Negative Brief: Cuba Embargo - good

By J. Luke Seykora

***Resolved: The United States Federal Government should significantly reform its import and/or export policy within the bounds of international trade***

The Affirmative plan removes the US trade embargo on Cuba, which has been in place since 1962. AFF will argue that it has not been successful at removing the Communist government, but that’s not its goal, so it hasn’t failed. Its goal is to deny resources and funding to a regime hostile to US interests and to democracy and human rights in Latin America. Dropping the embargo would reduce US influence for good and decrease respect for democracy and human rights.

Note: Some of the dates in this brief may seem outdated, but they are relevant because they were written during the time when President Obama was trying to do a partial rollback of the Cuban embargo.

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Negative: Cuba Embargo - Good

INHERENCY

1. Travel restrictions lifted

Biden lifted travel restrictions on US citizens going to Cuba

Hannah Sampson June 2022 (staff writer at The Washington Post) June 2, 2022 “Biden’s revised Cuba policy creates more options for U.S. travelers” [*https://www.washingtonpost.com/travel/2022/06/02/new-cuba-policy-travel-americans/*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/travel/2022/06/02/new-cuba-policy-travel-americans/)(Accessed July 4, 2022)

Under an order issued Wednesday by the U.S. Transportation Department, airlines will again be allowed to fly to Cuban destinations beyond Havana, an avenue that was [cut off](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/us-stops-flights-to-all-cuban-cities-except-havana/2019/10/25/982e156c-f77a-11e9-ad8b-85e2aa00b5ce_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_5) in late 2019. Public charter flights will also be permitted to go to airports outside Havana after being suspended in early 2020. The Transportation Department issued the order rescinding the Trump-era restrictions after a request this week from Secretary of State Antony Blinken. He wrote that scheduled and charter air services could resume “effective immediately” once the department took action. That formal request followed a May 16 announcement that the Biden administration was taking measures, including allowing the additional flights, to “increase support for the Cuban people in line with our national security interests.”

2. Automatic Ending to Embargo if Standards are Met

Standards = Restore Democracy and End Tyranny

Senator Marco Rubio 2021 (US senator from Florida.) July 20, 2021, A Press Release of a Speech Given on the Senate Floor entitled “Cubans Aren’t Protesting Because of an Embargo – They Want Liberty” <https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2021/7/rubio-cubans-aren-t-protesting-because-of-an-embargo-they-want-liberty> (Accessed July 4, 2022)

And by the way, in the law that codified the embargo it has a clause that automatically triggers the end of the embargo. And you want to know what this tough standard is that’s in the law? Free the political prisoners, free press, free and fair elections, and multi-party elections. The regime does those three things, and the embargo ends automatically. Automatically.

MINOR REPAIR

More Humanitarian Aid

Dr. Christopher Sabatini 2021 (Senior Research Fellow for Latin America, US and the Americas Programme) July 19, 2021 “US embargo blocks constructive policy approach to Cuba” <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/07/us-embargo-blocks-constructive-policy-approach-cuba> (accessed July 4, 2022)

Regardless of the rights and wrongs of the embargo, this is the moment creative multilateral diplomacy could walk the delicate line between embargo opponents and advocates. A simple call by the Biden administration for an increased humanitarian aid campaign – either through on-the-ground non-governmental networks [such as Caritas](https://www.caritas.us/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw_8mHBhClARIsABfFgpgdJUMSoQieOVNGHfTpHIXaS1L-hJtUqomIKItAoq4ygClbGrqmegoaAoxyEALw_wcB) or multilateral offices such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – would blunt denunciations of ‘gringo interference’ and channel international criticism of the ‘blockade’ into effective action.

It would also mobilize the US, as well as European and Latin American countries and citizens to put their euros or convertible Cuban pesos where their mouth is, while expressing their defence of the rights of Cuban citizens to complain about government failures.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Embargo is not failing

Actual Purpose of Embargo: Successfully denies resources to anti-American regime

REUTERS NEWS SERVICE 2008. (Jeff Franks, journalist) May 21, 2008, “U.S. official says Cuba embargo successful,” [www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSN2143173120080522](http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSN2143173120080522) (Accessed July 5, 2022)(brackets added)

A U.S. trade embargo in place 46 years against Cuba has been successful, U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez said on Wednesday, even though the island's communist government remains. [Then U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos] Gutierrez said the embargo, imposed in 1962 to undermine the government of Fidel Castro, deprived Cuban leaders of resources they would have used for "ill-focused goals." "The purpose of the embargo is to deny resources to a regime who is clearly anti-American, who doesn't like our country, and in that regard the embargo has been extremely successful," Gutierrez said in a phone interview from Washington.

Embargo successfully reduces Cuba’s ability to cause international trouble

Peter Brookes 2009 (Peter researches and develops Heritage’s policy on weapons of mass destruction and counter proliferation.) April 16, 2009 “Keep the Embargo, O” <https://www.heritage.org/commentary/keep-the-embargo-o> (Accessed July 4, 2022)

The embargo has stifled Havana's ambitions ever since the Castros lost their Soviet sponsorship in the early 1990s. Anyone noticed the lack of trouble Cuba has caused internationally since then? Contrast that with the 1980s some time.

2. A/T “Exposure Will Change the Government”

Cuba has millions of tourists, but they have no political impact for change

Dr. Jose Azel 2015 (Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Univ. of Miami) Copyright 2015 “American Tourism Will Not Undermine the Castro Regime” <https://mailchi.mp/a99c903777ae/issue-97-american-tourism-will-not-undermine-the-castro-regime?e=967438d6c9> (Accessed July 5, 2022)

For decades, two million tourists from Canada, Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere have traveled yearly to Cuba with no impact whatsoever on the Cuban regime. The more empirically valid argument is that expenditures by tourists add to the longevity of the regime, since the monies flow into enterprises controlled by the Cuban military. Moreover, tourist dollars allow the regime to avoid meaningful economic and political reforms. In any case, international tourism has not brought about political reforms in Cuba, or in the remaining universe of totalitarian regimes. For example, China and Vietnam welcome 130 million and 8 million tourists, respectively, each year with no impact on their form of government.

No Percentage of Tourists will be able to Bring Democracy

Dr. Jose Azel 2015 (Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Univ. of Miami) Copyright 2015 “American Tourism Will Not Undermine the Castro Regime” <https://mailchi.mp/a99c903777ae/issue-97-american-tourism-will-not-undermine-the-castro-regime?e=967438d6c9> (Accessed July 5, 2022)

Nonetheless, rather than rejecting the “American tourists” arguments only on its lack of logical merits, I looked for statistical proxies to test the hypothesis. American tourists represent only 1.6 percent of inbound tourism in China.  In Cuba, tourists from the United States account for 3.3 percent of total tourism. In other words, Cuba’s tourism is twice as “American intensive” as China’s. Neither country has engaged in political reforms, but it is only fair to ask: What percentage of tourists must be American in order to validate the “American tourist will bring democracy” thesis? Answer: unknown.

Conclusion: Tourists Bring No Change – It’s Illogical

Dr. Jose Azel 2015 (Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Univ. of Miami) Copyright 2015 “American Tourism Will Not Undermine the Castro Regime” <https://mailchi.mp/a99c903777ae/issue-97-american-tourism-will-not-undermine-the-castro-regime?e=967438d6c9> (Accessed July 5, 2022)

The point of all this is simply to show that the “American tourists will help bring democracy to Cuba” working proposition of the Administration’s new U.S.-Cuba policy, fails to pass the most basic tests of logical coherence. We deserve more critical and rigorous thinking from our policymakers.

3. A/T “Medicine and humanitarian aid blocked”

Not blocked: U.S. embargo doesn’t block humanitarian and medical aid

VERIFY 2021 (news verification and research organization) July 27, 2021 “Yes, the US embargo allows humanitarian aid to reach Cuba, but it’s unclear whether Cuban citizens are receiving it” <https://www.verifythis.com/article/news/verify/government-verify/us-cuba-embargo-humanatarian-aid/536-32db0efb-c5e4-4c69-a5a2-57d82cb5f653> (Accessed July 4, 2021)

Meanwhile, Rodney Hunter, the political coordinator for the United States Mission to the United Nations, mentioned during the meeting that despite the embargo, the U.S. was “a significant supplier of humanitarian goods to the Cuban people and one of Cuba's principal trading partners.”    
“Every year we authorize billions of dollars worth of exports to Cuba, including food and other agricultural commodities, medicines, medical devices, telecommunications equipment, other goods, and other items to support the Cuban people. Advancing democracy and human rights remain at the core of our policy efforts,” said Hunter.

Cuba is the one banning medicine, not the US

Senator Marco Rubio 2021 (US senator from Florida) July 20, 2021, A Press Release of a Speech Given on the Senate Floor entitled “Cubans Aren’t Protesting Because of an Embargo – They Want Liberty” <https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2021/7/rubio-cubans-aren-t-protesting-because-of-an-embargo-they-want-liberty> (Accessed July 4, 2022)

What about medicine? That’s another thing they put out there: “this is so cruel, we don’t allow medicine in.” Do you know what the Cuban regime announced last week? This is what they announced on their national television: “We are going to lift the ban on the importation of medicine.” What? You mean there was a Cuban ban, a regime ban on importing medicine? Yes, there was. They’re the ones that weren’t allowing medicine in. And any amount they were allowing in, they were putting a tariff on it. So there’s no blockade on medicine. We sell them medicine! And you can donate medicine – unlimited amounts under U.S. law. If there’s a blockade on medicine, it’s the regime’s blockade.

4. A/T “Trade with China justifies trade with Cuba”

China is repressive, but Cuba is very different and much worse

Carlos Gutierrez 2007 (Then Secretary of Commerce) 24 Oct 2007 “Ask the White House on Cuban Policy” <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/ask/20071024.html> (Accessed July 6, 2022)

Though China does not have a full, market economy it does exhibit much of the behaviors and benefits of an open economy. In China, people can open a business. They can invest. There is a tremendous amount of choice for consumers. A Chinese worker can get paid directly for their work. The Cuban people don’t enjoy the same opportunities. And, though millions of dollars have poured into Cuba from Canada, Europe and other points around the globe, it has not benefited the average Cuban. More investment and money spent in Cuba means more money lining the pockets of the Cuban dictator and his cronies. Instead of comparing Cuba with China, we should compare Cuba to other countries that are similar, such as North Korea.

SOLVENCY

1. No economic benefit

Cuban suffering is caused by communism, not the US embargo

Jeff Jacoby 2022 (columnist for The Boston Globe since 1994, is a conservative writer with a national reputation.) February 13, 2022 “Cuba’s dictatorship, not the embargo, is what needs to go” <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/02/13/opinion/cubas-dictatorship-not-embargo-is-what-needs-go/> (Accessed July 4, 2022) (Hightlights Added for Emphasis)

Sixty years later, Cuba remains drenched in misery. The New York Times [reported in January](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/14/world/americas/cuba-mass-trials-crackdown.html) that protesters rounded up during last summer’s peaceful anti-government demonstrations “could get up to 30 years in prison as they face the largest and most punitive mass trials on the island since the early years of the revolution.” In a country known for harsh government crackdowns, the authorities are engaged in one of the harshest ever. The suffering of Cuba’s people is undeniable, and so is its cause: not the US embargo but the communist despotism that has been in place since 1959.

No significant economic benefit to Cuba nor the US: Communist economic system blocks economic growth, not the embargo

Martin Crutsinger 2008 (AP Economics Writer) “Cuba Trade Embargo Expected to Remain” <https://www.foxnews.com/wires/2008Feb20/0,4670,USCubaEmbargo,00.html> (Accessed July 6, 2022) (Highlights added for emphasis) (Note on the URL: you will need to scroll down to view the article)

Gary Hufbauer, an economist with the Peterson Institute, a Washington think tank, said any normalization of relations would have only a slight impact on the U.S. economy because Cuba is such a small market. He said agriculture and tourism would see modest gains. He said Cuba would get a boost if it could once again export to the United States, but he said it has been the communist system, rather than the U.S. trade embargo, that has been the major factor depressing living standards in Cuba. "Some people say that the embargo deprived Cuba of economic resources," Hufbauer said. "But the main reason Cuba is poor is that its economic system is crummy and has been for a long time,"

Communism will keep Cuba in poverty no matter what

John Miltimore 2021 (Managing Editor of FEE.org at the Foundation For Economic Education) July 22, 2021 “The U.S. Is Not Responsible for Cuba’s Poverty — Communism Is” (Accessed July 5, 2022) <https://www.nationalreview.com/2021/07/the-u-s-is-not-responsible-for-cubas-poverty-communism-is/>

As noted above, prior to Castro’s takeover, Cuba was one of the wealthiest countries in the Western Hemisphere. That all changed under Castro. The failures of communism in Cuba were tragic, but also familiar. The 20th century was littered with failed communist states, a fact that was widely understood and uncontroversial until recently. As someone once put it, “communism was a great system for making people equally poor — in fact, there was no better system in the world for that than communism. Capitalism made people unequally rich.”

Corrupt Cuban government controls the economy

2022 Index of Economic Freedom (The *Index of Economic Freedom*, an annual guide published by The Heritage Foundation, Washington's No. 1 think tank. The Index covers 12 freedoms – from property rights to financial freedom – in 184 countries.) Copyright 2022 “#175 Cuba” <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/cuba> (Accessed July 4, 2022)(Highlights added for Emphasis)

Although a 2019 constitution recognizes private property in theory, the state owns most means of production. There is practically no separation among the judiciary, the National Assembly, and the Communist Party, which can appoint or remove judges at any time. Corruption is a serious problem that remains unaddressed. Widespread illegality permeates both Cuba’s limited private enterprises and the vast state-controlled economy.

2. Trade benefits empirically denied. If trade improved Cuba, it should have happened by now.

The embargo is NOT a blockade. Other countries, and some US companies, trade with Cuba

Daniel Funke 2021 ( fact check reporter covering online misinformation for USA TODAY.) July 15, 2021 “Fact check: US embargo doesn't prevent Cuba from trading with other countries” <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2021/07/15/fact-check-us-cuba-embargo-doesnt-apply-all-countries-companies/7954883002/> (Accessed July 4, 2022)

The claim that the U.S. "blockade" of Cuba means the island nation can't trade with any country or company is FALSE, based on our research. The embargo prevents most American companies from doing business with Cuba and vice versa. Although the embargo creates disincentives for other countries and companies to trade with Cuba, it does not compel them to cut economic ties with the island nation. Many countries, as well as some American companies, do business in Cuba.

Many other countries trade billions of dollars annually with Cuba

Senator Marco Rubio 2021 (US senator from Florida) July 20, 2021, A Press Release of a Speech Given on the Senate Floor entitled “Cubans Aren’t Protesting Because of an Embargo – They Want Liberty” <https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2021/7/rubio-cubans-aren-t-protesting-because-of-an-embargo-they-want-liberty> (accessed July 4, 2022)

First of all, let me begin by saying that there are no American ships blockading Cuba, surrounding the island of Cuba. In fact, Cuba frankly does not have an embargo in the way people think. Cuba trades with the whole world. For example, Cuba every year exports $1.2 billion dollars, which doesn’t sound like a lot but is a lot for an island of 11 million people. They export $461 million dollars to China, $127 million dollars to Spain, $65 million to the Netherlands, $64 to Germany. This is not a country that’s isolated, they trade with every country in the world, they import $5.3 billion dollars a year! With Spain alone they import a billion dollars. Another $790 million from China, $327 million from Italy, $295 million from Canada and from Russia. So they import over $5 billion dollars, they export over $1.2 billion dollars*.* Cuba is not isolated, they trade with every country, this regime trades with virtually every country on the planet.

3. Embargo relaxation empirically denies

Past relaxations of the embargo have not produced any improvement in Cuban human rights

Dr. Ray Walser 2012 (PhD; veteran Foreign Service officer; Senior Policy Analyst specializing in Latin America at The Heritage Foundation; former visiting professor of international relations and Latin America politics at the U.S. Military Academy) June 15, 2022, Cuban-American Leaders: “No Substitute for Freedom” in Cuba <https://www.dailysignal.com/2012/06/25/cuban-american-leaders-no-substitute-for-freedom-in-cuba/> (Accessed July 5, 2022))

When it comes to dealing with the Castro dictatorship inCuba, there are several schools of thought. The one preferred by Washington liberals, idealists, and the architects of the Obama Administration’s Cuba policy holds that increased travel, remittances, and diplomatic engagement is softening hearts, opening Cuba, and loosening the regime’s unwavering commitment to sustain a succession process that preserves the dictatorship of the Cuban Communist Party in a post-Castro era. However, these pleasing liberal assumptions are negated on a daily basis by hard-headed facts on the ground in Cuba. With each new step lifting restrictions on travel and remittances have come more demands for additional actions—not a reciprocal loosening of the regime’s grip on its citizens.

4. Cuban government resistance to reform

Repealing Helms-Burton sanctions will enable a new generation of repression in Cuba

Dr. Ray Walser 2012 (PhD; veteran Foreign Service officer; Senior Policy Analyst specializing in Latin America at The Heritage Foundation; former visiting professor of international relations and Latin America politics at the U.S. Military Academy) May 18, 2012 “How To Achieve Real Political Reform in Cuba” <https://www.heritage.org/americas/commentary/how-achieve-real-political-reform-cuba> (Accessed July 5, 2022)

The ultimate goal of spokespersons such as Mariela Castro is relatively simple: Win the coveted U.S. imprimatur of acceptance for Cuban-style, post-Castro socialism, and smooth the way for full diplomatic recognition. The eventual goal, of course, is to bring down the 1996 Helms-Burton Act and with it the trade embargo. That way, the fabled Castro Revolution may continue on a course of channeled change, with a succession of next-generation party apparatchiks, bureaucrats and military leaders fully in control in the wheelhouse. Yet, as the Bush administration knew, and the Obama administration seems to forget, authentic change in Cuba requires far more than institutional tinkering and piecemeal economic reform or the creation of manufactured “democratic space.”

Communists have complete control and won’t give it up if we lift the embargo

Jeff Jacoby 2022 (columnist for The Boston Globe since 1994, is a conservative writer with a national reputation.) February 13, 2022 “Cuba’s dictatorship, not the embargo, is what needs to go” <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/02/13/opinion/cubas-dictatorship-not-embargo-is-what-needs-go/> (Accessed July 4, 2022) [**Definition**: French word for a “duck,” it’s used in English to mean an phony, yet often repeated, rumor or legend]

Nor is there any shortage of tourists from democratic countries. [Millions of them visit the island each year](https://www.statista.com/statistics/816389/cuba-number-of-tourist-arrivals/), half a million Americans among them. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, more [tourists were traveling to Cuba from the United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Cuba#Visitors) than from any other country except Canada. It is a canard that the embargo prevents Cuba from democratizing by preventing American vacationers and businesspeople from flooding the country with their notions of liberty and enterprise. Cuba’s rulers maintain a stranglehold on virtually every aspect of the economy, which means that anything that enriches that economy adds to their power. Lifting what remains of the travel ban and embargo will not pull the plug on Cuba’s misery; it will only make that misery worse.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Harms Human Rights in Cuba

Lifting the embargo would mean more money for the Communists and more suffering for the Cuban people

Peter Brookes 2009 (researcher at Heritage Foundation) April 16, 2009 “Keep the Embargo, O” <https://www.heritage.org/commentary/keep-the-embargo-o> (Accessed July 4, 2022)

Because the economy is nationalized, trade will pour plenty of cash into the Cuban national coffers -- allowing Havana to suppress dissent at home and bolster its communist agenda abroad. The *last* thing we should do is to fill the pockets of a regime that'll use those profits to keep a jackboot on the neck of the Cuban people. The political and human-rights situation in Cuba is grim enough already. The police state controls the lives of 11 million Cubans in what has become an island prison. The people enjoy *none* of the basic civil liberties -- no freedom of speech, press, assembly or association.

2. Undermines democracy & human rights in the Western Hemisphere

Link: Obama’s relaxation of the embargo destroyed support for democracy in the Western Hemisphere

Dr. Jose Azel 2015 (Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Univ. of Miami) Copyright 2015 “THE LOGICAL FALLACY OF THE NEW U.S.-CUBA POLICY AND ITS SECURITY” <https://www.ascecuba.org/c/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/v25-azel.pdf> (Accessed July 6, 2022) (Context Note: Dr. Azel was writing at the time President Obama had begun relaxing the trade embargo)

The President’s new Cuba policy has legitimized the Cuban totalitarian-military regime in the eyes of the world, and particularly in the eyes of Latin America. By legitimizing an oppressive regime that violates human rights with abandon, the President has reversed our long standing support for democratic governance in the region.

Link: Lifting the Cuban embargo emboldens our enemies and increases anti-American sentiment in Latin America

Dr. Jose Azel 2015 (Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies, Univ. of Miami) Copyright 2015 “THE LOGICAL FALLACY OF THE NEW U.S.-CUBA POLICY AND ITS SECURITY” <https://www.ascecuba.org/c/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/v25-azel.pdf> (Accessed July 6, 2022) (Context Note: Dr. Azel was writing at the time President Obama had begun relaxing the trade embargo)

Contrary to the argument of some that the new U.S.- Cuba policy will help improve relations with Latin America, our implicit concessions and seal of approval of a military dictatorship further weaken American influence in the region. It encourages anti-American leaders in Latin America and elsewhere to take positions inimical to U.S. interests as Cuba has done for decades.

Link: Marxist Hurricane. Leftist movements are sweeping into power throughout Latin America

Mike Gonzalez and Mateo Haydar 2022. (Gonzalez – Senior Fellow, Heritage Foundation. Haydar – Research Assistant for Latin America, Heritage Foundation) 5 July 2022 “A Marxist “Hurricane” Threatens the Western Hemisphere“ <https://www.heritage.org/americas/commentary/marxist-hurricane-threatens-the-western-hemisphere> (accessed 9 July 2022)

“We are headed towards a Bolivarian hurricane,” Diosdado Cabello, a Maduro ally in the National Assembly in Venezuela, said ominously in October 2019. “It cannot be stopped by absolutely anyone. What is happening in Peru, what is happening in Chile, what is happening in Argentina, what is happening in Honduras, in Ecuador is just a little breeze. A hurricane is what is to come. It is absolutely impossible that Colombia remains how it is. It is absolutely impossible that Brazil remains how it is. There is no way.” Five of those have now fallen, and all in the same manner: Some event creates a spark for demonstrations that sweep the nation, all coordinated through social media.

Brink: Worst possible time to be dropping US influence in the region

Mike Gonzalez and Mateo Haydar 2022. (Gonzalez – Senior Fellow, Heritage Foundation. Haydar – Research Assistant for Latin America, Heritage Foundation) 5 July 2022 “A Marxist “Hurricane” Threatens the Western Hemisphere“ <https://www.heritage.org/americas/commentary/marxist-hurricane-threatens-the-western-hemisphere> (accessed 9 July 2022)

Unlike Reagan, who came to the aid of democracies in Latin America when they were equally threatened by communists, Biden is unlikely to do anything. He is beholden to groups such as Black Lives Matter, whose members support Maduro and attend Foro de São Paulo meetings. All this poses another global challenge at the worst possible time.

Impact: Loss of human rights and democracy in Latin America as the US cedes influence to China

Ted Piccone 2019. (senior fellow with the Project on International Order and Strategy and the Latin America Initiative at the Brookings Institution; eight years as a senior foreign policy advisor in the Clinton administration at the National Security Council, the State Department’s Office of Policy Planning, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense) DEMOCRACY & DISORDER LATIN AMERICA’S STRUGGLE WITH DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/FP_20190226_latin_america_piccone.pdf> (accessed 9 July 2022)

In addition to the region’s own inconsistent history of supporting democratization among its neighbors, a number of recent geopolitical trends do not bode well for Latin America’s democratic progress. The United States, traditionally the most influential actor in the region, had largely shifted after the Cold War from a narrow national security approach to an explicitly pro-democratic, free trade, and economic development agenda.  
**END QUOTE. HE GOES ON LATER IN THE ARTICLE TO WRITE QUOTE:**  
The big question is how China’s authoritarian government will exert its newfound leverage to influence Latin America’s fragile transition to liberal democracy. More broadly, will it supplant U.S. hegemony? How quickly? And for better or worse? From the standpoint of Latin America’s political development, it would be fair to assume that China’s growing economic power and ambitions of global leadership, coupled with its inherently closed and repressive model of political control, will hurt the region’s prospects for strengthening its liberal democratic systems and respect for human rights.

Impact: Less Human Rights in the Western Hemisphere

*Peter Brookes 2009 (Peter researches and develops Heritage’s policy on weapons of mass destruction and counter proliferation.) April 16, 2009 “Keep the Embargo, O”* [*https://www.heritage.org/commentary/keep-the-embargo-o*](https://www.heritage.org/commentary/keep-the-embargo-o) *(Accessed July 4, 2022)*

We also don't need a pumped-up Cuba that could become a serious menace to US interests in Latin America, the Caribbean -- or beyond. (The likes of China, Russia and Iran might also look to partner with a revitalized Cuba.) With an influx of resources, the Cuban regime would surely team up with the rulers of nations like Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia to advance socialism and anti-Americanism in the Western Hemisphere.

Impact: US influence is needed to combat crime, violence and poverty in Latin America

James M. Roberts and Lora Ries 2021 (Roberts - Research Fellow for Economic Freedom and Growth in the Center for International Trade and Economics, of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute of National Security and Foreign Policy.  Ries is Director of the Center for Technology Policy, of the Davis Institute, at Heritage Foundation) 11 Aug 2021” The Best U.S. Response to the Root Causes of Poverty in Central America” <https://www.heritage.org/americas/report/the-best-us-response-the-root-causes-poverty-central-america> (accessed 9 July 2022) (the “Northern Triangle” is El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras)

Notwithstanding the rising power of China in the region, the United States is still by far the pre-eminent power in Northern Triangle countries. The Administration should not be afraid to exercise the immense influence of the U.S. government and the U.S. military to leverage the policy changes in the region needed to truly address and provide sustainable solutions to reduce crime, violence, and poverty.