trump and his cabinet embraced the

idea of a pursuing a positive relationship with Cuba; the United States would have enjoyed many positive economic impacts due to the emergence of a newly developed trading partner so close to its borders. However, as the leader of the free and democratic world, to give a regime such as Cuba's a free pass to an increase in economic output without the guarantee of some rights for the Cuban people would not be an acceptable option for the U.S. government. Still, it is important to point out that when sanctions were slowly eased back by the Obama administration, freedoms were granted to the Cuban people that were never considered otherwise. The Trump administration stated that sanctions are the best option for the Cuban people, but this could not be farther from the truth as the embargo has done nothing but caused the citizens of Cuba harm. Essentially, the embargo is what allows the Cuban government to keep its total control over the people by effectively blaming all of the country's domestic problems on the United States. The lack of a true middle class or means to acquire wealth for citizens is what gives the Cuban government its power. Such power, however, could be minimized, as seen during the second term of the Obama administration, through the fostering of a private sector within the Cuban economy.

The best-case scenario when dealing with Cuba would be if those at the head of the nation's communist regime stepped down, allowing fair elections, or at the very least instituted a constitution that guaranteed some basic civil liberties for the people. If this were to be happen, the conditions set within the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 and all accompanying bits of legislation pertaining to the lifting of sanctions would be met. However, such a scenario would be far fetched as no matter how strict the sanctions against Cuba have been throughout history, their government has never capitulated under pressure from the United States; and there is little evidence indicating that they would do so now. The goal of the U.S.

government when dealing with Cuba should not be to show strength through strict sanctions but should be to show strength through the development of economic prosperity for the Cuban people. Essentially, policies in place within the embargo should be slowly rolled back, and legislative actions should only be instituted if they serve to directly foster freedoms for the people of Cuba.

Conclusion

Such an endeavor could be completed in a multitude of ways, but the steps taken during the Obama administration during his dealings with Cuban premiere, Raul Castro, should be modeled after. Under the current policy set by the Trump administration, the focus is to show strength by leveraging the well-being of the Cuban people to harm the leading regime. However, this does not work as the Cuban government controls the flow of information that goes to the people, which makes it so that those at the head of the regime can manipulate facts to make it seem as though the United States is the enemy. By slowly easing back sanctions, the citizens of Cuba would, in theory, begin to realize some aspects of Western culture through easing of travel restrictions and the trading of goods. Through such an exchange, the Cuban people would begin to experience a certain degree of prosperity and freedom that has long since been foreign to them, hopefully provoking peaceful remediations to their government.

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Angelo, P. J. (2020, October 26). There goes the neighborhood: U.S. hegemony in the

Hemisphere in an era of great Power Competition. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from

<https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/there-goes-the-neighborhood-us-hegemony-in-the-hemisphere-in-an-era-of-great-power-competition/>

Written by a fellow of Latin American Studies for the Council of Foreign Relations.

Argues that U.S. hemispheric hegemony is slipping in Latin America to the likes of China and Russia. Overall, the article does very well to demonstrate how China and Russia are investing in Latin American countries, especially in regard to Cuba.

Cornell University (2021). Foreign Assistance act of 1961. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from

https://www.law.cornell.edu/topn/foreign_assistance_act_of_1961

Original anti-Cuban legislation in regard to an embargo passed in 1961 after Fidel Castro seized power and began to nationalize aspects of the Cuban economy. Is also the act that

caused Castro to seek aid from the Soviet Union, proclaiming that his new government would be Marxist in the process. Will be argued against in the paper.

DeMelfi, C. M. (2006). Nothing but the Facts: an In-Depth Analysis of the Effects of Economic Sanctions Against Cuba. *J. Int'l Bus. & L.*, 5, 137.

Published by Hofstra Law School, this source goes over the various economic effects of the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Pages 26-27 are what is primarily being used in the paper to explore potential economic impacts if the embargo were to be lifted. Important to note that this paper was published before the Obama presidency, which saw economic sanctions against Cuba being almost completely lifted.

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020, November 18). Cuban Revolution. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Cuban-Revolution>

Written by a group of independent authors who work for the Encyclopedia Britannica. Served to provide historical context and background information for my paper regarding the Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro's rise to power. Does not formulate any opinions but does well to provide basic facts and information.

Burton, D. (1996, March 12). H.R.927 - 104th Congress (1995-1996): CUBAN liberty and DEMOCRATIC Solidarity (LIBERTAD) act of 1996. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/927>

Active bill in the United States legislature that strengthened the Cuban embargo in the late nineties. Is still applied today in regard to the current state of the embargo. Serves as a source to be examined and argued against within the paper.

Cuban National Government. (2016, June). INFORME DE CUBA Sobre la resolución 70/5 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, titulada “Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos de América contra Cuba”-Report of Cuba – On Resolution 70/5 of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/sites/default/files/InformeBloqueo2016ES.pdf>

Independently translated from Spanish to English, this document is the formal resolution drafted by the Cuban government in 2016 that was brought to the United Nations in an attempt to gain international support regarding the lifting of economic sanctions against Cuba. Provides official statements regarding the negative socio-economic impacts that the U.S. embargo of Cuba has brought about.

Frank, M. (2018, April 17). Explainer: The State of Raul Castro's Economic Reforms in Cuba. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-politics-castro-changes-explaine/explainer-the-state-of-raul-castros-economic-reforms-in-cuba-idUSKBN1HO0CL>

Written as a report of the steps made by the Raul Castro regime to liberate the Cuban national economy. Does not serve to provide an in-depth analysis, but reports on the facts and provides a chronological timeline of Raul Castro's economic reforms in Cuba.

Guevara, D. J. F. (2019). Constructing Legitimacy in “Stone” and “Words” during Cuba's Second Republic: Building and Contesting Fulgencio Batista's José Martí. *History and Memory*, 31(2), 117-154.

Provides details pertaining to the rise of Fulgencio Batista. Used in the paper to provide historical context regarding Batista's rise to power. Defines his rule over Cuba as illegitimate despite the United States' support for his regime.

Halperin, M. (1972). *The Rise and Decline of Fidel Castro: An Essay in Contemporary History*.

This book could be considered a primary source, as it was written only a decade after the start of the Cuban embargo. Furthermore, the author lived in Cuba under Castro's regime for many years and provides some personal insights into what life was like in Cuba under control of the communist party. The author provides valid points, but some of the personal insights provided serve little purpose to the main point of the work which is the rise and decline of Fidel Castro. This source is used in my research to provide deeper insight into Fidel Castro and his regime.

Human Rights Watch. (2019, January 17). World report 2019: Human Rights Trends in Cuba.

Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/cuba#>

Report published by independent organization that documents human rights violations from around the world. Used in the paper to get a sense of how the Cuban government treats its people today.

Kuntz, D. (1994). The Politics of Suffering: The Impact of the U.S. Embargo on the Health of the Cuban People. Report to the American Public Health Association of a Fact-Finding Trip to Cuba, June 6-11, 1993. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 15(1), 86-107.

doi:10.2307/3342609

Published in the *Journal of Public Health Policy*, this paper seeks to point out the negative impacts that the U.S. embargo has on the people of Cuba, citing damages in almost every aspect relative to the prosperity of the Cuban people. Clearly argues that the United States is responsible for much of Cuba's domestic issues.

Lynch, T., Aydin, N., & Harrington, J. (2004). ESTIMATION OF ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC SCENARIOS OF THE FUTURE EMERGENCE OF CUBA INTO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IN A POST U.S. TRADE EMBARGO ERA – ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON THE U.S. ECONOMY. Retrieved April 4, 2021, from <https://its.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/imported/storage/original/application/9401862706cd8640a3bdb6b52fd67c0a.pdf>

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Article that focuses on the potential impacts if the Cuban embargo were to be lifted.

Published by Investopedia, this article solely looks at potential economic growth associated with free trade between the U.S. and Cuba.

Office of the Press Secretary. (2017, June 16). National security Presidential memorandum on strengthening the policy of the United States toward Cuba. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20170616224946/https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united>

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Pepper, M. (2009). The Costs of the Embargo. Retrieved April 04, 2021, from <http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2009/0309pepper.html>

Article was initially published in a journal on economics. Talks about the fiscal impacts that the Cuban embargo has on both Cuba and the United States. Takes the position that the United States has been more negatively impacted than Cuba. Whereas this position is controversial, and not one that is supported by many scholars, the pure numbers provided in this article are most insightful.

PEW Research Center. (2020, May 31). Growing Public Support for U.S. Ties With Cuba – And an End to the Trade Embargo. Retrieved April 18, 2021, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2015/07/21/growing-public-support-for-u-s-ties-with-cuba-and-an-end-to-the-trade-embargo/>

Provides analytical data regarding the growing public support for the United States to pursue a positive relationship with Cuba. In addition, the research provided also suggests that the majority of Americans also support bringing an end to the embargo.

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Written as a case study pertaining to international law in regard to the situation between the United States and Cuba. Provides explanation as to how U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba are illegal in regard to international law.

Smugula, J. W. (1995). Redirecting Focus: Justifying the U.S. Embargo Against Cuba and Resolving the Stalemate. *NCJ Int'l L. & Com. Reg.*, 21, 65.

Used in the Literary Review as a justification for the presence of economic sanctions against Cuba. Presents the issue that Cuba unjustly, and in direct violation to international law, confiscated United States property for the new Cuban national economy in the early 1960s. Written in 1995 at a time when a new wave of pro-embargo legislation was being passed through U.S. Congress.

Torricelli, R. (1992, October 01). H.R.5323 - 102nd CONGRESS (1991-1992): Cuban Democracy act of 1992. Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/102nd-congress/house-bill/5323>

Precursor bill to the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity act of 1996. Served to strengthen economic sanctions for Cuba that had been relaxed. Will be another piece of legislation to be argued against.

[USC02] 50 USC Ch. 53: Trading with the enemy. (n.d.). Retrieved March 14, 2021, from <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=%2Fprelim%40title50%2Fchapter53&edition=prelim>

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White, N. D. (2019). Ending the U.S. embargo of Cuba: international law in dispute. *Journal of Latin American Studies*.

The author of this source comes from a legal background. This is apparent as the source is written as a legal critique of the embargo. Will be used in the paper as evidence to the illegality of the Cuban embargo today, effectively helping to prove the thesis.

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