DOWN WITH THE EMBARGO: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND U.S. CUBA POLICY (1960-2006)

By

INDIRA RAMPERSAD

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2007
For Ma
whose unconditional love, boundless energy, unrelenting support, profound faith and calm patience made this project possible
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my adviser, Dr. Terry McCoy whose boundless patience, calm tolerance and careful advice over the years have made this dissertation an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. Special thank gos to Dr. Leslie Anderson for her diligence and unrelenting support throughout the course of this project especially during the writing stage. Thanks also to the other members of my committee, Dr. Oren and Dr. Dodd, who were always willing to provide a listening ear to my issues and ideas and to Dr. Reynaldo Jiminez, my external examiner, for his contribution in the examining process. Heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Leann Brown, Dr. Peggy Kohn and especially Dr. Dennis Jett on whose shoulders I could always lean for trustworthy advice. To Sue, Debbie and Brisha, I extend warmest gratitude. Thanks also go to my extended family at UF’s International Center, Debra and Maud, who took great care of me during my stay at UF. Sincerest gratitude goes to the extended Caribbean posse for all the fun times and for making Gainesville a comfortable home away from home.

Thanks go to the Laspau Fulbright Commission for funding my first 2 years of the Ph.D program. Heartfelt appreciation goes to the Ruth McQuown Grant Committee which supported my field research in D.C., New York and Miami. Deepest gratitude also goes to the Department of Political Science for funding the last 3 years of my education at UF. Kind appreciation to Sandra Levinson, Wayne Smith, Kirby Jones, Claire Rodríguez, Silvia Wilhelm, Alvaro Fernández and all the other unrelenting anti-embargo activists throughout the United States.

Many, many thanks go to my loving family and friends in Trinidad, New York and Toronto who have been a bulwark of support throughout the years. And last but not least, thanks go to my dear mum whose love, patience, wisdom, loyalty and devotion have been unfathomable and unsurpassed in the course of this project.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ...........................................................................................................................4
LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................................8
LIST OF FIGURES ...............................................................................................................................9
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..................................................................................................................10
ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................................11

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION ...............................................................................................................................13
History of the U.S. Embargo on Cuba .........................................................................................13
Curiosity, Contributions and Challenges ..................................................................................20
Dissertation Structure ..................................................................................................................22

2 TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ......24
Limitations of International Relations Theory ...........................................................................24
The Conceptual Dilemma .............................................................................................................27
Theories of Social Movements .....................................................................................................33
Resource Mobilization Perspectives ..............................................................................................34
The Political Process Model and Political Opportunity Structures ...........................................46
Hypothesis ......................................................................................................................................50
Mobilizing Resources ....................................................................................................................51
The Enabling Environment .............................................................................................................52
Methodology .................................................................................................................................53

3 TAXONOMY OF ANTI-EMBARGO ORGANIZATIONS ........................................................57
History and Goals ..........................................................................................................................58
Financial Resources .......................................................................................................................69
Leadership, Human Resources and Organizational Structure ....................................................74
Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................84

4 STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF THE ANTI-EMBARGO MOVEMENT ..................89
Conventional Strategies and Tactics .............................................................................................89
Confrontational Strategies and Tactics .........................................................................................104
Solidarity Networks and Co-option ..............................................................................................108
Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................115
5 SPEAKING TRUTHS TO POWER: CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND CHALLENGING THE STATE..............................................................116

Rallying Against the Embargo: From Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush .......................117
Reaction to the Torricelli Bill ........................................................................................................123
Rejecting the Helms-Burton Law ............................................................................................126
Clamoring for the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act ......................129
Protesting the Reports of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba .......................132
The Elián González Affair and the Rise of Moderate Cuban Americans .........................139
Frustrations, Successes and Future Aspirations .................................................................145

6 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: A RATIONAL DEPARTURE ........................................149

Olson’s Rational Model ........................................................................................................150
Salisbury’s Exchange Theory ...............................................................................................153
Tactical Framing and the New Social Movements ...............................................................155
Solidarity Networks and Co-option ......................................................................................160
Social Capital ........................................................................................................................165
Commitment, Moral Incentives and Psychological Benefits ...............................................169
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................176

7 POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES: SYSTEMIC, NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL IMPULSES TO ANTI-EMBARGO ACTIVISM ...........................................180

Systemic Forces and Expanding Opportunity Structures ....................................................182
The End of the Cold War and the Onslaught of Globalization .......................................183
Pope John Paul’s Visit to Cuba .....................................................................................186
State-level Impetus to Anti-Embargo Activities .................................................................189
Cuba’s Liberal Economic Reforms ..................................................................................189
Type of Government .......................................................................................................192
Policy-Specific Opportunities ..........................................................................................196
Societal Facilitators to Anti-Embargo Activism .................................................................200
The Countermovement and Power Alignment ..........................................................200
Shifting Dynamics within the Cuban American Community .......................................206
The Countervailing Force ..................................................................................................209
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................209

8 CONCLUSIONS .................................................................................................................216

Thawing of the Glacier .........................................................................................................216
The Anti-Embargo Movement and a Post-Castro Cuba .................................................219

APPENDIX

A ARTICLES SEARCHED FOR LIBERAL NORMS IN WEBSITES OF PROMINENT ANTI-EMBARGO ORGANIZATIONS .................................................................222

Center for International Policy (CIP) ................................................................................222
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Classification of anti-embargo organizations, dates founded and objectives</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2</td>
<td>Organizations, leaders and funding sources</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Frequency of 5 liberal norms in 40 documents published in websites of prominent anti-embargo organizations</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>ABC/ Washington Post poll showing pre- and post-Cold War responses to Cuba as a threat to the U.S.</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-2</td>
<td>Yankelovich tracking poll showing responses to Cuba as a threat to the U.S.</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-3</td>
<td>Hit Counts of anti-embargo activism of twenty-five organizations (labeled 1-25) from Cold War to post-Cold War Era in the Christian Science Monitor, Miami Herald, New York Times, USA Today and Washington Post</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-4</td>
<td>Comparison of frequency of “Cuban Democracy Act/Torricelli Bill” and “Helms Burton Law” in five U.S. newspapers</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-5</td>
<td>Lobby Groups’ Contributions to Political Action Committees in the 1980s and 1990s</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-6</td>
<td>Contributions to Candidates and Political Action Committees in the 1980s and 1990s</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-7</td>
<td>Cuban American Contributions to Political Parties in the 1980s and 1990s</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>Frequency of 5 liberal norms in 40 documents published in websites of prominent anti-embargo organizations as reflected in Table 6-1. The X-axis represents the number of hit counts in the websites and the Y-axis represents the major organizations.</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>Comparison of anti-Embargo activism from Cold War to post-Cold War as reflected in Table 7-3. The X-axis represents 25 anti-embargo organizations and the Y-axis represents their frequency in the <em>Christian Science Monitor, Miami Herald, the New York Times, USA Today</em> and the <em>Washington Post</em>.</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-2</td>
<td>Comparison of Appearances of “Cuban Democracy Act/Torricelli Bill” and “Helms Burton Law” in five U.S. Newspapers as reflected in Table 7-4 above. The X-axis represents and the Y-axis represents the number of hit counts in the 5 major U.S newspapers listed in Table 7-4.</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHTC</td>
<td>Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAEF</td>
<td>Cuban American Alliance Education Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANF</td>
<td>Cuban American National Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>Cuban Commission for Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Center for International Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECDET</td>
<td>Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENCASA</td>
<td>Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFCO</td>
<td>Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWG</td>
<td>Latin American Working Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBS</td>
<td>Public Broadcasting Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMO</td>
<td>Social Movement Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USCTA</td>
<td>U.S.-Cuba Trade Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VB</td>
<td>Venceremos Brigade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLA</td>
<td>Washington Office on Latin America</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ever since the imposition of a partial embargo on Cuba by the Eisenhower administration in 1960, more than one hundred organizations in the United States have been challenging the state on U.S. Cuba policy. Collectively, these organizations constitute a dynamic social movement which represents the crucible of a new contentious ferment triggered by an intriguing blend of international, national and sub-national impulses, ironically sparking intensified relations between the two nations, particularly in the post-Cold War era. Over time, the movement has invariably re-energized, reinvented, redefined and reconstituted itself to persistently reject and attempt to reform this state policy which restricts tourist, family, cultural and academic travel, limits remittances and prohibits free trade with Cuba.

This dissertation presents the first comprehensive analysis of the anti-embargo movement. It seeks to address the central research puzzle of why the movement has persisted in attempting to change U.S. Cuba policy when it has met with such limited success over time. Undertaking the analysis from the levels of both a single social movement and multiple interest groups, it describes and analyzes the network of organizations which constitute the movement. First, it recounts the story of the organizations from birth to the present: their history, goals, organizational structure, resources, size, leadership, strategies, tactics and activism. Second, it
employs a social movements theoretical framework to explain the impulses prompting individuals to join the movement and the impetus accounting for its sustained activism over the last three decades.

Drawing on the popular resource mobilization literature, it contends that the rational, utilitarian model is inadequate to understand the multifarious attributes of the movement. Hence, it turns to alternative views on tactical frames, solidarity networks, co-option, social capital, commitment theory, moral incentives and psychological benefits for possible answers.

However, the resource mobilization perspective fails to capture the political impetus and the new contentious ferment sparked by the end of the Cold War in 1989. This necessitates encapsulating the discourse within the theoretical framework of political opportunity structures prompting an analysis of the systemic, national and sub-national impulses propelling increased collective action in the post-Cold War era.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

History of the U.S. Embargo on Cuba

Since the 1960s, United States foreign policy to Cuba has been defined, redefined, shaped and debated in the context of the economic embargo. The history of the embargo is as turbulent as the choppy waters of the Florida Straits. No other issue in U.S. Caribbean relations has prompted such continued heated discourse and none has grabbed such widespread media attention as the contentious American embargo policy which prevents tourist travel, imposes sanctions on trade, limits remittances to Cuban relatives and restricts academic, family and cultural exchanges with the island.

The embargo has survived ten American presidents, some of whom have either relaxed or tightened it in accordance with their own ideological beliefs or the political demands of the time. The initial policy was a response to the triumph of Castro’s revolution 1959, his prompt ideological alignment with the Soviet Union and his adoption of an anti-American stance. In October 1960, President Eisenhower imposed a partial embargo in response to Castro’s nationalization of $2 billion in American property and an additional $1.5 billion in assets.¹

The disastrous outcome of the Bay of Pigs Invasion in 1961 and Castro’s subsequent capture of 1122 Cuban exiles, resulted in President Kennedy’s expanding the embargo in 1962 to include all goods that was made with Cuban materials, even if they were manufactured in other countries. After the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis when it was discovered that Cuba was harboring medium-range missiles aimed at the U.S., Americans viewed the embargo more as a vital national security measure and less as an economic and social necessity. Kennedy continued to

tighten the embargo as a Cold War tactic when Castro showed his determination to act as the Soviet proxy in the Western Hemisphere. As an overt Soviet satellite receiving $4 billion annually from the U.S.S.R., even Castro’s South American neighbors began supporting the embargo and broke diplomatic relations with Cuba through resolutions of the Organization of American States (OAS).

The 1970s witnessed periodic initiatives toward improving relations between the two countries. Secret talks between the United States and Cuba over normalization of relations occurred during the Ford administration in 1974. In 1975, the OAS voted to end all political and economic sanctions on Cuba and several of its members opted to resume diplomatic relations. In 1977 under President Carter, diplomatic ties were partially restored through the establishment of “Interests Sections” in each country, though the U.S. embargo remained. Carter dropped the travel ban and allowed subsidiaries of U.S. companies to sell products to Cuba. He also allowed Cuban exiles to send money to relatives in the island. In 1979 alone, 150,000 Americans visited Cuba under Carter’s relaxed policies. But Cold War ideological and political battles impeded progress toward normalization between Cuba and the U.S. Cuban support of leftist insurgents in Angola ended U.S. interest in détente with Cuba in the 1970s.

In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration initially pondered rapprochement with Cuba, but the possibility ended when Cuba supported Marxist groups in Central American civil wars. Events such as the Mariel boatlift of 1980, in which 125,000 Cubans left Cuba for the U.S. and the American invasion of Grenada in 1983 - crafted in part to thwart Cuban-aided development

---

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
of a military airfield - intensified friction between the U.S. and Cuba. Under Reagan, sanctions were resumed resulting in one of the most hostile policies against Cuba since the Bay of Pigs. Reagan reinstated the travel ban and prohibited Americans from spending money in Cuba. He also banned travel to the U.S. by Cuban government or Communist party officials or their representatives and barred most Cuban students, scholars and artists from entering the U.S. New Treasury regulations in 1989 restricted U.S. citizens spending in Cuba to a maximum of $100. The U.S. began to broadcast via Radio Martí to Cuba in 1985, and TV Martí in 1990, and the Cuban government jammed the television broadcasts soon after they went on the air.

The end of the Cold War did not bring the kind of changes in U.S. Cuba policy that was expected in a unipolar international system in which Cuba no longer poses an ideological or security threat to the U.S. Instead, the 1990s saw a tightening of the embargo. Under President George H. Bush, the Mack Amendment was passed prohibiting all trade with Cuba by subsidiaries of U.S. companies even if located outside the U.S. The Torricelli Bill, or Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, was also passed under Bush to “wreak havoc on the island,” according to its sponsor, Robert Toricelli, with the senior Bush proposing that he would impose sanctions on any nation buying products from Cuba. The law prohibits foreign-based subsidiaries of U.S. companies from trading with Cuba, but creates loopholes for travel to Cuba by a select group of U.S. citizens to deliver food and medicine to Cuba. Thus, there was a simultaneous increase in people-to-people initiatives at a time when Cuba was undergoing a severe economic crisis called the “special period,” due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. At the same time, Castro was taking concrete steps to enact social and economic reforms involving job creation and employment opportunities.

5 Ibid.
President Clinton’s Cuba policy initially took a moderate course. The 1994 rafter crisis sent 30,000 Cubans toward U.S. shores. Subsequent U.S.-Cuban negotiations led to a series of migration accords in which the two countries made commitments to promote safe, legal and orderly migration. This *balsero* exodus resulted in Clinton suspending the decade old policy of granting asylum to refugees and reaching a pact with Castro. In 1995, he also allowed American media organizations to establish permanent headquarters in Cuba. In October 1995, Clinton also announced measures to allow nongovernmental organizations in the U.S. to fund projects in Cuba, and to allow U.S. AID funding to NGOs in the U.S. for Cuba-related projects.⁶

U.S.-Cuba relations took a dramatic turn for the worse in 1996, when Cuban MIG jetfighters shot down two U.S.-based civilian aircrafts belonging to the Miami-based group, Brothers to the Rescue, killing three U.S. citizens and one Cuban resident of the United States. Clinton used the incident to endorse the Helms-Burton Law in the heat of the 1996 election campaign in a bid to court vital Cuban American votes in South Florida. Helms-Burton enacts penalties on foreign companies doing business in Cuba; permits lawsuits (even by individuals who were Cuban citizens at the time) against foreign investors who make use of expropriated property seized by the Cuban government; and denies entry into the U.S. to such foreign investors and their family members. Acting under a waiver provision in the law known as Title III, Presidents Clinton and Bush have suspended implementation of the lawsuit measure at six-month intervals.⁷

In anticipation of Pope John Paul’s II visit to Cuba in January 1998, Clinton approved licenses for religious groups and the media to use charter aircraft and a cruise ship to travel to the

---


island. In 1998, the U.S. government also took steps to expedite the sales and donations of medicines to Cuba, including the licensing of direct cargo flights. In January 1999, Clinton expanded the categories and streamlined the issuance of licenses for those who seek to travel to Cuba; allowed Americans to send up to $1200 per year in remittances to Cuba; broadened the categories of groups to whom sale of food and medical products could be made; and authorized direct charter passenger flights to Cuba from U.S. cities other than Miami. Charter flights then departed from Los Angeles and New York bound for Havana and other Cuban cities.8

In the meantime, the U.S. Congress sharply diverged on U.S. Cuba policy. The 106th Congress (1999-2000), passed legislation to both reduce and increase sanctions against Cuba. The Trade Sanctions Reform Act (TSRA), signed into law by President Clinton in October 2000, allowed the export of food and medicine to Cuba, but prohibited any U.S. financing, either public or private, of such exports. The legislation also codified the ban on travel to Cuba for tourism, which throughout its history had been mandated only by Executive Order. In the first session of the 107th Congress (2001), bills were again introduced to both ease and tighten the embargo. Several key votes indicate growing support for ending the embargo. In July 2001, the House of Representatives voted by overwhelming majority to end funding of enforcement of the travel ban, and a December 2001 vote in the Senate indicated strong support for lifting restrictions on the finance of sales of U.S. agricultural products to Cuba.9 Described as the harshest pro-embargo president, President George W. Bush demonstrates strong support for the embargo. In May 2001, he announced that, “my administration will oppose any attempt to weaken sanctions against Cuba’s government.” Later, in July, he reaffirmed his position and


9 Ibid.
announced that he would enhance and expand capabilities of the U.S. government to enforce the embargo. In addition, he expanded people-to-people initiatives by increasing support for human rights activists in Cuba and instructing the use of “all available means to overcome the jamming of Radio and TV Martí”.  

With his brother, Jeb Bush, as Governor of Florida with Jeb’s rather close alliance with the hardline, right-winged Cuban American community in South Florida, and with the increasingly hotly contested electoral constituency of South Florida, President Bush was true to his word. In December 2003, he established a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba that presented a 500-page report in May 2004, with some of the most severe recommendations for tightening the embargo that was ever witnessed. The report proposed $45 million dollars to the budget for “hastening change” in Cuba. The new provisions restrict family and academic travels, remittances and parcel deliveries to Cuban relatives. Cuban Americans can only visit Cuba once every three years for a maximum of 14 days with a special license. Before, they could have visited once per year with a general license. Only “immediate family” - mother, father, brother, sister and grandparents can visit. Remittances are limited to $300 per Cuban household in a three-month period, according to rules listed on the U.S. State Department’s website. The money must be sent through State Department-certified institutions. Visitors can only spend $50 a day in Cuba as opposed to $164 before. Luggage is now limited to 44 pounds with no overweight whereas overweight was allowed at a charge of $2 per extra pound previously. The

10 Ibid.

new restrictions grant academic travelers permission for one year at a time for one semester. Previously, permission was granted for two years at a time for varying durations. Academic institutions wanting to send students or scholars to Cuba must obtain a license from the Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control. Under the tightening of regulations, licenses for study in Cuba are now issued only for programs lasting a minimum of ten weeks. To participate, students must be enrolled in a full-time degree program at the institution holding the license, and only full-time tenured faculty members from the same institution may teach in such programs. Before 2004, imports of Cuban goods such as cigars and coffee valued up to $100 were allowed. Such imports from Cuba have now been banned altogether.12

The second 93-page report of the Commission, issued in July 2006, attempted to counteract perceptions that the first report was nothing but an “American occupation plan”.13 The latest recommendations included a budget of $80 million for the next two years to ensure a “transition” rather than a “succession” of Cuban leadership. Claiming that the 2004 measures restricting travel and curtailing remittances and parcel deliveries have had great success, the 2006 report called for their strengthened implementation.14

Supporting the Cuban embargo are early Cuban exiles who have played a pivotal role in maintaining this hostile policy to Cuba. These hardliners forged a well-organized and effective interest group that lobbies Congress and the administration, contributes heavily to political campaigns, and forms a key voting group in two states (Florida and New Jersey), critical to

12 Ibid.


winning the Presidency. They have developed political power, and have exercised this power effectively.

The story of these powerful, hardline, pro-embargo Cuban Americans; their role in domestic politics; their influence on successive American administrations since the seventies; and their success in shaping U.S. Cuba policy through the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), has been told and retold countless times (Molyneux in Bulmer Thomas and Dunkerly, 1999, Domínguez 1997, Roy 1997). It has dominated media and academic discourse to such an extent that the alternative narrative of the anti-embargo movement has hardly been recounted. This dissertation takes up the challenge of relating this story.

Curiosity, Contributions and Challenges

As a Caribbean student in the United States, the economic embargo on Cuba holds a particular fascination for me. Since the seventies, when it resumed diplomatic relations with Cuba, the Anglo-Caribbean has demonstrated widespread sympathy for the island. On arrival in the United States, it was evident to me that, although the harsh embargo policy was alive and kicking, relations between the two countries have never really stalled. Further probing revealed that beneath the iceberg of the cold, hostile embargo policy of hardliners in the sunshine state, there is significant thawing of the glacier. There exists the untold story of organizations scattered throughout the U.S., vigorously working to change American Cuba policy. Preliminary research uncovered more than a hundred organizations committed to repealing the embargo since 1969. Yet no comprehensive study of these organizations could be found. Overcome with an overwhelming curiosity to learn and understand more about these organizations, I was inundated with a flood of questions. Who are these organizations? When were they formed? Where are they located? Which are the most active? What are their goals? How are they structured? Who are their leaders and members? Who funds them? How successful are they? What are their
similarities and differences? What are their aspirations and frustrations? What tactics and strategies do they employ to achieve their goals? What is their relationship with each other and with the state? What are their plans for a post-Castro Cuba?

These questions are subsumed by the overriding puzzle as to why have these organizations persist in attempting to change this embargo policy, some for more than thirty years, even though they have met with such limited success. This would become the central research question of my project. Since they relentlessly challenge the embargo policy, these groups are identified collectively as the anti-embargo movement in the U.S.

A major challenge in this research was the quest for an appropriate theoretical model. The grand contending paradigms of International Relations fail to provide an adequate framework for this study. Moreover, traditional perspectives on the role of powerful, hardline Cuban exiles and domestic politics on foreign policy have also proven inadequate. The problem emerges because the subjects are marginalized domestic organizations, which are not very successful in influencing foreign policy outcomes. Scholars focusing on domestic actors generally tend to underscore the role of affluent ethnic or business interests that have been successful in forging policy. This is not surprising since their focus has been on the policy outcome itself rather than on the organizations which attempt to shape it. Thus, it has become necessary to turn to Comparative Politics to find an appropriate model to analyze these groups. In recognizing that the behavior of most domestic groups is similar, irrespective of the type of policy they attempt to change - domestic or foreign - a comparative theoretical framework seems most applicable. Moreover, in as much as the groups operate at the margins of the political system and have achieved limited success in changing policy, they collectively constitute what has come to be popularly known as “social movements” in Comparative Politics. As such, social movements
theory provides the most appropriate framework for analyzing the anti-embargo movement in the United States.

This dissertation takes up the challenge of analyzing this sorely neglected and unexplored dimension of U.S. Cuba policy with the goal of presenting the first comprehensive study of the anti-embargo movement in the United States. It diverges sharply from the traditional approach which explores U.S. Cuba policy in the context of U.S. domestic politics and the role of powerful, hardline, right-winged Cuban Americans in South Florida. The model employed is also unique since U.S. Cuba policy has traditionally been analyzed as intermestic policy, from the perspective of powerful ethnic interest groups and domestic politics. This project opens avenues for bridging the Comparative Politics/International Relations divide within the discipline of Political Science. It does this firstly, by employing social movements perspectives to analyze groups attempting to influence foreign policy, and secondly, by introducing an exogenous or systemic dynamic as a dimension of “political opportunity structures” discussed in chapter VI. The chapters are therefore designed to recount this untold story of the anti-embargo movement, first descriptively, then analytically.

Dissertation Structure

This Chapter, (chapter 1), presents an overview of the Cuban problematique including a brief history of the U.S. embargo on Cuba. It also details the curiosity, contributions and challenges of this dissertation. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on social movements theory which is the perspective used to analyze the movement in subsequent chapters. It then outlines the theoretical concerns addressed in the other chapters and the methodology employed to investigate the organizations. Since there is no comprehensive academic study of any of the groups under study, nor of the collective anti-embargo movement, and documented archival material about them is virtually non-existent, the next three chapters provide a detailed overview
of the major organizations comprising the core of the anti-embargo movement. These chapters are primarily descriptive reflecting a heavy reliance on information from the organizations’ websites and from unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The bulk of the primary research undertaken in the field is reflected in these three chapters. Hence, chapter 3 recounts the history of the organizations, their location, primary and underlying goals, their organizational structure, funding sources and membership. Chapter 4 examines the strategies and tactics which they have employed and the similarities and differences of these across groups. Chapter 5 undertakes an assessment of the interplay between contentious politics and the organizations’ challenge to the state in the post-Cold War era. This includes a trajectory of their relationship with specific American presidents and state policies and with the countermovement of hard-line Cuban Americans based in South Florida. It also assesses their successes and failures, future aspirations, frustrations and hopes for a post-Castro Cuba.

The three descriptive chapters inform the other two which aim to analyze the groups within the framework of social movements theory geared toward unraveling the central research question of why do the organizations persist in attempting to change U.S. policy despite such limited success over time. Chapter 6 draws on the “resource mobilization” approach to assess which model best explains the impulses prompting individuals to join the movement and what sustains its continued operations. Chapter 7 explores perspectives on “political opportunity structures” geared toward exploring the international, national and sub-national or local setting facilitating the movement’s activism. The concluding Chapter 8, attempts a brief assessment of the possible scenario in a post-Castro Cuba.
CHAPTER 2
TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Limitations of International Relations Theory

The grand contending paradigms which characterize the field of International Relations have failed to provide an adequate model for explaining the role of marginalized domestic groups within the U.S. which seek to change American Cuba policy. This limitation becomes glaring when the policy they attempt to repeal is clearly foreign policy, the study of which is a major sub-field of International Relations. The study of foreign policy has been the subject of much controversy following Kenneth Waltz’s forceful claims that a “systemic (and neorealist) theory of international politics is not and cannot be a theory of foreign policy, that it is an “error…to mistake a theory of international politics for a theory of foreign policy (Waltz 1979: 121).

The limitations of the major paradigms of International Relations such as Waltz’s neorealism for explaining the role of domestic actors in foreign policy are related to some of their basic assumptions. One is that states are the primary, unitary, rational and purposive actors in the international system. Another is that systemic forces such as the distribution of power and anarchy determine how states assess other states before deciding on a foreign policy. Neoliberalism takes the same systemic approach even though it recognizes the role of other actors in the system such as international organizations and international regimes (Keohane and Nye 1977, Krasner 1983).

During the sixties and seventies, there was no shortage of literature on the role of domestic politics in the American foreign policy process (Roseneau 1967, Allison 1971, Gourevitch 1978). However Waltz’s (1979) ground-breaking study on structural realism emphasizing the impact of systemic forces, served to drive domestic variables out of foreign policy analyses.
during the eighties. The popularity and wave of criticisms of the “Democratic Peace” at the end of the decade and beyond (Russet and Oneal, 2001, Brown, Lynn-Jones and Miller 1996, Oren 1995, Layne 1994), led to a revival of academic interest on domestic factors. By the nineties, another variation of realism had emerged in the form of “state-centered” or “postclassical realism” as theories of foreign policy surged along with existing theories of international politics.

Neoclassical or postclassical realism deviates from Waltz’s structural realism. It contends that “there is no immediate or perfect transmission belt linking material capabilities to foreign policy behavior. Foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level…. Foreign policy choices are made by “actual political leaders and elites, so it is their perceptions of relative power that matter” (Rose 1998: 147). Rose introduces the term “Innenpolitik” contending that internal factors such as “political and economic ideology, national character, partisan politics, or socioeconomic structure determine how countries behave toward the world beyond their borders” (Rose 1998). Fareed Zakaria prefers the concept of “state-centered” realism which takes a similar view that “statesmen not states are the primary actors in international affairs” (Zakaria 1998: 42).

These responses to Waltz’s structural model provoked reaction from several scholars spawning a burgeoning literary oeuvre on the impact of domestic factors on foreign policy (Moravcsic 1997, Russett 1993, Snyder 1991, Ikenberry, Lake and Mastanduno 1988). Some even attempt to reconcile a “systemic theory of international politics” and a “theory of foreign policy” (Fearon 1998). Yet, the dichotomy identified by Waltz (1979) highlights the very problems that arise in employing systemic theories to analyze the role of domestic actors in foreign policy as in the U.S. Cuba context.
Recognizing that domestic politics is the driving force behind U.S. Cuba policy, the traditional tendency has been to analyze this policy from the perspective of powerful ethnic interest groups and domestic politics (Dominguez 1997, Haney et al. 1999, Haney 2005). Some scholars have described it as “intermestic policy” underscoring the confluence of domestic and international politics or as a two-level game (Putnam 1988, LeoGrande 1998, Brenner, Haney and Vanderbush in Wittkopf and McCormick 2004).

However, even this traditional ethnic interest group and domestic politics approach does not adequately capture the role of other domestic marginalized groups attempting to change and reshape foreign policy but are not very successful. This is partly because the emphasis would now shift from the actual foreign policy outcome to process - the operations of the groups attempting to shape it. Foreign policy theory tends to underscore the role of powerful business and ethnic groups which succeed in persuading governments to formulate and implement policy to suit their own group interest. It does not consider groups which have little or no influence on policy outcome.

The field of Americans Government focusing on interest group theory also underscores the role of groups which are influential in shaping “public” policy. Following the publication of David Truman’s The Government Process (1951), four streams of political theories emerged identified as the elitist, pluralist, rationalist and hyperpluralist, which underscore the influence of both affluent and non-affluent groups in society. The 1950’s became known as “the Golden Age of Interest Group Theory” as Truman’s footsteps were quickly followed by others (Latham 1952, Mills 1956, Shattschneider 1960). However, like foreign policy theory, they generally emphasize groups which have some influence on public policy neglecting those which are unsuccessful and those which focus on foreign policy. This may be due to their limited impact on foreign policy.
As Bernard Cohen contends, interest groups have less effect on foreign than on domestic policy (in Ogene 1983: 5).

The academic lacunae will be partially filled by Comparative Politics with the migration of protest movements from the periphery of society to the mainstream and the subsequent salience of movement organizations to the political process. This has contributed significantly to the expansion of academic studies on what is now popularly known as “social movements” (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Meyer and Tarrow 1998). During the “Cycle of Contention” of the 1960’s and 1970” social movements expanded in both visibility and purpose underscoring the role of marginalized groups which are generally unsuccessful in shaping policy (Tarrow 1998).

Although social movements theory is generally employed for public policy analyses, it serves as the most suitable framework for marginalized domestic groups attempting to shape foreign policy. It can safely be assumed that the behavior of domestic groups would be similar whether they are attempting to change public policy or foreign policy. As such, although we draw on interest group theory where necessary, social movements theory provides the best model for understanding the myriad of organizations within the U.S. attempting to change American policy to Cuba.

**The Conceptual Dilemma**

The distinction between social movements and interest groups are at times indiscernible presenting an unsolvable conceptual dilemma. Definitions of social movements are varied and many and at times overlapping and confusing, at best. McCarthy and Zald (1977), define a social movement “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1217-18). For Charles Tilly (1984), a social movement consists of “a sustained interaction between a specific set of authorities and various spokespersons for a given challenge
to those authorities” (Tilly 1984: 305). According to Ibarra (2002), social movements share some performances with industrial conflict, electoral campaigns, and interest group politics.

Social movements were historically formed with a standard cluster of organized performances, formation of associations, public meetings, demonstrations, marches, petition drives, pamphleteering, lobbying, and display of symbols representing shared commitment to a cause. They overlap in some of these functions with electoral campaigns, interest-group agitation, and management-labor interaction” (Ibarra 2003: 23).

Sidney Tarrow (1994) initially made a clear distinction between social movements and interest groups insisting that “social movements are not interest groups because they are not formally organized, with well-defined leadership, goal hierarchies, and decision-making entities” (Tarrow 1994: 15-16). However, the distinction is not clear-cut especially with the emergence of the conceptualization of Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) in the seventies. Charles Tilly (1984), identifies SMOs as an essential part of any social movement which is “a sustained series of interaction between power holders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support” (Tilly 1984: 306).

This raises the question of what is formal representation. In the United States, this is accorded only to geographical areas – at the federal level, to states and congressional districts. Since all other constituencies lack formal representation, the definition would embrace all interest groups which repeatedly and publicly demand change in the distribution and exercise of power. This would include the minority party as well.

Recognizing the risk of being over-inclusive, McCarthy and Zald ask “Is a SMO an interest group?” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1218). The response provides what has come to be seen as the key distinction between social movements and SMOs, on the one hand, and other forms of political organizations, on the other. Social movements operate at the margins of the
political system and SMOs are less institutionalized than interest group and have fewer routine ties with government (Giugni, McAdam and Tilly 1999: 6). Though other scholars focus on different attributes of SMOs, they all emphasize their marginality which distinguishes them from other political organizations. For Gamson (1990: 16), they represent constituencies not previously mobilized, and for Tilly, they “speak on behalf of constituencies lacking formal representation” (Tilly 1984: 306) or employ unconventional disruptive tactics (McAdam 1982: 25).

Definitions of interest groups tend to be broad and vague. For Wilson (1980), interest groups are organizations “which have some autonomy from government or political parties and that…try to influence public policy” (Wilson 1980: 8). Walker (1991) focuses on organizations “that can reasonably be described as voluntary associations…seeking in one way or another to petition the government on behalf of some organized interest or cause” (Walker (1991: 4). However, these definitions can also encompass SMOs, making distinction difficult.

Tactics have been another criteria used to distinguish between interest groups and social movements. Interest groups are often thought of as highly conventional and their members as averse to disruptive behavior and confrontational tactics unlike social movements. This raises the question as to what is disruptive behavior. For example, business threats to reduce or shift investments spell the possibility of disrupting the economy (Lindblom 1977). Through repeated court challenge, American interest groups often prevent the implementation of laws and regulations for years.

Paul Burstein (1998) questions whether it is the non-institutional aspect of tactics that is crucial but is not certain what “noninstitutional” means. He rejects the notion that it connotes “not regulated by law” since much political activity not thought of as “noninstitutional” such as
“letter-writing campaigns, visiting legislators’ offices, and placing political advertisements in newspapers” (Burstein in Costain and McFarland 1998: 43) are considered interest group activity. The level of orderliness and structure of the tactics has also been considered as a distinguishing feature. Tilly (1984), contends that social movements’ tactics are chosen from a set of well-known and understood possibilities, sometimes planned and rehearsed. Burstein concludes that “the tactics of SMOs often are orderly and predictable while those of “interest groups” often are arguably non-institutionalized and are intended to be disruptive” (Burstein in Costain and McFarland 1998: 43). This contradicts Tarrow’s (1994) definition described above.

In their path-breaking article on social movements, McCarthy and Zald (1977), attempt to make a dubious distinction between social movement organizations (SMOs) and interest groups. Though they affirmed that social movements are not interest groups (in a footnote), they admitted that they themselves are “not fully satisfied” with the answer. They considered the view that interest groups are more institutionalized than SMOs and not just in terms of tactics. McCarthy and Zald (1977) relies on Lowi’s formulation that “a SMO which becomes highly institutionalized and routinizes stable ties with a government agency is an interest group” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1218). For Wilson (1990), “a social movement may or may not become an interest group depending on whether or not it develops the appropriate degree of institutionalization (Wilson 1990: 9). However, there is no consensus on how institutionalized an organization should be to qualify as an interest group. Paul Burstein (1998), asserts that

I am not aware of anyone having provided a theoretical rationale for dividing a continuum of institutionalization at one place- interest groups on one side, social movement organizations on the other – rather than another. It would be very difficult to do so in any case, since institutionalization itself is not defined with any precision; indeed, often is not defined at all (Burstein in Costain and McFarland 1998: 43-44).

Burstein identifies a study by Heinz et al (1993) and Walker (1991), which attempted to identify interest groups by drawing from lists of organizations identified by publishers as trying
to influence federal policy. The list was supplemented by screening media reports of organizational activity and by interviewing government officials. Though this approach does not distinguish between interest groups and SMO’s, it distinguishes amongst groups solely on the basis of visibility rather than goals, membership, tactics or level of institutionalization. If a conventionally defined social movement had entered their sample and had achieved the required level of visibility, it would be labeled an interest group (Burstein in Costain and McFarland 1998: 43-44).

The difficulties of distinguishing between social movements and interest groups have led some leading social movement theorists to abandon their earlier criterion of distinction. McAdam (1982) no longer views tactics as a distinguishing criteria and together with Tarrow and Tilly (1996), have subsequently claimed that groups choose what tactics to use by considering how best to use the resources they have to deal with the opportunities and constraints they face in any particular situation. Hence they affirm:

There are no inherently social-movement oriented actors or groups. The same groups that pour into the streets and mount the barricades may be found in lobbies, newspapers offices, and political party branches …these various types of activities may be combined in the repertoire of the same group and may even be employed simultaneously.”…there is no fundamental discontinuity between social movements and institutional politics… (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 1996: 27).

This intensifies the dilemma of what exactly is the difference between social movements and interest groups if there is no “fundamental discontinuity”. We may attempt a distinction by focusing on degree of influence. Social movements tend to have limited success in influencing policy. Traditional interest groups boast of powerful constituents, with interests strategically placed in a number of key congressional districts and abundant economic resources to invest in lobbying such as the right-wing Cuban-American organization and the Jewish-American lobby. Social movements on the other hand, are seen as efforts by “excluded groups to mobilize
sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests through non-institutionalized means” (McAdam 1982: 37).

Anne Costain (1992), categorizes the Black civil rights groups of the sixties as both social movements and interest groups. As social movements, they engaged in boycotts of segregated transportation systems, sit-ins at white lunch counters in the South, mass marches and freedom rise to draw public attention and support for their cause. But in addition to these noninstitutionalized actions, these civil rights groups were also involved in activities which interest group literature emphasize. They were involved in voter registration drives, court challenges and legislative lobbying in their efforts to change public policy. Costain (1992) attempts to bridge the gap between social movements and interest group theory in her study of the women’s movement with the provocative title “Social Movements as Interest Groups: The Case of the Women’s Movement”. She develops two data sets, one tracing congressional action on legislation addressing women as an interest group; the other showing up the movement’s activities as a social movement assessing the degree of agitation on behalf of women’s rights in the United States based on New York Times coverage (Costain in Petracca 1992: 285-307).

We conclude that both social movements and interest groups are representative intermediaries between the citizens and the state. What seems to emerge here is a kind of hybrid between interest groups and social movements. In as much as we are not dealing with a single organization but with a network of different actors, our subject is a social movement. Its identification as a social movement is reinforced by the fact that this collective operates at “the margins of the political system and has fewer routine ties with government” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1218). In as much as the organizations of this collective are groups of “outsiders” who seem powerless and tend to resort to desperate measures to win even recognition, much less
substantial concessions from the powers that be, they constitute a social movement. In as much as they are often not very successful in achieving their goals, they are also social movements.

At the same time, the interest group characteristics of the organizations that constitute the social movement should not be neglected. In as much as they want change and challenge the powerbrokers for policy reform, they are interest groups. Moreover, in as much as some clamor for change for the public good and others seek change for themselves, they can be identified as public interest groups and self-oriented interest groups respectively (Hrebenar 1997: 11-12). Also, in as much as they demonstrate strong institutional structures, they are interest groups (Tarrow 1994). Finally, in as much as they interact with Congress and lobby for their cause with which business interest at least have attained some success, they are also interest groups.

We recognize the conceptual dilemma inherent in the project and opt to use the concept of “social movement” as a network of interactions of “interest groups” which we define here as “organized, institutionalized groups with well-defined goals and organizational structure whose members share specific normative beliefs which guide their primary goal of changing policy”. We launch our analysis from the level of both the individual interest group and the collective social movement. However, social movement theory presents the dominant framework for this project. It seems a more appropriate model for this network of domestic actors which has consistently failed to influence U.S. Cuba policy, has few routine ties with government, has not received wide-scale media attention and remains at the periphery of the U.S. political system despite decades of continuously attempting to effect change.

**Theories of Social Movements**

Various approaches to analyzing social movements have been advanced. Currently there are four dominant perspectives some of which are relevant to this study. They include the classical approach on collective behavior; theories of resource mobilization which embraces
Mancur Olson’s (1965) rational choice model; perspectives on political process focusing on expanding political opportunities; and the New Social Movement perspectives which include analyses on framing.

The classical models (Kornhauser 1959, Smelser 1962, Turner and Killian 1962, Ted Gurr 1970 and Davies 1979), emphasize collective individual behavior as disruptive leading to revolution, mass rebellion, violent upheavals and aggressive action. They ignored the process by which such individual feelings at the micro level resulted in such macro phenomenon as mass rebellion or revolution, and are generally not applicable to this study. Resource mobilization and expanding political opportunities provide the basic framework for this project. The New Social Movements perspective addressing framing as a mobilization tactic is also applicable and will be absorbed in the resource mobilization discourse.

Resource Mobilization Perspectives

Between the 1960s and 1970s, a new generation of sociologists emerged preoccupied with the issues of the times which included civil rights, decolonization and peace. The intellectual currents and societal attitudes created an atmosphere of legitimacy for social movements. The emphasis shifted from the individual unit of analysis to social structures and macro processes. Structure became a key concept in social movement analysis with new theories challenging the classical collective behavior approaches. The argument was made that social movements should not be subsumed under collective behavior since they were different enough to warrant their own mode of analysis. Rather than irrational individuals, social movements were seen as exhibiting enduring, patterned and institutionalized elements. Moreover, these patterns were as rational as those who study them. It was then that the link between social movements and interest groups were established since the latter emphasized the political rather than the psychological and the notion of social movements organizations (SMOs) emerged with increasing emphasis on
institutionalization and structure. The actions of social movements are conceptualized as rooted in the collective understanding of group interests. These actions were seen as taking place within structures that limit but do not completely or mechanically determine them. The theoretical strands that constituted these challenges came to be known as “resource mobilization theory”.

The central premise of the traditional resource mobilization theory is that the emergence and persistence of social movement activity is contingent upon the availability of resources that can be channeled into movement mobilization and activity (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1988, McCarthy and Zald 1977). The availability, aggregation and deployment of resources are regarded as amongst the most crucial factors determining movement emergence. McCarthy and Zald (1977) contends that not only is the absolute and relative amount of resources available to social movements contingent on the amount of discretionary resources of mass and elite publics, but the greater the amount of resources available to the social movement sector within a society, the greater the likelihood that new social movement organizations and social movement industries will emerge (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1224-25). Thus, McCarthy and Zald (1977) propose a “market managerial” economic model which operates as “business firms” or “movement industries”, with “movement sectors” and “movement entrepreneurs” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1230). The members act as consumers who make individual consumer choices based on costs and benefits and “selective incentives” based on individual interests and preferences. Movement leaders act as managers, selling a product in competition with other interest groups.

The movement’s capacity to mobilize depends upon both material and non-material resources. The former constitute work, money, concrete benefits and services. The latter include authority, moral engagement, faith and friendship. A rational calculation is undertaken through
which these resources are distributed across multiple objectives. The level of mobilization
depends on the ability of the social movement to “organize discontent, reduce the costs of action,
utilize and create solidarity, share incentives among members and achieve external consensus.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) include several other dimensions in their (partial) resource
mobilization theory. In contrast to the traditional classical model which relies on an aggrieved
population for the necessary resources and labor, resource mobilization theory contends that
social movements may or may not be based on the grievances of the presumed beneficiaries.
Individuals, organizations and constituents may be a prime source of support while supporters
who actually provide money, facilities, and even labor, may have little or no commitment to the
values or norms that guide specific movements.

One of the principal elements of the resource mobilization perspective is the adoption of
the problems of Mancur Olson’s (1965) rational choice model in the Logic of Collective Action.
Della Porta and Diani (2004) affirm that “one of the most important innovations of the resource
mobilization approach is the definition of social movements as conscious actors making rational
choices”. Olson’s logic is if such movements deliver collective goods, few individuals will bear
the cost of working for them on their own. Applying the theory to interest groups, Olson flatly
discounts the core pluralist belief that interest groups arise on the basis of common interests,
demonstrating that “if the members of a large group rationally seek to maximize their personal
welfare, they will not act to advance their common good or group objectives unless there is
coercion to force them to do so or, unless some separate incentive, distinct from the achievement
of the common or group interest, is offered to the members of the group individually on the
condition that they help bear the costs or burdens involved in the achievement of the group
objectives” (Olson 1965: 2). Olson’s rational modeling approach is characteristically an
economic mode of analysis and argues that political goals will not be sufficient to induce members to support interest group or social movement activity. Hence, the problem of free-riding will arise. What actually facilitate the group formation are not collective goods but “selective incentives”. Thus, according to Olson, a truly “rational man” in an economic sense would not join an interest group unless some very specific conditions were present. Firstly, the organization should be small enough so that the addition of one or more member will appreciably increase the group’s power. Secondly, the benefits are available to members and are of equal or greater value than the dues or other costs paid by a member. Thirdly, the individual is a powerful person and his contribution or addition to any organization would make a difference in the group’s power. Fourthly, the organization employs coercion (Olson 1965).

Olson’s basic arguments are consistent in many respects with the exchange theory proposed by Salisbury (1969/1970). Like Olson, Salisbury explicitly rejected Truman’s (1951) pluralist views that interest groups naturally arise out of the interaction of people with common interests responding to societal disruptions. The formation of an interest group was extremely problematic for both writers. It called for someone to be willing to bear the costs of organizing such groups by locating members, organizing meetings and convincing them to contribute time and money to the new group. Salisbury (/1969/1970) did not emphasize free-riding as much as Olson but started with the premise that most individuals are concerned with their own self-interest and would be reluctant to contribute much to provide a collective good.

Salisbury’s (1969/1970) exchange theory is an expansion of Olson’s in his assertion that individual entrepreneurs tend to be willing to bear the initial organizational costs not for collective benefits but for a staff job with the new organization. In this way, he accounted for consumer, farm, labor and environmental groups unaccounted for by Olson. Though he
acknowledged that organizations of some purposive interest groups might be skilled at articulating some common interest, Salisbury insisted that group organizations were small-business entrepreneurs offering benefits for the price of membership in order to finance their jobs (Salisbury 1969: 11-13, 17-18, 25). Thus, according to Salisbury, most group activity has little to do with efforts to affect public policy decision but is concerned rather with “the internal exchange of benefits by which the group is organized and sustained” (Salisbury 1969: 20). These benefits can be selective material, solidary, or expressive but selective material predominates in most organizations. Salisbury’s theory was supported by research undertaken of eighty-three national public interest groups by Jeffrey Berry (1977, 1978). Berry found that a majority of fifty-five groups were explained by exchange theory (Berry 1977: 24, 1978).

The Olson and Salisbury models seem more appropriate to explain economic interest groups. However, the view of the individual as exceedingly self-interested – and group leaders as preoccupied with running a viable business does not explain the operations of non-economic or public interest groups. Even some of those in Berry’s study such as Ralph Nader, John Gardner of Common Cause and Cleaveland Amory of the Fund for Animals do not seem to quite fit the image of a salesperson seeking a staff job. Rather, they seem deeply committed to their cause (Petracca 1992: 107).

Another facet of resource mobilization theory is tactics. In classical approaches, social movement leaders employ bargaining, persuasion or violence to influence authorities to change. The choice of tactics depended upon previous history of relations with authorities, the relative success of previous encounters and ideology. Resource mobilization theory is also concerned with the interaction between movements and authorities but acknowledges a number of other strategic tasks such as “mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite
publics into sympathizers, achieving change in targets” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1217). The choice of tactics may present a dilemma since what one tactic achieves may conflict with behavior aimed at achieving another. Interorganizational competition and cooperation also influence tactics. According to Della Porta and Diani (2004c), the type and nature of the resources available explain the tactical choices made by movements and the consequences of collective action on the social and political action” (Della Porta and Diani 2004c: 8).

The New Social Movements approach also treats with some relevant strategic and tactical repertoires. Framing is one of the most widely discussed tactics of this school. There has been growing consensus since the mid-1980’s amongst social movement scholars that social movements and social change cannot be fully explained by structural models. Drawing from social psychology, several social movements scholars called for attention to be paid to cognitive and ideational factors such as interpretation, symbolization, and meaning (Cohen 1985; Ferree and Miller 1985; Gamson, Fireman and Rytina 1982; Klandermans 1984; McAdam 1989). The notion of strategic framing of grievances has been particularly influential (Snow and Benford 1988, 1992; Snow et al. 1986). This approach redirected attention to subjective aspects in the analysis of social movements. In this perspective, grievances are perceived to be interpreted in different ways by individuals and social movement organizations. The concept of framing is especially useful because it facilitates an empirical examination of the process by which a given objective situation is defined and experienced (Johnston and Noakes 2005: 70). According to Snow and Benford (1992), framing denotes “an active process derived phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality contention” (Snow and Benford 1992: 136). They continue that “mobilization therefore depends not only on the availability and deployment of tangible resources, the opening or closing of political opportunities, or a favorable cost-benefit
calculus, but also on the way these variables are framed, and the degree to which they resonate with targets of mobilization” (Snow and Benford 1988: 213). Snow and Benford (1988) identify three types of framing as necessary for successful recruitment. The first is diagnostic in which a movement convinces potential converts that a problem needs to be addressed; the second is prognostic in which the movement convinces converts of appropriate strategies, tactics and targets. The third is motivational in which movements exhort converts to get involved in these activities (Snow and Benford 1988).

Also deviating from the traditional structural focus, Marc Steinberg (1998), cogently argues a case for the role of discourse in the framing process. He contends that “repertoires are not ideational elements carried about in individual’s heads, but are fundamentally collective diagnoses of injustice and prognoses for change. They are the products of speech communication between actors (both individual and collective) that are produced, sustained, and transformed in the course of contention” (Steinberg 1998: 857). Introducing the notion of “multivocality” in his dialogical model of framing, he explains how a social movement consisting of various groups can assume a homogenous voice facilitating the mobilization process. Thus, he asserts that “the multivocality of discourse could facilitate the mobilization of heterogeneous groups to the extent that it permits multiple and even divergent productions of meanings through a discursive repertoire. The multi-voiced word in this sense can allow for a misrecognition of heterogeneity as unity, as groups with potentially divergent interests and identities articulate through what they perceive as shared claims and understandings” (Steinberg 1998: 860). Steinberg continues that this tactic is frequently used in mobilizing grassroots and local actions in building a discursive repertoire and in the production of meanings within a repertoire. However, for mobilizing wider
populations to build ties and networks, tactics of mass communication is more effective (Steinberg 1998: 860).

The use of frames as a conscious “tactic” has been explored by McAdam (1996). For him, tactics are consciously designed to frame action, attract media attention, shape public opinion in favorable ways to the movement, and signify the degree of threat embodied in the movement and its ability to disrupt public order (McAdam 1996: 348). Employing the sophisticated conceptualization of “strategic dramaturgy”, McAdam (1996) describes those framing efforts that consider the messages and symbols encoded in movement actions and demands. For him, one strategy that movements employ is the staging of actions with the objective of framing situations in a manner that appeals to the public. He affirms that since movement have moral and cultural dimensions that involve insurgents’ and publics’ consciousness, beliefs and practices, the notion of strategic dramaturgy facilitates a moving away from the cognitive bias of framing and considers that movement often invoke values and basic moral principles to frame grievances and legitimate action.

This dimension of strategic framing is directly linked to emotions, a somewhat ignored aspect of framing. Emotions are important for their mediating role in the communication and interpretation between movements and their publics (Benford 1997). Because contemporary social movement theory reacted to the “disruptive” behavior of the “maddening crowd”, of the sixties and seventies, attempts to emphasize the “rationality” of moves and goals, the role of emotions was not given salience until the New Social Movements approaches emerged. However, in this perspective, emotions are not seen as blind, irrational reactions. Johnston and Noakes (2005), contend that emotions “do not prevent us from seeing the world objectively, nor are they necessarily in conflict with cool reason and logic (Johnson and Noakes 2005: 72).
Flam (1990a, 1990b) contends that emotions are important to the growth and unfolding of social movements and political protests (In Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). Potential members experience “moral shock”, which is the first step toward recruitment into social movements. It arises when an unprecedented event or piece of information provokes such an outrage in an individual that he/she becomes inclined toward political action whether or not he/she has acquaintances in that movement or not (Luker 1984, Jasper and Poulsen 1995, Jasper 1997 in Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). One aspect of emotions as they relate to the actions of social movements that have been explored in the literature is that of “injustice frames”. Gamson (1992) identifies injustice frames as “a way of viewing a situation or condition that expresses indignation or outrage over a perceived injustice and which identifies those blameworthy people responsible for it” (Gamson 1992: 32). This moral compulsion to respond to injustice, albeit framed, may be explained by Emergent Norm Theory (ENT). According to ENT, the sense of injustice is heightened by an event or a perceived crisis such as the end of the Cold War when the perception of Cuba as a security threat is reduced but the embargo continues to be tightened. This is elaborated upon in chapter 6.

In response to the rational model, other studies emphasize forms of organization and mobilization of resources such as moral engagement (Tillock and Morrison 1979). Fireman and Gamson (in Zald and McCarthy 1979), argue for an alternative approach to mobilization critiquing Olson’s utilitarian, self-interested, rational model by emphasizing the role of solidarity, principle and solidary groups. They define solidarity as “rooted in the configuration of relationships linking the members of a group to one another” (Fireman and Gamson in Zald and McCarthy 1979: 21). They contend that these relationships may foster common identity, shared faith and general commitment to defend the group (not the cause). Accordingly, a person’s
solidarity with a group is based on five factors: friends and relatives, participation in
organizations, design for living, subordinate and superordinate relations, and no exit. A lack of
solidarity will result in failed mobilization efforts (Fireman and Gamson in Zald and McCarthy
1979: 22).

Social movement scholars are now forging a link between resource mobilization and social
capital. Connections, knowledge, time, skill and expertise are crucial to a movement’s ability to
survive. Social capital approaches offer a relatively new perspective for understanding resource
mobilization through its focus on social relationships as resources that can facilitate access to
other resources (Bebbington 2002). Viewed as a sociological construct rooted in social theory,
social capital defined as “the aggregate of actual or potential resources which are linked to
possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual
acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group which provides each
of its members with the backing of collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them
to credit, in the various senses of the word” (Bourdieu 1986: 248-249). Robert Putnam (1993),
drawing from the ideas of Tocqueville, perceives social capital as – a community marked by
active participation in public affairs through activities which are virtuous – a steady recognition
and pursuit of the public good at the expense of all purely individual and private ends.” Self-
interest is not totally absent but it is self-interest properly understood, i.e self-interest defined in
the context of broader public needs, self-interest that is “enlightened” rather than “myopic”, self-
interest that is alive to the interest of others. For Putnam (1993), citizenships entail equal rights
and obligations for all, a community bound together by horizontal relations of reciprocity and
cooperation, not by vertical relations of authority, exploitation and dependency. The citizens of
the civic community are helpful, respectful and trustful towards each other. Indeed,
“interpersonal trust” is probably the moral orientation that most needs to be diffused among the people if republican society is to be maintained. The values of this civic community are embodied in, and reinforced by distinctive social structures and practices (Putnam 1993).

The idea of solidary and purposive or public interests groups like the women’s, environmental or civil rights organization is taken up by Terry Moe (1980) in a scathing attack of the rational model. Moe (1980) contends that psychological benefits are the prime incentives for group membership. These psychological benefits assume different forms such as the pursuit of ideological objectives, the desire to make a difference in the political process, a strong sense of political efficacy, the satisfaction of a personal feeling of obligation, and the need to obtain political information (Moe 1980: 113-144). The importance of political motivations is supported by Hansen (1977) who investigated the decisions of members to join the American Farm Federation, the National Association of Farm Builders, and the League of Women Voters. Hansen concluded that political motivations do matter, especially when the group is threatened (Hansen 1977: 24, 1978).

The rewards or benefits criteria advanced by Peter Clark and James Wilson (1961), have been later adopted by virtually all interest group scholars. They identify three types of benefits which can accrue to an individual. The first is material which includes tangible rewards which can usually be translated into monetary terms. The second is solidary, which are social rewards that derive from associating in group activities. The third is purposive which are rewards associated with ideological or issue-oriented goals that offer no significant tangible or benefits to members (Petracca 1992: 102). The latter two are considered non-material incentives.

Mark Petracca (1992) forges a nexus between non-economic benefits and what he calls “commitment theory” which argues that “the high degree of time, energy, and resources needed
to be involved in group activities stems from “beliefs about good policy” (Sabatier and McLaughlin 1990). Critical to participation are expected collective benefits arising from a group’s political activities. The benefits may be material or ideological/purposive, or both. Thus, even if goals were initially selfinterested, such behavior typically becomes intertwined with congruent conceptions of improving social welfare, either out of selfrespect or concerns of political efficacy (Tesser 1978; Margolis 1982: 100). Material self-interest may have created the initial incentives to join an interest group, then to become leaders. However, this benefit has to be quite large and must be buttressed by ideological/purposive incentives for individuals to be sufficiently committed to join, then become leaders, to encourage others to join and stay in the organization (Sabbatier and McCubin 1990 in Petracca 1992: 109-110).

Such purposive incentives may be the promotion and preservation of what has come to be know as “norms” in both the domestic and international arenas. Unlike economic incentives which imply material rewards, norms are more closely identified with “social rewards” or “psychological benefits” as espoused by Moe (1980). Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) define norms as “standards of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity”. They continue that “norms by nature embody a quality of “oughtness” and shared moral assessment, norms prompt justification for action and leave an extensive trail of communication among actors that we can study” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 892). In attempting to explain the origins of norms, they allude to the “logic of appropriateness” which relates to the emergence of new norms which compete with existing norms for “appropriateness”. Referring to activists in the women’s suffrage movement as “norm entrepreneurs”, they affirm that “suffragettes chained themselves to fences, went on hunger strikes, broke windows of government buildings and refused to pay taxes as ways of protesting their exclusion from political participation. More relevant to this study,
however, is their explanation of what motivates norm entrepreneurs (activists). They insist that “it is very difficult to explain the motivations of norm entrepreneurs without reference to empathy, altruism, and ideational commitment” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 898) In their 1998 text, they describe activists as “enactors”, “people who seek to amplify the generative power of norms, broaden the scope of practices these norms engender, and sometimes even renegotiate or transform the norms themselves” (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 35).

Although the anti-embargo groups do not quite conform to Keck and Sikkink’s notion of “transnational advocacy networks” since they are not exactly “actors working internationally on an issue who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services” (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 89, italics, mine), their motivations are similar. Like transnational advocacy networks they also seek to persuade, pressure and gain leverage over much more powerful organizations and governments. We agree with Keck and Sikkink (1998), that “they are not always successful in their efforts, but they are increasingly relevant players in policy debates” (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 2).

The Political Process Model and Political Opportunity Structures

The resource mobilization perspective neglects the important political dynamic which propels contentious action. This limitation is addressed in the political process model. The critical element of this model is the role of expanding political opportunities within the broader social and political environment in stimulating the rise of social movements. This “enabling environment” gave rise to the notion of “political opportunity structure” which was first introduced by Eisinger (1973) and elaborated by Tarrow (1983, 1989b). Tarrow (1983, 1989b) perceives the concept as three dimensional: the degree of openness or closure of formal political access; the degree of stability or instability of political alignments; and the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners (Tarrow 1983: 28). Later, he adds a fourth
element: political conflicts within and among elites (Tarrow 1989b: 35). Kriesi (in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995) specifies these fundamental premises of Tarrow’s model indicating that the political opportunity structure is not constant since it may shift over time due to factors beyond the control of the actors involved. Since actors cannot anticipate such shifts when they decide to engage in collective action, they take the political opportunity structure as a given at the time of engagement making it independent of their purposive action (Kriesi in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 167-197).

The link between social movements/revolutions and institutionalized politics was made by several political process theorists including Charles Tilly (1978), Doug McAdam (1982), and Sidney Tarrow (1983). These analyses are not confined to opportunity structures alone but also include constraints. The myriad of empirical work inspired by the political process model has stimulated a growing awareness amongst social movement scholars of the range of collective settings in which movements emerge and the organizational forms to which they gave rise.

Commenting on the political process model, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) observes that Tilly (1978) and some of his colleagues examined the role of several grassroots settings – work and neighborhood – which facilitate the structuring of collective action. They note that other scholars took up the challenge offered by Tilly (1978), applying his insights to more contemporary movements. Aldon Morris (1981, 1984) and Doug McAdam(1982), analyzed the role of local Black institutions particularly churches and colleges, in the emergence of the American Civil Rights Movement. Sara Evans (1980), investigated the Women’s Liberation Movement, locating it within informal friendship networks which were forged by women who were active in the Civil Rights Movement and in the American New Left. The political process model focusing on informal, grassroots mobilizing structures has attracted the
attention of several scholars in more recent network studies of movement recruitment (Gould, 1991; Kriesi 1988; McAdam 1986, McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980 in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 2004c: 4).

McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (2004c), insist that changes in the structures of political opportunities can contribute to shifting fortunes of social movements. With reference to the decline of the American Civil Rights Movement, they cited the “redemocratization of voting rights in the South, the development of significant Republican strength in the region, and President Nixon’s recognition and exploitation of this development in his successful 1968 campaign” as significant changes impacting on the movement’s decline. Nixon’s “Southern strategy” dealt a severe blow to the Black struggle by illustrating the irrelevance of the Black vote to the political success of the Republican Party. Subsequently, the Movement had little relevance on Nixon and his Republican successors (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 2004c: 12).

Kreisi (in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995) also perceives three broad sets of properties of a political system which he identifies as “its informal institutional structure, its informal procedures and prevailing strategies with regards to challengers, and the configuration of power relevant for the confrontation with the challengers” (Kriesi in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 169). An interesting dynamic is brought into the debate by Kreisi’s inclusion of the configurations of power in the system which together with the general setting for the mobilization of collective action, can specify the authorities’ strategies and those of the members of the system. These strategies will determine the degree of facilitation or repression by the members of the system which the challengers would face. It will also determine the possibility of success of the challengers actions and the possibility of success in the absence of such actions. This possibility will be high if the government is reform-oriented or low if the government in
power is hostile to the movement (Koopmans 1990a) (Kriesi in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 167-197).

According to McAdam (in McAdam in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 23-40), a “window of opportunity” may be brought on by a political upheaval prompting a “cycle of protest” as described by Tarrow (1993). In his discussion of political opportunity structures, Tilly (1978) did not specifically mention a structural change in the international system. We contend that systemic events can trigger a “wave of protest” of the type Tarrow (1993) alludes to. Tarrow asserts that “protest cycles are often touched off by unpredictable events…they are crucibles within which new weapons of social protests are fashioned” (Tarrow 1993: 285-286). He also links cycles of protest and social movement organizations asserting that “a major reason for the acceleration in the appearance of protest cycles in the past 150 years is the invention of these organized actors with their stake in contentious collective action” (Tarrow 1993: 286).

Finally, for some time now, attention has been paid to the role of the state in collective action. Several scholars have been arguing that type of state, type of government and specific state policies can either facilitate or constrain contentious activities (Kreisi 1995, Kreisi et al 1995, Goodwin 1995, Jenkins 1995; Amenta and Young 1999). Embedded in this discourse are contending debates on the impact of federalism versus centralism and democracy versus authoritarianism (Marshall 1963; Bright and Harper 1984; Lipsky and Olson 1976; Tarrow 1994, 1998). These have complimented studies on facilitators (Tarrow 1998) and constrainers such as countermovements and power configurations at the national and societal levels (Schwartz 1976; Kriesi in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996).
The Anti-Embargo Movement and U.S./Cuba Policy: A Framework for Analysis

Hypothesis

The central research puzzle we are attempting to unravel is why do the anti-embargo movement persists in attempting to change U.S. Cuba policy given its repeated lack of success? In response to this question we develop two major hypotheses. The first is that the movement’s sustained activism is not based on rational self-interest but on non-material, collective incentives such as commitment, psychological benefits and normative values that hinge upon notions of right and wrong. The second is that international, national and sub-national forces have facilitated the movement resulting in increased and sustained anti-embargo activism in the post-Cold War era. A social movement theoretical framework incorporating facets of the resource mobilization approach and political opportunity structures will be employed to analyze the persistence of the movement and to explain its continued activism in the post-Cold War era.

In this regard, we address a number of concerns. Is there a supply and willingness of foundations to sponsor anti-embargo organizations which have facilitated their activities over time? Is anti-embargo activism driven by the availability of resources and selective material incentives or are challengers also guided by non-material collective incentives? Has the innovative framing of grievances heightened public awareness and attracted new members to the movement? If the movement is employing new frames in its tactical repertoire due to innovations in information technology, are they resonating sufficiently with targets of mobilization to spur increasing and continued activism as Snow and Bendford (1988) suggest? Have political opportunities structures spawned anti-embargo activities in the nineties and beyond? Is the post-Cold War era punctuated by specific events in the international, national and sub-national settings which precipitate a “wave of protests” against U.S. Cuba policy?
Mobilizing Resources

In chapter 6, we examine the validity of the rational model to contribute to understanding the ability of the anti-embargo movement to persist despite its limited success over time. In short, is the movement’s survival contingent upon the availability of material resources and do they operate as “business firms” or “movement industries”, with “movement sectors” and “movement entrepreneurs” (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1230)? Or are members guided to join and stay in the movement by selective material incentives such as a staff job as affirmed by Salisbury (1969)? Addressing the first question would entail an examination of the type of resources available to the movement and determining whether these are limited to financial resources or whether they also include human resources and strategies and tactics employed in the mobilization process. The second question merits an investigation of the motivations driving leaders, staff and members to join the movement and remain active.

The notion of solidarity networks as espoused by Fireman and Gamson (1979) will also be useful for analyzing the movement’s networking practices. This analysis will be geared toward understanding whether the networks can be considered part of the movement’s stock of material resources and the ease or difficulty of co-opting them. How relevant is Freeman’s (1973) assertion that co-option of pre-existing networks facilitate the operations of new groups? This chapter will also embrace the burgeoning literature on social capital introduced by Pierre Bordieu (1984), popularized by Robert Putnam (2000) and adopted by some social movement scholars. Here, we hope to determine whether the network connections (Bordieu 1986), effectively mobilized by the anti-embargo movement through associationalism in pursuit of a common goal (Oberschall 1973, Gamson 1975, Tilly 1978, Skocpol 1992), contribute to its continued activism. We also explore the extent to which the groups cooperate to jointly air their grievance and the role that trust plays in their operations.
The second major concern to be addressed in chapter 6 is the extent to which the rational model’s focus on the availability of material resources suffices to explain the survival of the anti-embargo movement or whether this approach can be complemented with other theoretical perspectives from the interest group literature. In this vein, we conjecture whether the movement has been able to persist merely because of the availability of material resources or because of other non-material factors. Is the movement’s persistence attributable to a deep and abiding commitment to the cause and “belief about good policy” (Petracca 1992), “values other than economic-self interest”, moral incentives and “psychological benefits” (Moe 1980) or that of “solidary and purposive benefits” (Clark and Wilson (1961) empathy, altruism and ideational commitment (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 898)?

**The Enabling Environment**

The limitations of the resource mobilization perspective in its neglect of the polity and the state necessitate a complementary model which accommodates the political dynamic. A major concern of Chapter 7 is whether the “enabling environment” or “political opportunity structures” are indeed relevant to the existence and sustenance of anti-embargo organizations and activism. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (2004c) suggest that changes in the structure of political opportunities could impact on the fortunes of the anti-embargo movement. We hope to extend this “expanding opportunities” model by utilizing a kind of Waltzian approach to analyze the anti-embargo movement. Three levels of analysis will be employed to determine whether there has been an increase both in anti-embargo organizations and in their activism over time. We identify these levels as systemic, national and sub-national.

Firstly, we examine structural forces like the end of the Cold War in 1989; the special period endured by Cubans and Castro’s liberal reforms of the mid-nineties; and the papal visit to Cuba in 1998. This analysis constitutes a major academic contribution of this work since the
“enabling environment” in social movements theory has traditionally been the domestic context. Secondly, we assess the national setting including the type of government and specific state policies. Thirdly, we review the societal impetus such as shifting dynamics within the countermovement comprised of powerful right-wing extremist exiles in Miami represented by the Cuban American National Foundation and state officials. The Elián González affair and the rise of moderate pro-engagement factions within the Cuban American community will also be examined as local impulses propelling anti-embargo activism. Kriesi’s (in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995) perspective on the “configuration of power relevant for the confrontation” will be utilized to explore this local or societal setting and the power structure which challengers confront in South Florida because of the authorities’ alliance with pro-embargo activists. A significant question to be addressed here is whether this configuration of power or countermovement which emerges due to the authorities’ alliance with exile hardliners, hinders or spawns anti-embargo activism.

Methodology

Diversity characterizes the research tools of this dissertation. They ranges from content analysis of major American newspapers to archival research on official documents, books, journals, newspapers, magazines and websites to unstructured and semi-structured elite interviews with scholars, group leaders and staff members and congressional staff. The information collected for this project is therefore overwhelmingly qualitative.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 which are the three chapters following this theory chapter are primarily descriptive. They describe the history, goals, leadership, organizational structure and resources; strategies and tactics; and a trajectory of anti-embargo activism, respectively. The information for these chapters was obtained initially from a series of unstructured and semi-structured interviews undertaken between May 2005 and December 2006. The initial unstructured
interviews were conducted personally with academics, leaders and staff members of the groups located primarily in Washington D.C, New York and Miami. These were followed by semi-structured phone interviews consisting of questions tailored to suit the information required on the history, goals, structure, resources, strategies, tactics and activism of the groups under study.

In addition, the Internet proves an invaluable resource for information about the organizations. Most of them have well-developed websites containing information ranging from their history and funding sources and structure to names, phone numbers and email addresses of leaders and staff members and the groups’ strategies and tactics. The websites were particularly useful for conducting content analysis on norms that guide the operations of the organizations. Information for Chapter 5 which treats with contentious politics and challenge to the state was also obtained from archival research on American newspapers.

The analytical chapters, 6 and 7, reflect a heavy reliance on texts on social movements and scholarly publications in journals. Content analysis was also undertaken for Chapter 6 to understand the extent to which some organizations are guided by certain liberal norms, namely human rights, peace, justice, freedom and democracy. The Center for International Policy, the Latin American Working Group, the Washington Office on Latin America and the Cuban American Education Alliance Fund were selected because they all focus specifically on the embargo and because of the range and extent of their activism. Their websites are also much better developed than most of the others which facilitated an electronic search. A separate electronic search for the appearance of each these concepts – “human rights”, “peace”, “justice”, “freedom” and “democracy”- in each of the organizations’ website publications and links, were undertaken and the frequency of hit counts recorded. The problem with this effort is that it is not certain whether all the publications of these organizations were searched since only those on the
Internet where they are mainly found were accessed. Nonetheless, together with the websites, those researched give a good indication as to whether the organizations are indeed motivated by these liberal norms and which organization gives most priority to which norm.

In order to understand whether exogenous factors, specifically, the collapse of communism in the Eastern bloc (resulting in attitudinal changes to Cuba and attempts at liberal reforms in Cuba), prompted an increase in anti-embargo activities in the post-Cold War era, it was necessary to undertake a comparative content analysis in chapter 7. A simple and uncomplicated method for this aspect of the investigation was adopted which was facilitated to a large extent by the Internet through relevant websites and the University of Florida library databases. Firstly, an extensive Internet search was undertaken to identify organizations opposed to U.S. Cuba policy and the date of their formation. The websites of some popular organizations like CIP and WOLA proved useful in providing an extensive list of these other organizations.

Secondly, twenty-five of the more prominent organizations which were formed before the end of the Cold War were selected and a comprehensive electronic search of the Lexis Nexis database of periodicals was conducted to compare the extent of their activities from nine years before the Cold War (1980-1989) to the current post-Cold War period (1990-2006). This involved a “full-text” search of the mention of these organizations names with respect to Cuba in major American newspapers. The search was conducted under “General News” of the Christian Science Monitor, the New York Times, the Miami Herald, USA Today and the Washington Post. Since the database allowed five newspapers to be searched at the same time, all five were searched simultaneously. The search term used was the name of the organization such as, “Center for International Policy” and “Cuba” and then the number of hit counts recorded.
Finally, the case study in this work is both an analysis of a single phenomenon (the social movement) and of multiple cases (the interest groups). The multiple cases share some common attributes and are variants of the larger, encompassing category of the social movement, herein dubbed “the anti-embargo movement”. The analysis is launched from the level of both the single social movement and the multiple interest groups. The latter facilitates an understanding of particular organizational dynamics such as history, goals, resources, structure, size, leadership, strategies and tactics. Apart from its connotation here as a collective of interest groups, the term “social movement” is often employed as a mode of generalization and as a means of appropriately locating the study in the sub-field of Comparative Politics in the discipline of Political Science.
CHAPTER 3
TAXONOMY OF ANTI-EMBARGO ORGANIZATIONS

The anti-embargo movement comprises more than a hundred organizations which seek to change U.S. policy to Cuba. They are led by both Americans and Cuban Americans located mainly in Washington D.C., New York and Miami, though few have been traced to other states like California and New Jersey. They fall into three main categories.

First, there are older and larger organizations, some of which are international activists which do not have Cuba as a special project but have taken up the Cuban cause. These include the American Civil Liberties Union, Human Rights Watch, Madre (an international human rights organization), Global Exchange, Oxfam America and faith-based groups like the World Council of Churches, Church World Service, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Episcopal Church.

Second, there are organizations dealing with other Latin American/Caribbean issues but have a specific Cuba project. These include the Center for International Policy (CIP), the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), the Latin American Working Group (LAWG), World Policy Institute and the Lexington Institute.

The third group consists of organizations concerned only with U.S. Cuba policy such as Venceremos Brigade, the Center for Cuban Studies, the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET), Pastors for Peace, the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy, U.S. Women and Cuba Collaboration; and the business interests including USA Engage and the U.S-Cuba Trade Association. It also includes a host of moderate Cuban American organization. The most prominent are the Cuban Committee for Democracy, Cambio Cubano, the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists (ENCASA), the Cuban American Alliance
Education Fund (CAAEF), the Cuba Study Group, and the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights.

The dissertation focuses primarily on organizations in the second and third categories which either have a specific Cuba project, or treat with U.S. Cuba policy as the sole agenda. These include the D.C. groups of which primary emphasis is placed on the Center for Cuban Studies, the Washington Office on Latin America, the Latin American Working Group, the New York based Center for Cuban Studies and Pastors for Peace, Venceremos Brigade, the recently formed Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel, the business coalitions, USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association; The Cuban American organizations include the longstanding Cuban Committee for Democracy; the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund; Puentes Cubanos; the Cuba Study Group, the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists and the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights. They are selected because they are the most active on the contentious embargo issues treating with tourist, academic and family travel, remittances, trade and cultural exchanges to the island. In this respect, these organizations are identified as the core of the anti-embargo movement in the U.S. These 15 groups are represented in Table 1. They are categorized into two groups: those with Cuba as its sole concern, fall under category “A” and those with a broader regional or international focus but have Cuba as a special project, fall under category “B”. ¹

**History and Goals**

The first anti-embargo organization emerged in 1969 with the formation of Venceremos Brigade (VB), even before the hardline pro-embargo faction had been consolidated in Miami. Based in New Jersey, the Brigade was originally comprised of a coalition of young people. Its

¹ See Table 3-1 on page 87 for a list of organizations under study.
goal was, and still is, to show solidarity to the Cuban Revolution and to challenge U.S. policy to Cuba, particularly the ban on travel. It continues to openly defy the law to take brigades to Cuba annually. The organization has taken more than 8000 brigadistas to Cuba over the years where they had the opportunity to participate in the sugar harvests and to work in agricultural and construction in various parts of the island. Describing itself as the oldest Cuba solidarity group in the world, Venceremos Brigade boasts that “the VB has never requested permission from the U.S. government to go to Cuba - and we never will! We believe it is our right as U.S. citizens to travel free of U.S. government obstacles. We also believe that we have much to learn from Cuba and the best way to do that is to travel there and see for ourselves”.  

The Center for Cuban Studies opened its doors to the public in New York in 1972 with the same primary objective as Venceremos Brigade - to counteract the effects of U.S. policy to Cuba. Founded by Sandra Levinson in collaboration with a group of scholars, writers, artists and other professionals, the Center aims to provide a vital communication link between the U.S. and the island. This is achieved through publications, organized tours, library services, exchange programs and art projects. The Center also seeks to provide accurate and up-to-date information about Cuba which it does through its well-stocked Lourdes Casals library and organized trips to Cuba undertaken within the legal exemption to the travel ban. These include professional research, news-gathering, educational and religious study.  

The Center for International Policy (CIP) was formed in 1975 in the aftermath of the Vietnam War by former diplomat and peace activists. Its central concern then was to ensure that a government’s human rights record was a prime consideration in allocating foreign aid. Today,

---


U.S. Cuba policy is a priority issue in CIP’s agenda but it is also concerned with post-conflict resolution in Central America and limiting military assistance to the Western Hemisphere, especially Columbia. Changing U.S. Cuba policy became a major dimension of CIP’s mission when Wayne Smith joined the organization in 1992 after resigning as Chief of Mission at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana over fundamental disagreements with the Reagan Administration’s foreign policy. Smith’s numerous publications in several newspapers and CIP’s website, strongly condemning U.S. policy to Cuba, contribute to making the Center a leading anti-embargo organization in D.C. Smith is perceived by many groups as a leading icon in the anti-embargo movement. He defines CIP as a “small Washington think tank which advocates a more sensible policy to Cuba”. CIP has taken Congresspersons to Cuba in an effort to promote dialogue and allow them to see the Cuban reality for themselves “since the U.S. public is fed a lot of anti-Castro propaganda”.

In that same year, 1975, the Washington Office on Latin American (WOLA) was established. Like CIP, WOLA is also concerned with human rights in Latin America having worked at the outset to write the first major legislation conditioning U.S. military aid abroad on human rights practices. It parallels CIP’s interest in other countries including the Andes, Columbia, Cuba and Central America particularly Mexico, with the set goal of defining policy options and developing strategies for the expanding community of development, environmental, and human rights organizations engaged with U.S. policy on Latin America. It criticizes the Cuban embargo as misguided and counter-productive and its Cuba project is geared toward


5 Interview with Smith, 9th August 2006.
normalizing relations with the island which it perceives as a “more sensible, more effective, and more humane strategy for promoting human rights and social justice”.\(^6\)

The year 1983 saw the formation of the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) in D.C. Unlike CIP and WOLA, it is a coalition representing the interests of over sixty major religious, humanitarian, grassroots and policy organizations. Its general mission is similar to that of CIP and WOLA, geared toward encouraging U.S. policies towards Latin America that promote human rights, justice, peace and sustainable development. Like the other two D.C. organizations, it also has a Cuba program driven by the policy positions of its coalition partners, which “has been and continues to be to end the U.S. embargo on Cuba for the benefit of both our peoples”. The LAWG believes “that the history of hostility between our two countries is obsolete and should be changed” because “the embargo has failed to enact a change in its 43-year history”.\(^7\)

The LAWG prioritizes religious, academic, educational and family travel. According to staff member, Claire Rodriguez, the pursuit of free trade is not part of its agenda”. Neither is the organization concerned with regime change in Cuba. Rather, it underscores the issues of peace and justice.\(^8\)

Pastors for Peace is a special ministry of an umbrella faith-based organization called the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), which was founded in 1967 by progressive church leaders and activists to assist the poor and disenfranchised in developing community organizations to fight human and civil rights injustices. Founded in 1992 by Reverend Lucius Walker in New York, Pastors for Peace engages in similar activities as


\(^8\) Interview with Rodriguez, 11th August 2006.
Venceremos Brigade, discussed above. Its objective is “to bring an end to the immoral and unjust U.S. economic blockade of Cuba”.\(^9\) Since its inception, it has been taking annual Friendship Caravans with humanitarian aid to Cuba without the required treasury license. This is in protest of the “unjust regulation” because it believes that applying for a license would suggest a defacto recognition of the embargo’s restriction on travel to the island. According to staff member, Shane Gasteyer, “Pastors for Peace have been joined by Canadian, Mexicans and even Europeans in its 2006 Caravan to Cuba”.\(^10\) The organization has had several confrontations with the state for undertaking this “illegal” activity, even having some of the equipment which it was taking to Cuba confiscated by Treasury officials. In the summer of 2003, Pastors for Peace joined Venceremos Brigade in its 34th anniversary contingent to Cuba in protest of the restrictions proposed that year. Like CIP, Pastors for Peace is bent on presenting the reality of Cuba to the American Public who are fed false information by the media and American administrations.\(^11\)

In response to academic travel restrictions imposed by the Bush administration, an academic freedom focus group met in D.C. in November, 2004. The Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET) was formed in December that year in organized opposition to the restrictions and to protect the rights of academics to define and execute educational programs as they see fit. Although it is based in D.C., membership of ECDET is drawn from people affiliated with accredited colleges, universities and academic associations across the U.S.


\(^10\) Interview with Gasteyer, 10\(^{th}\) August 2006.

\(^11\) Ibid.
and comes from 45 American states. The organization is chaired by CIP’s senior fellow, Wayne Smith who coordinates the efforts of the coalition. “Wayne Smith is the lifeblood of ECDET”, affirms Carmen Diana Deere, Director of the University of Florida’s Center for Latin American Studies. He solicited my membership to lend solidarity to the coalition as former president of the Latin American Studies Association. We’ve tried in vain to have Cuban academics participate in the LASA conference generally held in the United States. But the U.S. administration repeatedly rejects their entry into this country”.  

Two D.C. based business coalitions are important organizations in the anti-embargo movement. These are USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. Both advocate changing the embargo policy with regards to trade with Cuba. USA Engage is part of the National Foreign Trade Council, the oldest trade Organization in the U.S. It was formed in 1997 and is primarily concerned with the removal of unilateral sanctions as it “promotes responsible alternatives to sanctions that actually advance U.S. humanitarian and foreign policy goals, such as intensified U.S. diplomacy and multilateral cooperation”. Currently under the directorship of Jake Colvin, it believes that, as a large coalition, it provides a voice to ensure that American policy makers listen to all interested parties especially those opposed to and affected by sanctions such as American companies, farmers and workers. Colvin explained that the coalition “also opposed unilateral trade sanctions on Iran and Libya in the mid-nineties and naturally seeks

---

13 Interview with Deere, 13th June 2006.
normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba”. 15 USA Engage considers itself “the leading business organization supporting reform of U.S. policy toward Cuba, as well as the most important outside group supporting the work of the Cuba Working Groups in both the House and Senate”. 16

The U.S.-Cuba Trade association emerged out of the disintegration of the group of businessmen and statesmen who called themselves Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba, which had successfully lobbied the Congress in 1999 for removal of sanctions on the sale of food and medicine to Cuba. Formerly established in 2005, the coalition works on behalf of its U.S. business members to protect current trade and to expand and increase the potential for future business between the United States and Cuba. The president, Kirby Jones, is also president of Alamar Associates which he established in 1974, to offer a full range of consulting services for clients preparing to enter the Cuban market. 17 He brings a wealth of experience to the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association having first-hand knowledge and personal contacts in Cuba. He has been taking clients to Cuba for thirty years and is described by Newsweek as “the man who knows about Cuba than any other American”. 18 The newly formed Trade Association seeks full normalization of commercial relations between the U.S. and Cuba. It also assists business interests interested in trading with Cuba by providing information and teaching them how to undertake business with Cuba. 19 “The only way to impact change is to engage it” declares Jones.

15 Interview with Colvin, 19th August 2006.


18 Ibid.

“Cuba is not an anomaly. The U.S. has disagreements with several other countries, yet it has healthy trade relations with them”.20

The decade of the nineties also saw a proliferation of moderate Cuban American organizations mostly in Miami but also in D.C. Several of these are pro-engagement and pro-dialogue, but they are also anti-Castro. They display a more passionate and nationalistic response to the embargo, not surprisingly, since it deals with matters close to their hearts such as food, medicine, family relations and patria or the Fatherland.

The Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD) considers itself the largest Cuban American organization and the antithesis of the hardline Cuban American National Foundation (CANF).21 The CCD was founded in 1993 by wealthy Miami Lawyer, Alfredo Durán, who left Cuba for Miami after Castro rose to power. Durán joined the anti-Castro exile movement in Miami and participated in the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion as a member of Brigade 2506. He was captured in the invasion and was held prisoner until the American government agreed to pay the ransom requested by Castro. He retuned to Miami as an active anti-Castroite and became President of the Veterans Association of Brigade 2506. But in the early 1990s, Durán promoted negotiations with the Cuban government, and in 1993 he was expelled from the Veteran’s Association of Brigade 2506 for “reasons associated with his public statements indicating his willingness to go to Havana to discuss the history of the Bay of Pigs invasion.” Branded by hardliners as a dialoguero, Durán established the CCD as a national organization of Cuban Americans and citizens of all other nationalities seeking to promote a comprehensive U.S.-Cuba engagement policy resulting in a transition to democracy in Cuba. It is dedicated to a diplomatic resolution of

20 Interview with Jones, 16th August 2006.
the longstanding conflict between Cuba and the United States. It prioritizes dialogue and mutual respect, and applied these principles to its work with Cuba as well as with the Cuban American community in the United States. Although the organization promotes itself as non-partisan, Durán admits that he himself is an active member of the Democratic Party and the majority of CCD’s members are democrats. For Durán, the term dialoguero is only considered derogatory in Miami. “It is unwise to cast aspersions on anyone here”, explains Durán , “I myself was part of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Who was more rabidly anti-Castro than myself”?22

Several other moderate Cuban American organizations attempting to promote a policy of rapprochement and dialogue with Cuba also emerged in the nineties. However, this moderate stance does not translate into support for the Castro regime. Amongst these are the Cuban American Coalition, the Cuban American Defense League, Cuban American Professionals and Entrepreneurs, the Cuban Reunification Operation (led by prominent member of Cambio Cubano, Bernardo Benes, also viewed as a dialoguero by right-hardline exiles), the Cuban Democratic Platform, the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF) and Puentes Cubanos. Apart from the last two, these organizations have not been very active and very little is know about them. Hence, they are not considered part of the core of the anti-embargo movement in this study.

CAAEF perceives itself as a national network of Cuban Americans seeking to educate the public at large on issues related to hardships resulting from current U.S.-Cuban relations. It acts “as a vehicle for the development of mutually beneficial engagements which promote understanding and human compassion”.23 Founded in 1995, its leaders operate from both D.C.

22 Interview with Durán, 19th December 2006.

and California. According to its President, Delvis Fernández Levy, “the coalition was formed at a time when the embargo was strengthening instead of weakening as we expected”. Our network has membership in several locations including New York, New Jersey and Maryland”. 24 In the wake of the 2004 restrictions on family travel to Cuba the issue became the main bone of contention of the network which took it to the UN Convention on Human Rights in March, 2005. 25

The current decade also saw the emergence of some Cuban American groups opposed to the embargo, several in response to the tightening of the embargo through the Helms-Burton Law of 1996 and renewed restrictions imposed in 2004. Amongst these, the Cuba Study Group stands out as unique given the circumstances which led to its formation. It was founded in 2000 in the aftermath of the Elián González affair in an attempt to change the negative national image of the Cuban American community that emerged after the incident. The group is committed to “more practical, proactive and consensual approaches towards Cuba policy” and “favors pragmatic and effective approaches based on deliberate fact-finding, careful analysis, strategic orientation, and a strong ethical foundation”. 26 The organization makes for an interesting study comprised as it is of wealthy Miami businessmen and professionals. Its goals diverge from the other Cuban American organizations in its preoccupation with change within Cuba. Hence, it is geared toward the formulation of “effective, multilateral policy recommendations through thoughtful discussion and critical analysis of ideas that promote and facilitate a peaceful regime.

24 Interview with Fernández, 23rd October 2006.
change in Cuba and lead to democracy, a free and open society, a market-based economic system, respect for human rights and the rule of law and the reunification of the Cuban nation”. 27 Carlos Saladrigas, co-Chairman of the Group, explains that the Group has friends even in the rabidly anti-Castro, Cuban Liberty Council, although some there would not speak to him and are as irrational as the hardliners in Cuba”. 28

The Cuban American Commission for Family Rights is a broad coalition of Cuban Americans established in May 2004 to denounce the new government restrictions on travel and remittances. Their mission is “to preserve the integrity of the Cuban family and work to defeat those who want to divide it”. 29 According to its President, Alvaro Fernández, “our reason for being was unwavering opposition to the harsh and extremely cruel measures imposed by the Bush Administration that year, making it much tougher to travel to Cuba, even for people with family members on the island. Along with restricting family travel to once every three years – with no exceptions, not even to visit sick family members – the new regulations also made it more difficult to help loved ones on the island with one’s own hard-earned dollars”. 30 Silvia Wilhelm, founder and Executive Director of the organization, describes the measures as “anti-family, un-American and anti-Cuban”. 31 The Commission is particularly incensed with the definition of family, insisting that family rights should not be determined. “Human rights are being trampled upon by this administration” affirms Wilhelm. 32 An irate Fernández noted that

27 Ibid.
28 Interview with Saladrigas, 6th June 2006.
31 Interview with Wilhelm, 21st August 2006.
32 Ibid.
“the Bush Administration was the first in U.S. history that deemed itself fit to define what comprised a family. A Cuban family at that. I can assure you that the measures made every Commission member’s blood boil over”.

**Financial Resources**

Both the unstructured and semi-structured interviews reveal that the groups which constitute the anti-embargo movement are relatively homogenous in mobilizing resources. Most obtain funding from external sources: foundations and private donations from members, and supporters and some from business interests though the latter were not identified for the sake of privacy. Some of the organizations were also unwilling to divulge the other sources and most refused to give figures. The figures presented in the following paragraphs were sourced from either the website of the foundations or that of the organizations under study.

The Center for International Policy (CIP), the Washington Office of Latin America (WOLA), the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) and the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, report to receiving funding from both foundations and private individuals. The bulk of CIP’s funding are derived from external sources. These include the Arca Foundation, the Christopher Reynolds Foundation, the Compton Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, the Ford Foundation, the General Service Foundation, the National Lawyers’ Guild, the Samuel Rubin Foundation, the Schooner Foundation and the Stewart R. Mill Charitable Trust.

They provide one fifth of the organization’s income with a small percentage also coming from fees and the sale of publications and the rest derived from thousands of individual donors via mail or online. Neither CIP’s website nor the interviews provide information on the business

---


interests which fund the Cuban cause. The interviewee, Wayne Smith, prefer to keep them anonymous. However, it should be noted that because CIP engages in other Asian and Latin American projects which concern countries like Columbia, Nicaragua, Honduras, North Korea, China and Bangladesh, not all the foundations mentioned above support the specific Cuban cause.

Of the foundations mentioned, the Christopher Reynolds Foundation is specifically committed to the U.S./Cuba cause. Its website emphasizes that “since 1995, the Foundation has been steadily increasing its support of work that focuses on U.S. relations with Cuba and needs in Cuba as defined by Cubans themselves”. Indeed, in March 2001, the directors of this foundation agreed to “phase out all other domestic grant-making and concentrate the resources of the Foundation solely on our Cuba effort”.

The Christopher Reynolds Foundation also funds several other anti-embargo groups such as the Center for Cuban Studies, WOLA, LAWG and the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) of which Pastors for Peace is a sub-group. Other anti-embargo organizations funded by this foundation include the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF), the Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD), the Cuba Policy Foundation and the Lexington Institute.

---

36 Center for International Policy. Washington, DC. http://ciponline.org
37 The Christopher Reynolds Foundation. “Our Grant-making Program.” http://www.creynolds.org/guide.htm
38 Ibid.
WOLA’s funding also comes from foundations, donations, religious organizations and individuals. Donations are payable through the mail or online.\textsuperscript{40} WOLA describes itself as a 501 (c) 3 tax exempt non-profit organization.\textsuperscript{41} In 2004, the organization received a grant in the sum of $50,000 from the Public Welfare Foundation\textsuperscript{42} and in 2006 it was granted $350,000 by the Ford Foundation.\textsuperscript{43} The Christopher Reynolds Foundations granted $160,000 to CIP, WOLA and LAWG combined in 2005.\textsuperscript{44}

The LAWG also receives funding from the Ford Foundation, the Open Society Institute Development Foundation, The Moriah Fund, the General Service Foundation, The Arca Foundation, the Stewart Mott Education Charitable Trust and the Lawson Valentine Fund. Contributions to LAWG’s Education Fund are also made by the Presbyterian Church (USA), Catholic Relief Services and Oxfam America. According to LAWG’s website, “LAWG is funded primarily through donations by coalition members and other non-governmental and religious organizations”.\textsuperscript{45} This is supported by information received in an interview with staff member, Claire Rodriguez, who also affirms that the organization enjoys the status of both a c (3) organization through which it receives funding from foundations and a c (4) organization

\textsuperscript{41} Interview with Geoff Thale and Rachel Farley, 20th May 2005.
\textsuperscript{43} Ford Foundation. 2007. “Grant Information.” \url{http://www.fordfound.org/grants_db/view_grant_detail.cfm?grant_id=33201}
\textsuperscript{44} The Christopher Reynolds Foundation. “Grants.” \url{http://www.creynolds.org/grants.htm}
which allows it to receive donations from grassroots organizations which are members of its coalition.  

Pastors for Peace receives funding from the Massachusetts-based Careth Foundation which supports organizations working toward international peace. It is also funded via tax deductible donations and receives non-monetary donations from the public in the form of laptop computers, cameras, printers, cartridges, copiers and software which it takes to Cuba in its annual caravan campaign. Unlike the other organizations discussed above, Pastors for Peace solicits both monetary and non-monetary donations via its website.

The Center for Cuban Studies is a non-profit corporation with tax exempt status. Part of it funding is derived from annual membership fees. Funds are also raised from sales of certain Cuban cultural artifacts such as t-shirts, videos, notecards, postcards, CDs and other gift items. The Center has also set up a Lifeline Fund which enables contributors to donate materials to Cuban institutions. These materials include medicines and medical supplies, religious artifacts, artists’ supplies and educational materials. In addition, the Center receives funding from

---

46 Interview with Rodriguez, 11th August 2006.


49 These are $60 (regular), $100 (supporting) and $150/$250 (sustaining). The fee for institutional and foreign membership is $70. Students and senior citizens from the U.S. join at the special rate of $40. Center for Cuban Studies. New York. “About Us.” http://www.cubaupdate.org/more.htm

organizations such as the Christopher Reynolds Foundation which donated $25,000 in 2005.\textsuperscript{51} The Center also receives donations from several prominent individuals.\textsuperscript{52}

The D.C. based Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD) has also been funded by grants from foundations including the Christopher Reynolds, Arca, McArthur and Ford Foundations. Its 150 members also pay an annual membership fee of $100. In addition, each of the fifteen members of the Board of Directors is expected to either personally donate or raise $1000 dollars annually. In the past, the CCD had sponsored a radio program called “transición” which was funded by the McArthur Foundation.\textsuperscript{53}

Although ECDET claims to have no funding, some of the newer organizations founded in the nineties and the current decade also receive funding from foundations and donations from individual members. These include the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights headed by Silvia Wilhelm who also heads Puentes Cubanos, a Cuban American organization funded by the Christopher Reynolds Foundation.\textsuperscript{54} The Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF) is not sponsored by foundations and only receives donations from private individuals who are predominantly financially stable Cuban American members of the organization.\textsuperscript{55} Similarly, neither the Cuba Study Group comprising of wealthy Miami businessmen nor USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association which are coalitions representing business

\textsuperscript{51} The Christopher Reynolds Foundation. “Grants.” http://www.creynolds.org/grants.htm


\textsuperscript{53} Interview with Durán, 19\textsuperscript{th} December 2006.

\textsuperscript{54} Interview with Wilhelm, 21\textsuperscript{st} August 2006.

\textsuperscript{55} Interview with Fernández, 23\textsuperscript{rd} October 2006.
interests, depend on foundation grants since their members are resourceful enough to sponsor them. Jake Colvin, Director of USA Engage, affirms that “all funding comes from members”. The U.S.- Cuba Trade Association describes itself as “a 501C(6) membership-based non-profit organization”. Kirby Jones, founder and President of the Association, reports that all funding for the coalition are derived from members.

**Leadership, Human Resources and Organizational Structure**

Certain individuals whose commitment to the Cuban cause has been unrelenting for more than thirty years, emerge as icons of the anti-embargo movement. They include Wayne Smith of the Center for International Policy, Sandra Levinson of the Center for Cuban Studies and Kirby Jones of the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. These three names are well-known by all groups involved in changing U.S. Cuba policy, whether based in D.C., New York or Miami. A closer look at the work of each of these individuals will serve to explain their significance as invaluable human resources in the anti-embargo movement.

Wayne Smith is Senior Fellow and Director of the Cuba program at the Center for International Policy. He is also a significant contributor to the National Security Program and a visiting professor of Latin American Studies and Director of the University of Havana Exchange Program at Johns Hopkins University. Moreover, Smith is a former Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He has served as Executive Secretary of President Kennedy’s Latin American Task Force and Chief of Mission at the U.S. Interests Section in

---

56 Interview with Colvin, 19th August 2006.


58 Interview with Jones, 16th August 2006.
Havana during his twenty-five year stint with the State Department (1957-82). He has also served in Argentina, Brazil and the U.S.S.R.  

Smith’s work in the anti-embargo movement is reflected in his prolific publication lists as head of the Cuba program at the CIP. An ardent advocate for the removal of the embargo, Smith’s articles published in several U.S. newspapers and journals such as The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Baltimore Sun, Christian Science Monitor, Miami Herald and Foreign Policy. These are embellished with provocative headlines like “Our Cuba Policy will get us Nada”; “A Continuing Perfect Failure”; and “A Bankrupt Cuba Policy”. Relentless in his pursuit of changing the policy toward Cuba, Smith has launched scathing attacks on Cuba being placed on the U.S. terrorist list, the “senseless embargo”, the Elián González debacle and the U.S. determination to prevent Cubans playing baseball in the United States. In Smith’s words, his lifelong goal has been to “bring about a more sensible U.S. policy to Cuba.” To this end, Smith has struggled for more than thirty years.

Sandra Levinson is currently based at the Center for Cuba Studies in New York which she started in 1972 in a loft in Greenwich Village. She had then taken a year off from her job as teacher of politics at Brooklyn Polytechnic and New York editor of Ramparts. She collected books, magazines and artwork from friends who had visited Cuba and launched a travel program to Cuba. This was the first of many groups to establish trips to Cuba for academics, journalists and other researchers.

---

59 Interview with Smith, 11th May 2005.
61 Interview with Smith, 11th May 2005, 9th August 2006.
Levinson escaped a bomb attack at the Center on 28th March, 1973, where she was working at the time. “The rabid Cuban exiles who planted the bomb were never caught”, she explained. “Everything was destroyed except the area around my desk” (Interview with Levinson, 26th May 2005). The Center moved to East 23rd Street and later to its current address on West 23rd Street. Levinson announced then that she was willing to stay at the Center “until we have normal diplomatic relations with Cuba” thinking that it would be four years at most until Nixon was ousted as President. Today, she expresses shock that “our policy has remained basically unchanged throughout the years and through multiple Presidents”62. She energetically continues her work at the Center, sponsoring conferences and seminars on U.S. Cuba policy and importing books and magazines to stock the Center’s Lourdes Casals library. She also publishes a magazine called Cuba Update, and when President Carter lifted the travel ban, she began sponsoring trips to Havana taking large delegations to the Havana Film Festival every year. In 1991, with the support of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, Levinson won a suit against the Treasury Department for legalizing the importation of original art work from Cuba. She spearheads one of the most popular programs of the Center which is the Cuban Art Space Gallery opened in 1999, exhibiting Cuba Art. Through the Abeja Obrera (Worker Bee) project, she has been taking brigadistas to Cuba to work in construction. The new restrictions imposed by the current Bush administration has thwarted her efforts to make it possible for artists and writers of both countries to travel to Cuba and the U.S. through the Artists and Writers Committee for the Normalization of Relations with Cuba which she has established as another of the Center’s programs.63

62 Interview with Levinson, 26th May 2005.
63 All information on Levinson here was obtained in a lengthy interview with her at her New York office on 26th May 2005.
Kirby Jones has been promoting relations between the United States and Cuba since the seventies. *Newsweek* describes him as “having better contacts with Cuba than any other American” and he is viewed by the *New York Times* as the “man to see about business in Cuba”.64 His first trip to Cuba was as a special correspondent for CBS in 1974. For the past thirty years he has traveled regularly to Cuba and engaged in numerous interviews with Fidel Castro for both television and print. He is also consultant of Alamar Associates, a private, profit-oriented consulting firm based in D.C. It offers a range of services to companies interested in doing business with Cuba. Jones has contributed significantly to the book entitled Subject to Solution: Problems in Cuban-U.S. Relations, and wrote an influential study published in 1988 entitled Opportunities for U.S.-Cuban Trade, commissioned by the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University.65

Between 1998 and 2000, Jones has chaired several U.S.-Cuba business summits bringing together more than 400 U.S. executives as well as Congresspersons and Cuban politicians, officials and potential business partners. He frequently speaks at business conferences such as the U.S.-Cuba Agricultural conferences in Cancun in 2002 and 2003 and the U.S.-Cuba Travel conference in 2003. Jones is now President of the coalition of the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association formed in 2005. He believes that U.S. policy to Cuba is wrong since it curtails invaluable business opportunities for both countries. He affirms “that the U.S. should treat Cuba as it treats other communist countries which have diplomatic relations with the United States. The U.S. has been pretending for forty seven years that the Cuban government does not exist. The way to

---
65 Ibid.
impact change with Cuba is to engage the Cubans in talks. Free trade is the right and normal thing to do”.66

What is striking about the commitment of these outstanding anti-embargo activists is that they are all American with no familial ties to Cuba. However, they are not the only outstanding advocates of change in U.S. Cuba policy. Several individuals including William Leogrande from American University, Cynthia McClintock of George Washington University, Saul Landau of the Institute for Policy Studies, Silvia Wilhelm and Alvaro Fernández of the Cuba American Commission for Family Rights, Mavis Anderson who heads the Cuba project at the Latin American Working Group, Sarah Stephens of the Center for International Policy, Geoff Thale of the Washington Office on Latin America, Phillip Peters from the Lexington Institute, Delvis Fernández Levy of the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund, Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace and Lissa Weinmann of the World Policy Institute, have been vigorously challenging the embargo on humanitarian, business, and familial grounds. Space does not allow a full analysis of their roles and contributions here, but they also constitute the stock of human resources at the forefront of the anti-embargo movement in its drive to change U.S. Cuba policy.

The organizations’ human resources also include staff members which are deeply committed to the Cuban cause. The D.C. organizations, CIP, WOLA and LAWG, not only treat with Cuba, but other international issues which concern other countries. They have a Cuba project which is run by certain individuals.67 These three D.C. groups have a small staff and a much more expanded Board of Directors. CIP boasts of both a President and an Executive


67 Wayne Smith is at CIP. He was assisted by Sarah Stevens until 2005 with Smith heading the project overall and Stephens charged with the Freedom to Travel Campaign. A new, intern, Vincent Pascandolo, is also now assisting in the project. See http://ciponline.org/staff.htm for a list of CIP’s board members. Geoff Thale heads the Cuba project at WOLA and Mavis Anderson at the LAWG.
Director with considerable experience in foreign affairs. There are also a number of Senior Fellows focusing on particular areas all of whom bring a diverse array of skills and experience to the organization. CIP’s staff acts as assistants to these Senior Fellows. In addition, there is a Board of Directors with members from a diverse range of institutions and organizations. Some of these are consultants while others are Foreign Service officers and academics.

WOLA’s structure is somewhat different, comprising a staff which constitutes a Senior Director, some Program Directors, a number of Senior Associates and Senior Fellows. Two of these are assigned to the Cuba program. Like CIP, WOLA also has a Board of Directors some of whom are members of other anti-embargo groups like Martin Coria of Church World Service and Silvia Wilhelm from Puentes Cubanos. Cynthia McClintock also sits amongst WOLA’s Board of Directors.

The staff of LAWG is also quite small, consisting of an Executive Director, two Senior Associates and two Program Assistants. The LAWG’s Board of Directors also benefits from a range of experiences and skills from several organizations. Indeed, two prominent members from

---

68 The President, Robert White, served in the Foreign Service for twenty five years. The Executive Director, Bill Goodfellow, who founded the organization, has extensive experience as an analyst of U.S. aid policies and is known for advocating greater transparency and accountability.

69 Such as Cynthia McClintock from George Washington University and William LeoGrande from American University. For a list of board members and their respective backgrounds see Center for International Policy. Washington, DC. [http://ciponline.org/staff.htm](http://ciponline.org/staff.htm)

70 These are Geoff Thale who is the Program Director and Senior Associate for Cuba and Central America and Elsa Falkenburger, the Program Officer for Cuba and Central American Youth Gang.


72 The Executive Director, Lisa Haugaard, brings with her a wealth of experience from her previous post as Executive Director of the Central American Historical Institute in Washington. Mavis Anderson who is charged with the Cuba project at the LAWG, has actually worked in Central America during her term at the Center for Global Education at Augsburg College.
WOLA hold the positions of Executive Director and board member respectively in the Latin American Working Group’s Education Fund, a major facet of the LAWG.\(^7\)

According to staff member, Shane Gasteyer, Pastors for Peace has an Executive Director who is the Reverend Lucius Walker.\(^7\) It also has an Assistant Director and a very small staff. Its structure is somewhat similar to the Center for Cuban Studies which has a Board of Directors and Sandra Levinson as Executive Director. In addition, the Center has a paid, full time librarian and one staff member who handles mail orders. Like Pastors for Peace, the Center “frequently receives voluntary assistance from interested parties whenever it schedules a big event such as an art exposition”.\(^7\)

The Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET) is centered in D.C. although its members hail from all over the U.S. Its structure is unlike any of the other groups. It comprises a co-Chair who is Wayne Smith in his capacity as adjunct professor at John Hopkins University. There are also fifteen steering committee members and four task force members. The latter include Phillip Brenner from American University, Cynthia McClintock from George Washington University, Robert Muse from Muse and Associates and Wayne Smith from CIP.\(^7\)

The human resources of the business coalitions, USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association are vital assets of the anti-embargo movement. Both organizations draw support from its broad membership base which consists of business interests in the U.S. seeking to do business with Cuba. USA Engage perceives itself as the “leading organization supporting reform

\(^7\) These are William Goodfellow and Joy Olson. For a list of the LAWG’s Board of Directors see Latin American Working Group. Washington, DC. 2003. “Latin American Working Group Board of Directors”. http://www.lawg.org/about/BoardofDirectors.htm

\(^7\) Interview with Gasteyer, 10\(^{th}\) August 2006.

\(^7\) Interview with Levinson, 21\(^{st}\) December 2006.

\(^7\) For a list of ECDET members see Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel. “ECDET Membership List.” http://www.ecdet.org/members.htm
of U.S. policy toward Cuba as well as the most important outside group supporting the work of
the Cuba Working Groups in both the House and the Senate”. It enjoys the support of several
prominent organizations including the National Foreign Trade Council, the U.S. Chamber of
Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Council on International
Business and the American Petroleum Institute. However, Cuba is not the only concern of USA
Engage since it is committed to removing unilateral sanctions against any country and prioritizes
other issues such as “protecting U.S. trademarks” and “working for “intelligent export controls
and temporary entry policies.” The organization’s staff involved in the Cuba project is Director,
Jake Colvin, and its co-chair, William Reinsch, President of the National Foreign Trade
Council.78

The U.S.-Cuba Trade Association has formed strategic partnerships with USA Engage
and the National Foreign Trade Council. Kirby Jones is the Association’s President, William
Reinsch (mentioned above) serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors while William Rogers
is Chairman of the Advisory Board. Rogers is former Assistant Secretary of State for Latin
America. He is also a member of the National Foreign Trade Council and Vice Chairman of
Kissinger Associates. The organization’s extensive membership boasts of a number of
prestigious former government officials and prominent American citizens such as Frank
Carlucci, Former Secretary of Defence (under Reagan), David Rockefeller of the Rockefeller
Center Properties, Sam Gibbons, Former Florida Congressman and Colonel Lawrence
Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to Secretary of State, Collin Powell.79 Silvia Wilhelm,

79 For a full list of Board of Advisors see U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. Washington, DC. “Structure, Staffing and
Management.” http://www.uscuba.org/manager.htm
Executive Director of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, is also a member of the U.S.- Cuba Trade Association.80

The structure of the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund is slightly different from the others with a Board of Directors consisting of an Executive Committee of three members and two Members at Large. The Fund is really a coalition representing most if not all of the organizations under study. The President, Delvis Fernández Levy, is also acting Executive Director of the organization. In addition, there is an expanded Advisory Council consisting of prominent members of the Cuban American community. Several of these are professionals in their own rights with occupations ranging from business entrepreneurs, to psychologists, physicians and medical advisors.81 Fernández explained that “the leadership of CAAEF is almost exclusively Cuban American”.82

The Cuba Study Group consists of two co-Chairmen, Luis J. Pérez, partner in the Miami office of Hogan and Harston L.L.P. and Carlos A. Saladrigas, Chairman of Premier American Bank. It also has an Executive Director, Tomas Bilbao, who has worked in the campaign of Mel Martinez and in the administration of George W. Bush. There are also seventeen board members drawn primarily from the business sectors of the Cuban American community. Amongst these prestigious board members are Carlos de la Cruz, member of the Board of Coca Cola Puerto Rico Bottlers and Eagle Brands; former U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, Ambassador Paul Cejas who has also been a business and civic leader in South Florida; and Enrique Sosa, named

80 Interview with Wilhelm, 21st August, 2006.


82 Interview with Fernández, 23rd October, 2006.
Executive Vice President of Amoco Corporation in 1995 and President of BP Amoco Chemicals in 1999.\textsuperscript{83}

The Cuban American Commission for Family Rights is run by an Executive Director, a President, a Vice President and a Secretary. As mentioned, the Executive Director, Sylvia Wilhelm, also works with several other organizations including the LAWG, the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association and Human Rights Watch which produced a lengthy report on the 2004 restrictions. In 1999, Wilhelm had formed Puentes Cubanos which were funded by several foundations and from which she acquired a wealth of experience which she brings to the organization. The Commission itself does not receive grants from foundations but are funded by its 300 members who donate voluntarily “to counteract the unjust embargo policy”.\textsuperscript{84}

Membership also constitutes an invaluable asset of the organizations’ human resources. CIP and WOLA do not have a membership base as such. The LAWG boasts of 6000 grassroots members which are not the same as its coalition partners consisting of religious, humanitarian, grassroots, policy and educational organizations.\textsuperscript{85} The Center for Cuban Studies has a paid membership base from the public generally comprising students, artists, writers and scholars.\textsuperscript{86} Pastors for Peace claims that it has no fixed membership since members are voluntary and vary from year to year.\textsuperscript{87} The members of the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel is mainly drawn from the academic community and numbered 462 in 2006. They are


\textsuperscript{84} Interview with Wilhelm, 21\textsuperscript{st} August 2006.


\textsuperscript{86} Center for Cuban Studies. New York. “About Us.” http://www.cubaupdate.org/more.htm#History%20and%20Purpose

\textsuperscript{87} Interview with Gasteyer, 10\textsuperscript{th} August 2006.
predominantly professors from accredited Universities and Colleges in the U.S. Amongst these institutions are Howard University, UC-Berkeley, Florida International, Michigan State, Harvard, Stanford and Princeton.88

Some of the moderate Cuban American organizations also have a membership base. The Cuban Committee for Democracy has 150 members,89 while the Cuban Commission for Family Rights boasts of 300 members.90 The Cuban American Alliance Education Fund has a network of members some of which are other organizations like the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights.91 The Cuba Study Group does not have any members except those who comprise its Board of Directors, discussed above.

Conclusion

All the above organizations are pursuing the same goal of changing U.S. Cuba policy even though they may prioritize different aspects of it or have other sub-focus. Venceremos Brigade is the only organization which expresses solidarity with the Cuban Revolution. Like the Center for Cuban Studies it is also concerned with information and cultural exchanges while the D.C. groups, CIP, WOLA, LAWG and the New York based Pastors for Peace are more interested in the promotion of human rights and justice in the United States. The annual caravanistas of Pastors for Peace mirror the brigadistas of Venceremos Brigade, both working quite closely together to take contingents to Cuba. CIP, WOLA and LAWG also have a broad regional agenda. The moderate Cuban American organizations generally hope to foster a process of dialogue and rapprochement with Cuba and to ensure its smooth transition to democracy.

88 Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel. “ECDET Membership List.” http://www.ecdet.org/members.htm
89 Interview with Durán, 19th December 2006.
90 Interview with Wilhelm, 21st August 2006.
although the Cuba Study Group has an additional agenda of changing the image of Cuban Americans in the aftermath of the Elián González debacle and of ensuring regime change in Cuba. The two D.C. based business coalitions seek to address the issue of trade with Cuba and represent a number of corporate and farming interests such as Cargill Inc., Caterpillar Americas and U.S Wheat Associates. Newer organizations formed in response to the 2004 restriction are geared toward changing policies on remittances, family and academic travel to the island.

Most of the organizations draw on the same funding sources. Several receive funding from foundations though the foundation donors may vary from year to year. The Christopher Reynolds Foundation funds several organizations which are also be funded by the Ford, Careth, Arca and several other foundations mentioned above. The D.C. groups report to also receiving funding from wealthy private supporter. Both CIP and the Center for Cuban Studies engage in fund-raising activities through the sale of publications and cultural artifacts. The latter also receive financial resources from a host of individual donors. As a coalition, the ECDET has no specific funding though some of its members have considerable resources of their own.

The organizations’ human resources are varied and many, reflecting a ready stock of well-trained and experienced personnel from all works of life. These external resources are invaluable as members of the groups’ Boards of Directors. Some organizations even share board members and draw from each other for specific expertise as will be seen in the case of the business coalitions. The immediate staff of most organizations is relatively small though some of these are crucial to the very sustenance of the anti-embargo movement. As identified, these include longstanding activists like Wayne Smith, Sandra Levinson and Kirby Jones. All the groups reflect a hierarchical structure with either President, Chairman, Director or Executive Director at the top and a skeletal staff below, if they employ a full time staff at all. In this regard, the Cuba
Study Group and the ECDET stands out, since the executive members comprise the core of the organizations which do not have paid full-time employees like CIP, LAWG and WOLA.

Finally, membership constitutes a vital asset for the organizations especially those that are coalitions such as LAWG, ECDET, CAAEF, USA ENGAGE and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. Some of these members are grassroots groups but others are drawn from the academic and business sectors. Still others find a membership base amongst the wider public such as the Cuban Committee for Democracy and the Center for Cuban Studies.

All in all, the groups are relatively homogenous in terms of goals and funding sources but reflect a fair degree of heterogeneity in terms of human resources, organizational structure, size and membership. Whether these have impacted on the ability of the anti-embargo movement to sustain itself and whether these contribute to its continued activism over time, will be subject of a subsequent chapter.

---

92 See Table 3-2 on page 88 for a list of leadership and funding sources of the 25 major organizations under study.
Table 3-1. Classification of anti-embargo organizations, dates founded and objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Date Founded</th>
<th>Category*</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center for Cuban Studies</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Information, Cultural Exchanges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for International Policy</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba Study Group</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Changing image of Cubans Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban American Alliance Education Fund</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Family Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban American Commission for Family Rights</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Family Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban Committee for Democracy</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Engagement with Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Academic/ Education Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Family Travel, Cultural Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Working Group</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Human Rights and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFCO/Pastors for Peace</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Human Rights, Justice, Aid to Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puentes Cubanos</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Family Travel, Remittances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA Engage</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Free Trade and Removal of Sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US-Cuba Trade Association</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Free Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venceremos Brigade</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Education, Cultural Exchanges, Aid to Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Office on Latin America</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Human rights, peace, justice, sustainable development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Category A represents organizations only concerned with Cuba. Category B represents organizations with a broad regional or international focus which has Cuba as a special project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Leader/s</th>
<th>Sources of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center for Cuban Studies</td>
<td>Sandra Levinson</td>
<td>Foundations, annual membership fees, prominent private citizens, sale of cultural artifacts (usually from Cuba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for International Policy</td>
<td>Wayne Smith</td>
<td>Foundations, membership fees, business interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba Study Group</td>
<td>Carlos Saladrígas, Luis J. Pérez</td>
<td>Self-funded by members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban American Alliance</td>
<td>Delvis Fernández Levy</td>
<td>Foundations, Primarily self-funded by Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban American</td>
<td>Silvia Wilhelm, Alvaro Fernández</td>
<td>Foundations, donations from members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission for Family Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban Committee for Democracy</td>
<td>Alfredo Durán</td>
<td>Foundations, membership fees, Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Coalition to</td>
<td>Wayne Smith</td>
<td>No funding (Members are mostly academic institutions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend Education Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Network of</td>
<td>Ruben Rumbaut</td>
<td>Self-funded by members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban American Scholars and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Working</td>
<td>Mavis Anderson</td>
<td>Foundations, private donors, grassroots organizations, members, public donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastors for Peace</td>
<td>Lucius Walker</td>
<td>Foundations, public and private Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puentes Cubanos</td>
<td>Silvia Wilhelm</td>
<td>Foundations, donations from members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA Engage</td>
<td>Jake Colvin</td>
<td>Self-funded by members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US-Cuba Trade Association</td>
<td>Kirby Jones</td>
<td>Self-funded by members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venceremos Brigade</td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>Foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Office on Latin</td>
<td>Geoff Thale</td>
<td>Foundations, public donations, private Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The strategies and tactics of the organizations reflect a fair degree of heterogeneity although they are similar in several instances. Most of the tactics employed are conventional and are carried out within the confines of the law. These include mailing lists, publications, conferences, summits and seminars. Some groups take delegations to Cuba and engage in lobbying on the Hill. Others employ litigation and use of the courts. Only Venceremos Brigade and Pastors for Peace have demonstrated a more confrontational approach openly breaking the law to take *brigadistas* and *caravanistas* to the island. None of the groups admitted to courting the media as a strategy although Pastors for Peace confesses that it employs tactics which will attract media attention. However, they all claim to have an amicable relationship with the media which occasionally covers their activities. Solidarity networks and co-option are also significant strategies of most groups. During the interviews, they all admitted that their interaction is very intense and consider themselves a dense network of organizations attempting to change U.S. policy to Cuba. Indeed, while undertaking interviews in D.C., other potential interviewees in New York and Miami were recommended.

**Conventional Strategies and Tactics**

The anti-embargo groups employ a range of conventional tactics. They have all taken advantage of the advancement in information technology and have established websites through which they publicize their goals, underscore the “unjust” embargo policy, solicit support and contributions from potential members and donors, highlight their specific grievances, advertise their activities and generally mobilize members of the public interested in participating in their contentious action.
The Center for International Policy (CIP) takes fact-finding delegations to Cuba, organizes conferences on specific issues, invites Cubans to express their views in the U.S., and publish opinion pieces which take issue with the current U.S. policy to Cuba. These are geared toward shaping public opinion about this policy and initiating dialogue with the Cuban government so that travel restrictions can be lifted and an eventual dismantling of the embargo achieved.¹

CIP took delegations to Cuba in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005. In February, March, April and June of 2001, it led four delegations including religious leaders, American sugar refiners, a Congressional delegation with the Michigan Farm Bureau and African-American journalists. In 2002, it took eight delegations to the island including the Travel Agent Fact-finding Mission on Sustainable Tourism in January; the Kentucky Agribusiness Fact-finding Mission in March; the Kentucky Women in Agriculture Fact-finding Mission in May; the Kentucky Fact-finding Mission on Banking, Transportation and Aquaculture and the Georgia Ports Authority and Fishing Industry Fact-Finding Mission in June; and the Kentucky Fact Finding Mission on Seafood Purchase and Transportation Infrastructure in July. In November, it led three missions including the Delegation of Former U.S. Senators, Dale Bumpers and John Culver; the Houston World Affairs Council Fact-finding Mission and the Fact-finding Mission of Architects and Urban Planners. Five missions were taken in 2003. These include the Senate Staff Fact-Finding Mission; Urbanists International Fact-Finding Mission and the Georgia Business Fact-Finding Mission in February; Senator Baucus and Montana Farm Delegation in September and the

Kansas Wheat Farmers Delegation in November. According to Smith, “these trips are important so that Americans can witness the Cuban reality for themselves especially in the light of the propaganda they are being fed in the U.S.”. In 2005, Wayne Smith visited Cuba to interview Ricardo Alarcón, president of the Cuban National Assembly. Smith, who heads CIP’s Cuba project, believes that “publishing is most important”. He has published in several major newspapers and in CIP’s website since 1993.

In addition to these delegations, CIP also sponsors a number of conferences on Cuba. In October, 2001 it sponsored an agricultural conference, and in November that year, it organized a “conference on the inconsistencies in the U.S. “terrorism list”. In September 2002, it worked with a number of other organizations to hold the Washington D.C. National Summit on Cuba. A Freedom to Travel Forum was held in July, 2003 and three conferences were organized in 2004. These were entitled the “Federal Sugar Subsidy Program”, “Commission for a Free Cuba” and “To Examine Evidence of Keeping Cuba on the U.S. List of Terrorist States” held in April, May and October, respectively. Two conferences were carded for 2005. The first, “U.S. Abuse at

---

3 Interview with Smith, 9th August 2006.
4 For a summary of that visit see the Center for International Policy’s Cuba Program. Washington, DC. “Cuba Program.” http://ciponline.org/cuba/cubaandterrorism/interview%20with%20Alarcon.htm
5 Interview with Smith, 9th August 2006.
Guantanamo”, was held in April and the other, “A History of Terrorism in Miami, Florida, was organized in October.  

The Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) has also sponsored a number of Congressional trips to Cuba. Amongst the recipients are Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Michael McNulty (D-NY) who visited Cuba on a fact-finding mission in February 2000, “to evaluate the impact of the U.S. embargo on the people of Cuba”. James P. McGovern (D-Mass) was also sponsored by WOLA to visit Cuba in April 2000 on a fact-finding mission “to facilitate education and cultural exchanges between Massachusetts universities and Cuban counterparts”. Joe Moakley (D-Mass) also received funding from WOLA for that trip. However, his purpose was “to create dialogue and exchanges between education leaders in Massachusetts and Cuba.” WOLA later sponsored McGovern on a subsequent fact-finding mission in February, 2004. 

WOLA also engage in educational outreach to the U.S. public on Cuba policy issues. In the firm belief that educated and organized citizen groups can make a change, WOLA advocates a number of strategies. These include reaching out to church groups; universities (faculty and students); local business groups; chambers of commerce; farm groups; agricultural associations and Cuba Americans. WOLA also offers detailed tips for citizens to work with these groups to undertake an educational event together such as a talk hosted by a university; to write a letter to a local newspaper or to visit a member of Congress or Congressional candidate together. In addition, WOLA works with CIP and the LAWG to organize seminars and conferences treating

---


9 Ibid.
with anti-embargo issues. Its website publishes articles from these D.C. groups and they have cooperated to publicly applaud the efforts of Senators and Congresspersons attempting to repeal the embargo.\textsuperscript{10} Although WOLA does not support the embargo on trade, according to coordinator of the Cuba project, Geoff Thale, “the organization has no official position on sanctions”. Moreover, though WOLA’s relationship with the state is not exactly friendly, they do hold meetings and civilized discussions”.\textsuperscript{11}

The Latin American Working Group (LAWG) has posted numerous publications in its website through which it hopes to educate the public on U.S.-Cuba policy. Some of these are authored or co-authored by the head of the Cuba program, Mavis Anderson\textsuperscript{12}. The LAWG also posts several articles written by Philip Peters of the Lexington Institute\textsuperscript{13}. Other articles by the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET), the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists (ENCASA) and CIP also appear in LAWG’s website.\textsuperscript{14} In 2006, LAWG posted an extensive document entitled “Retreat from Reason: U.S.-Cuba Academic Relations and the Bush Administration” written by Kimberly Stanton (2006).\textsuperscript{15} The coalition also works with WOLA and CIP, its partner organizations, to issue press releases lending support

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{11} Interview with Thale, 20\textsuperscript{th} May 2005. \\
\textsuperscript{13} Peters’ publications in the LAWG’s website include “Dieting for Democracy” (6\textsuperscript{th} May, 2004) and “The Value of Engagement with Cuba” (4\textsuperscript{th} September, 2003). An ardent anti-embargo advocate, Peters is actually a Cuba expert who is employed with the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Virginia. See Lexington Institute. www.lexingtoninstitute.org for more of his publications. \\
\end{tabular}
to congressional voting against the embargo policy such as the Senate Travel Bill. Its “Congress Watch” section keeps readers informed of the U.S. Cuba debate in the House.\textsuperscript{16} Its website also contains articles condemning the embargo published by prominent newspapers such as the \textit{Miami Herald}, \textit{the Chicago Tribune}, \textit{the Washington Post} and the \textit{Sun Sentinel}.\textsuperscript{17}

Via a flier, the LAWG offers readers the opportunity to sign up for its email network which will allow them to receive timely updates on U.S. Cuba policy. It also solicits signatures for petitions to various officials at a website where information on the plight of those who have traveled to Cuba and the U.S.-Cuba policy debate can be found. In addition, the coalition provides tips for members of the public to contact their senators and representatives and to write a letter to the editor or an Op-Ed for the local newspaper.\textsuperscript{18} However, former staff member, Phil Schmidt, affirms that a major strategy of the LAWG is working with grassroots organization such as Witness for Peace, Catholic Relief Services, Global Exchange, Oxfam America, the Alliance of Baptists and the International Labor Rights Fund.\textsuperscript{19}

Like CIP and WOLA, the New York-based Center for Cuban Studies also aims to educate and inform the public about U.S. Cuba policy. However, it diverges in its emphasis on the internal dynamics of the island, specifically, art and culture. Under the directorship of the energetic Sandra Levinson, the Center has been organizing trips to Cuba since 1973 for both groups and individuals that falls within the legal exemptions to the U.S. ban on travel. These trips are geared towards professional research, news-gathering, educational study and religious


\textsuperscript{19} Interview with Schmidt, 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2005.
study. Some of these are custom-planned research trips. The Center has also offered Spanish language classes in the past. In addition, the Center has set up a Lifeline Fund which facilitates contributions and donations to Cuban institutions. These include medicines and medical supplies, religious artifacts, artists’ supplies and educational materials.20

The Center’s Lourdes Casal Library holds thousands of post-1959 books on Cuba. The library is open to the public by appointment on Friday afternoons where visitors can review the numerous magazines, newspapers and special collection of study materials and extensive clippings file, housed there. Its magazine, Cuba Update, treats with issues such as migration, sexual politics, sustainable development, women, travel and the embargo. The printed magazine is no longer available and has been substituted by an online version, Cuba Update Online, and a soon to be published short monthly newsletter. In addition, the Center hosts numerous seminars which focus on issues such as “the African roots of Cuban culture, Cuba’s economic crisis, architecture and urban planning, health care, film, the performing and visual arts, religion law and justice, education, day care and the environment”.21

The Center’s “Cuban Art Space”, advertised through its website, www.cubanartspace.net, seeks to promote the work of Cuban artists. The Center is committed to this feat to the extent that it is prepared to take legal action against the American government if necessary. In 1991, the Center spearheaded a successful lawsuit against the Treasury Department. Since then, the importation and sale of original art from Cuba has been legal in the United States. The Center has a collection of several thousand art works, posters, hand-made books and photographs by Cuban artists. Director of the Center, Sandra Levinson, frequently hosts and curates art and

21 Ibid.
poster exhibitions and offers Cuban artifacts for rent or sale to the American public. According to Levinson, one of the strategies employed by the Center is working with journalist to present an accurate picture of the Cuban reality. Another strategy is an attempt to depart from the political image of the D.C. groups. “The Center does not engage in politicking although we do not deny that the Center is political since the Cuba issue can never be apolitical”. In this regard, the Center does not engage in lobbying on the Hill but focuses on cultural activities.

Like the Center for Cuban Studies, the recently formed Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET), has also employed litigation. However, its goal is specifically to fight against the violations of academic freedoms. On 13th June, 2006, Dr. Wayne S. Smith of Johns Hopkins University; Dr. John Cotman of Howard University; Jessica Kamen and Adnan Ahmad, both undergraduate students at Johns Hopkins University, legally challenged the state on the academic travel ban. The suits were filed against the U.S. Treasury Department over restrictions on educational travel issued on June 16 of 2004. According to the group, these restrictions clearly violate academic freedom as defined by the Supreme Court. ECDET has been assisted by the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida which also filed a lawsuit in June, 2006 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, “challenging the constitutionality of the recently signed state law banning Florida’s public universities from using private, state, or federal funds for travel to Cuba and certain other countries” (Burton 2006). To lend solidarity to its cause the ECDET has employed the strategy of reaching out to hundreds of

23 Interview with Levinson, 26th May 2005.
colleges and universities in the U.S. some of which have become active members in the coalition.\textsuperscript{25}

The two business coalitions work in close collaboration and employ similar tactics and strategies. In collaboration with the National Foreign Trade Council, USA Engage has issued numerous press releases and posted several articles in its website on developments regarding the U.S embargo on Cuba. Some of these have been published by other institutions such as the American Association for World Health, Human Rights Watch and the Cato Institute. The publications include “The impact of the U.S. Embargo on Health and Nutrition in Cuba”; “Human Rights Watch Opposes the Embargo on Cuba”; and “Cato Institute Study Urges U.S. to Lift Cuba Sanctions”.\textsuperscript{26} Director of USA Engage, Jake Colvin, admitted that the organization has been involved in lobbying Congress. Indeed, this organization seems to be the only one under study which enjoys a cordial relationship with the state, even occasionally holding meetings with state officials. This, according to Colvin, is due to the fact that Cuba is not the only issue in their agenda since it addresses sanctions imposed on other countries such as Iran (Interview with Colvin, 19\textsuperscript{th} August, 2006).

The U.S.-Cuba Trade Association (USCTA) has forged strategic partnerships with both the National Foreign Trade Council and USA Engage. These organizations not only support the USCTA but also facilitate its activities. The USCTA has organized conferences on Trade issues, two of which was held in 2006. The first entitled “Doing Business in Cuba”, was organized with


\textsuperscript{26} USAEngage. 2004. www.usaengage.org
the Florida Citrus Club and was held in Orlando, Florida in April. The second called the “U.S.-Cuba Energy Summit, was held in Mexico City, Mexico in February. Both conferences attracted a host of business interests including Caterpillar, Exxon Mobil Exploration, the Lewis Energy Group, Hemingway Preservation Foundation and Purity Foods. Jake Colvin, Director of USA-Engage, attended and participated in both conferences.

Lobbying is also a major tactic of USCTA. Both the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) and USA Engage provide extensive professional lobbying personnel and experience to support Congressional initiatives of direct concern to companies which trade with Cuba. USCTA call on these lobbyists as well as coordinate and work closely with both these organizations to protect the current business with Cuba from interference and to support and realize new measures to ease the procedures and build new business opportunities. Like CIP and WOLA, USCTA also takes trade delegations to Cuba. For Kirby Jones, President of USCTA, “taking business people to Cuba is important because they need to get educated and understand the potential for trade with Cuba. The level of lack of information about Cuba in the United States is astounding”.

The Cuban American organizations also engage in conventional tactics. The Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD), one of the oldest Cuban American organizations, has been vociferous in highlighting the changing dynamics of the community and the rise of moderate Cuban Americans. Former Director, Sean García, was vocal about the stance taken by the

---


28 Ibid.


30 Interview with Jones, 7th June 2005, 16th August 2006.
Committee and moderate Cuban Americans in the Elián González debacle.\textsuperscript{31} In 2003, the Committee had also jointly sponsored a conference with other anti-embargo organizations such as World Policy Institute, Puentes Cubanos, Fundación Amistad, The Time is Now Coalition, Cambio Cubano and Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba.\textsuperscript{32} According to Alfredo Durán, founder of CCD, the Committee has reached out overseas to countries like Venezuela and Spain which have lent support to the CCD in the past. In addition, the CCD had a radio program called “Transición” which transmitted anti-embargo programs daily via the 1450 am station which attempted to counteract the hardline transmissions of Radio Martí.\textsuperscript{33}

The Miami based Cuba Study Group has set up a “news center” in its website to allow visitors to read the latest news from and about Cuba. With articles from leading newspapers such as the \textit{Miami Herald}, \textit{Financial Times}, \textit{New York Times}, \textit{El País} and \textit{El Universal}, visitors can be updated on the latest developments from the island. The Group’s website also has a “research section” providing visitors with a wide variety of research papers written by some of the world’s leading Cubanists. They treat with issues like democracy and transition; economy and development; labor rights and U.S. policy. The “Research Section” also has a comprehensive list of Cuba Experts, allowing visitors to search and contact experts in areas ranging from society and culture to the military. In addition, this section provides a list of “suggested books” regarding Cuba ranging from fiction to issue-specific publications. Through a project called \textit{consenso cubano} (discussed below), the Cuba Study Group collaborates with other groups comprising political parties, academic and cultural institutions and other institutions which share

\textsuperscript{31} Cable News Network. CNNinternational.com. \url{www.edition.cnn.com}


\textsuperscript{33} Interview with Durán, 19\textsuperscript{th} December, 2006.
similar goals.\textsuperscript{34} According to co-Chairman, Carlos Saladrigas, “our strategy is to challenge the status quo by reframing the issue so that the image of Cuban Americans in South Florida will be changed while at the same time initiating the process of transition to democracy in Cuba”.\textsuperscript{35}

The Cuban American Commission for Family Rights has been vigorously protesting the 2004 restrictions on family travel via press conferences and peaceful street demonstrations in Miami and Washington D.C. in which hundreds of Cuban Americans participated.\textsuperscript{36} The Commission has also worked with the William C. Velazquez Institute (WCVI) to conduct a poll on Cuban American attitudes to the new restrictions and support amongst them for the George W. Bush administration.\textsuperscript{37} In addition, the Commission has participated in several national summits in Cuba in Mobil, Alabama in 2005 and at Rutgers University School of Law in Newark, New Jersey in October, 2006. Silvia Wilhelm, Executive Director of the Commission, claims that the organization has commissioned a documentary entitled “Those I left Behind”. She also admits to a close relationship with certain members of Congress, to having testified against the travel ban in Congress and to working closely with other organizations such as CIP, WOLA and LAWG.\textsuperscript{38}

The California based Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF), collaborates closely with the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights to promote humanitarian travel


\textsuperscript{35} Interview with Saladrigas, 6\textsuperscript{th} June 2006.

\textsuperscript{36} For example, the Commission participated in a Cuba Action Day in April 2005 in Washington D.C. in which more than 700 gathered to call for an end to the travel ban on Cuba. For details, see CommonDreams.org Newscenter. 1997-2007. “Cuba Action Day April 27: Over 700 to Call for End to Travel Ban; Leaders Coming to Washington.” http://www.commondreams.org/news2005/0426-06.htm.


\textsuperscript{38} Interview with Wilhelm, 21\textsuperscript{st} August 2006.
to Cuba. It establishes direct links of support and friendship with the Cuban Association for the Disabled. Amongst its many strategies are relief efforts undertaken with other national-based organizations to assist victims of natural disasters in Cuba; social work projects designed to compare efforts to meet basic human needs and to enhance human well-being; collaboration with the U.S.-Cuba Sister-City to promote and facilitate people-to-people engagements of mutual benefit; cultural exchanges, art exhibits, music, dance, cinema, and festival events to promote Cuban culture and raise funds for humanitarian projects. CAAEF also engages in forums and debates at schools and universities, the National Press Club, and in U.S. and foreign conference sites; press outreach, Op-Ed pieces, radio and newspaper interviews through U.S. and foreign media outlets, congressional visits and distribution of educational material on perspectives of Cuban Americans on U.S.-Cuba Relations. Furthermore, it participates in joint action and advocacy work with business, religious, human rights, cultural, and humanitarian groups to monitor legislation that may adversely impact on the well-being of both Cubans and Americans.  

CAAEF works very closely with other organizations which are willing to lend their resources for joint programs. According to Fernández, “the organizations have a ready stock of resources amongst each other. We are having a meeting this Saturday in Miami and CAAEF will pay for accommodation for some visiting participants from other groups. Silvia Wilhelm will also facilitate us in finding accommodation for participants within the Cuban American community. Some of our resources are located in Cuba. Sister Cities, an organization which

---

focuses on the twinning of U.S. and Cuban cities, receive support from mayors in the U.S. which are twinned with mayors in Cuba”.  

CAAEF has been engaged in a project know as “La Familia” for over seven years. It is a humanitarian project which has secured licenses from both the United States Department of Commerce and the Office of Foreign Assets Control for the delivery and exportation of donations to the Cuban Association for the Physically Disabled. The project is unique in two respects. Firstly, deliveries are made on a regular basis to meet current needs and secondly, assessments are made with each delivery for future assistance. Participants in the La Familia mission strive to assist the physically impaired to reach new levels of independent living and empowerment.  

CAEF also issues press releases on the embargo issue which it openly condemns, specifically the 2004 restrictions on travel. The organization also posts news articles on developments on Cuba in its website and on upcoming events hosted by itself and other anti-embargo organizations. It also publishes articles in major newspapers such as the Miami Herald and Granma International; and offers legislatives updates on the embargo debate in the U.S. Congress. 

40 Interview with Fernández, 25th October 2006.  
41 Interview with Fernández, 23rd October 2006.  
A unique and outstanding strategy of CAAEF was taking the Cuba issue to the 61st Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights on 31st March, 2005, following the 2004 restrictions on family and academic travel. There, President Delvis Fernández addressed “Questions of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of People of Cuban Origin Living in the United States of America and in Territories Under its Jurisdiction”. As a Cuban American, Fernández treated with a grievance close to his heart and the hearts of his compatriots in the United States by taking the issue to the UN. He related the story of a 103 year-old grandmother of Cuban origin who resides in the United States who was anxious to see her son, a resident of Cuba in a grave life-threatening situation, suffering from lung-cancer. The family contacted their United States Congressional representatives but was told she could not obtain an exception to travel with an accompanying family member. Similarly, he expounded the sorry plight of CAAEF’s La Familia project which “is held hostage waiting for a license placed on hold since August 15, 2004. Neither aid nor assistance has been sent for seven months while officials of the United States Government deliberate on granting a humanitarian travel permit to deliver donations already licensed by the United States Commerce Department”. The historic event was reported in the Cuban newspaper, Granma International:

Cuban-American groups at the Human Rights Commission (HRC) have condemned the measures - which they described as “criminal” - adopted by President George W. Bush to restrict their contact with relatives on the island, reported PL. Delvis Fernández Levy, president of the Cuban-American Alliance Education Fund, took part in this Thursday’s session in which Item 10, relating to economic, social and cultural rights, was debated. He explained that in July last year, the White House implemented certain regulations which contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other conventions adopted by the United Nations. He called on the HRC “to consider these violations to fundamental human rights and freedoms” and urged “the government of George W. Bush to put an end to the suffering caused by such policies. “Fernández Levy told Prensa Latina that it is the first time that Cuban-American citizens have attended this UN forum in order to make a

complaint about the U.S. “cruel anti-Cuban regulations.” “This is an historic moment. We have delegations from at least four organizations from California, Orlando and Miami. Now is the time for more people to take to the streets and add weight to this demand,” he affirmed (Granma International, April 1st, 2005).

Another strategy used by most of the organizations is the skillful framing of their grievances to evoke public empathy and sympathy for Cuban Americans and Cuba and to portray the administration as “immoral” and “unjust” for tightening the embargo. Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba, for example, has couched its grievance in humanitarian terms even though many of its members are profit-seeking business interests. The LAWG, CIP, WOLA and CAAEF have been promoting a photo exhibit depicting graphic representations of Cuban Americans who are affected by the travel ban entitled “Love Loss and Longing: The Impact of U.S. Travel Policy on Cuban American Families.” Gripping titles of articles such as, “Families Torn Apart”, “Strict U.S. Policies on Cuba Tears Families Apart”, “A Bankrupt Cuba Policy”, “U.S. Still Wrongheaded in its Approach to Cuba”, “The United States and Cuba - Strands of a Failed Policy” and UN Says no to US Blockade of Cuba”, pervade the websites of the anti-embargo organizations.45

Confrontational Strategies and Tactics

Only two of the organizations under study have employed confrontational tactics, openly breaking the law and defying state officials by making illegal trips to Cuba. The refusal to apply for a license is a tactic they employ to directly challenge the travel ban. As the oldest anti-embargo organization, Venceremos Brigade has been involved in educational activities since 1969. However, its more popular and controversial activity has been taking brigadistas to Cuba. Determined not to legitimize the embargo travel policy, the organization continues to take

brigadistas of all races, socio-economic class and sexual orientations to Cuba. In order to show solidarity for the Cuban Revolution in the past, the group has taken brigadistas to work in the sugar harvests and do agricultural and construction work in the island such as painting buildings and hauling construction materials.46

While there, they sleep in camps designed to host solidarity groups on bunk beds in rooms accommodating six to ten people. They have several meetings with Cuban organizations such as the Federation of Cuban Women; the Union of Communist Youth; and Municipal, Regional and National Assemblies. They also visit social and economic institutions such as health clinics, senior centers and orphanages, dropping off material aid in the process. Cultural activities in the island involve visits to museums, musical and dance performances and special events.47 In 2003, the brigadistas painted a neighborhood health clinic and celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks. In 2004, the Brigade celebrated its 35th anniversary by organizing a large and visible travel challenge because “Bush was increasing harassment of both “licensed” and “non-licensed” travelers” 48.

The other confrontational group, Pastors for Peace, sometimes collaborates with Venceremos Brigade in its activities on Cuba. A joint effort was undertaken in 2003 when the 34th Brigade “met with the members of the Pastors for Peace/IFCO Caravan and participated in several education workshops, such as Cuban Legal System and Hip Hop in Cuba. The Brigade also participated in a historic meeting with former Agents of the Cuban government that infiltrated Counter-Revolutionary organizations based in Cuba, that are supported by the

48 Ibid.
American Interest Section in Cuba”. They also participated in a historic meeting with former agents of the Cuban government that infiltrated counter-revolutionary organizations based in Cuba.49

The direct confrontational tactics of the New York based Pastors for Peace are quite similar to that of Venceremos Brigade but are different from the conventional tactics of the other groups. Pastors for Peace has been challenging the embargo policy for the last fourteen years by delivering humanitarian aid to Cuba without a Treasury Department license through its friendship caravans. Since 1992, the annual Caravans have traveled in school buses, trucks and cars to Cuba via Texas and Mexico taking medical and educational supplies, computers, school buses, milk, Bibles and bicycles collected from groups across the U.S. and Canada. Caravanistas hail from the U.S., Mexico and Europe. On the way to Texas, they stay with local community activists across the U.S.50

The annual Caravans are dedicated to different sectors of Cuban society. The seventh caravan was dedicated to the children of Cuba and Pastors for Peace delivered 500 tons of aid. This included a mobile library equipped with a Pentium computer, a pediatric ambulance, four school buses, and educational and medical aid. The Caravan left from both the East and West Coast of the U.S. The eighth caravan included 165 volunteers from across the U.S., Canada, Mexico and six European countries. It was dedicated to the children and elders of Cuba and deliveries included book mobiles, ambulances, computers, pediatric and geriatric medicines and raw materials to facilitate Cuba’s production of 385,000 tons worth of life-saving antibiotics.51

49 Veneceremos Brigade. “About Venceremos Brigade.” http://www.venceremosbrigade.org/aboutVB34.htm
50 Interview with Gasteyer, 10th August 2006.
Subsequent caravans were dedicated to Cuba’s doctors and nurses; students and athletes; Cuba’s innovation in alternative energy and transportation; its progress in health and healing and the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. The organization provided millions of dollars worth of sophisticated medical aid, solar panels and equipment; a fifty-three foot trailer filled with medical supplies; a bike mobile fully equipped for repairing bicycles. The 13th Caravan of July, 2002, visited the Latin American School of Medical Sciences to meet the dozens of American students who are recruited by Pastors for Peace and are studying on full Cuban scholarships to serve as doctors in medically under-served areas of the U.S.\(^\text{52}\)

Staff member Shane Gasteyer admits that Pastors for Peace has engaged in some lobbying but not to any large extent. They have also taken congressional delegations to Cuba like CIP and WOLA. He relates that Reverend Lucius Walker, who heads the organization, employs well-calculated tactics and strategies in order to irritate state officials while at the same time, evoke public sympathy for Cuba.\(^\text{53}\) This involves breaking the law and taking humanitarian aid to Cuba, respectively. In this regard, the organization has ensured that efforts by the state to confiscate aid materials at the U.S. border received ample attention from the American media. Indeed, the strategy worked well in 1996 when computers were seized by state officials and caravanistas engaged in a thirty two days Fast for Life at the San Diego border. The event attracted such widescale media attention that international organizations from Africa, Europe and Latin America, further pledged 1400 computers in solidarity with Cuba and the Fast for Life. Seventy members of Congress joined the effort and the state was eventually forced to release the computers which now comprise forty percent of the INFOMED network in Cuba, providing life-

\(^{52}\) Ibid.

\(^{53}\) Interview with Gasteyer, 10th August, 2006.
giving medical information for Cuban doctors. Like Venceremos Brigade who believes that it is our “duty to disobey unjust laws, the refusal of Pastors for Peace to apply for a license under the terms of the embargo is based on the principle: “to do so would be a *defacto* recognition of an immoral policy”. In response, the state has issued veiled threats via letters requesting information on where the caravanistas stayed in Cuba and how much money they spent in the island, but no legal action has been taken against the group.

**Solidarity Networks and Co-option**

Information provided by the organizations’ websites and the structured and semi-structured interviews, reveals that the organizations work very closely with each other, lending solidarity when necessary as in the case of Venceremos Brigade and Pastors for Peace. There is also a high level of cooperation amongst the three major D.C. groups. CIP and the LAWG, for example, jointly produce a program called “Just the Facts”, which is a database of U.S. security assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean. Seventeen organizations have also collaborated to jointly produce a website called cubacentral.com advocating an end to the travel ban on Cuba.

Perhaps the most vivid example of the movement’s networking and collaboration was in the organization of a “Cuban Action Day” held on 27th April, 2005. The event had 700 participants from more than thirty five states who traveled to Washington D.C. for this day of advocacy against the embargo on Cuba held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Amongst the participants were CIP, WOLA, LAWG and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association. The attendees and

---


56 Interview with Gasteyer, 10th August 2006.


Dense networking is also evident in the close collaboration and cooperation amongst the D.C. organizations and intense interaction with other organizations in Miami and New York. The CIP website for example, carries articles published by LAWG. WOLA’s former intern, Claire Rodriguez, is now a staff member at the LAWG and the intern, Vincent Pascandolo, who interned initially at the World Policy Institute, later joined CIP in the same capacity. Alfredo Duran from the CCD sits on CIP’s Board. Two prestigious members of WOLA, William Goodfellow and Joy Olson, are amongst the distinguished members of the Board of Directors at the LAWG. Silvia Wilhelm sits amongst the Board of Directors of the US-Cuba Trade Association which follows the example of USA-Engage and establishes close ties with the National Foreign Trade Council. Even though both are coalitions representing business interests, there is no sense of competition between them. Indeed, the President of the National Foreign Trade Council, William Reinsch, is both Chairman of the Board of Directors of the US-Cuba Trade Association and Co-Chair of USA-Engage.

Solidarity amongst groups is also quite visible in the 2003 American Farm Bureau Federation Convention where the members of the organizations worked together to present a booth which allowed them to share their message with the general public. As CIP’s website describes it, “the longest lines were at the End the Embargo on Cuba booth, sponsored by CIP, LAWG, WOLA and the Cuban American Alliance…over and over again, convention attendees

told LAWG’s Mavis Anderson, WOLA’s Rachel Farley, CIP’s Anya Landau and the Cuban American Alliance’s Delvis Fernández, that the embargo “doesn’t make any sense and “should have ended a long time ago”.

Several other activities including meeting and conferences have been jointly sponsored by a number of organizations. The 2002 National Summit on Cuba was sponsored by the National Farm Bureau Federation, USA Engage, the World Policy Institute and Americans for Humanitarian trade with Cuba. It was chaired by CIP’s Anya Landau. The summit incorporated a Cuba Lobby Day launched by younger-generation Cuban Americans who networked with other Cuban American advocacy groups. It demonstrated for the first time, “the remarkable breadth of support that exists throughout the United States for creating a more sensible policy toward Cuba”.

Over the years, the anti-embargo organizations have networked with a number of academics, business, and grassroots groups. In addition, several politicians and ex-politicians have demonstrated solidarity with the movement. In 2000, CIP hosted a conference on the prospects of agricultural trade between the United States and Cuba. Amongst the active participants at the conference were the United States Rice Producers Association and the American Farm Bureau Federation. The latter’s convention in 2003 in Tampa was actively supported by CIP, WOLA, LAWG and the Cuban American Education Alliance. The 2002 Summit in Washington D.C. was sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation, USA

---


Engage, World Policy Institute and Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba. The latter comprised prominent business interests such as Hills and Company and Archer Daniels Midlands Company.\textsuperscript{62}

In April 2005, the Cuba Study Group networked with twenty other organizations founded a project called “Consenso Cubano” which aims to unite the Cuban diaspora along a series of basic principles. Consenso Cubano is viewed as an open and dynamic process where these groups which are primarily “Cuban political, social, labor, cultural, intellectual, religious and human rights organizations, committed to reconciliation and to a non-violent transition in Cuba to a sovereign state under the rule of law”. It is a plural gathering space for reflection, conciliation and concord among Cuban organizations.\textsuperscript{63}

Religious organizations have also expressed solidarity with the anti-embargo movement. These include the Alliance of Baptists, Church World Service, the Cuban Jewish Community, the Cuban American Jewish Commission, the United Methodist Church and Witness for Peace. Church World Service has issued a petition on the implications of the 2006 Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba report which ends humanitarian aid provided through the Cuban Council of Churches. The petition is posted on LAWG’s website via an electronic link soliciting signatures from the public. Also posted on LAWG’s website is a link directing readers to a letter issued by the National Council of Churches to then Secretary of State, Collin Powell, pleading


with the Bush administration to reverse the Cuba policy which will “only strengthen the failed policy of the last forty years”. 64

Co-option is also heavily practiced by the anti-embargo movement where it takes place at two levels. Older organizations reach out to other co-optable sectors of the society such as the academy, the business sector and the Congress while newer organizations co-opt older organizations which help facilitate their development. The academic community represents one such group which was uncoordinated until the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET) was formed in 2004 when the Bush administration imposed stringent restrictions on academic travel to Cuba. Bill Leogrande, Dean of Public Affairs at American University and Cynthia McClintock, Professor of Political Science at George Washington University, were already involved with CIP, WOLA and the Center for Cuban Studies before they became part of the ECDET.65 Wayne Smith who heads the Cuba project at CIP, also co-chairs the ECDET coalition and is himself an adjunct professor at the John Hopkins University. Carmen Diana Deere, Director of the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Florida, affirms that ECDET had contacted her to be part of the organization because they wanted to get as many names as possible to strengthen the opposition against academic travel. It was her role as former President of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), which made her an invaluable asset to ECDET because “LASA had been against the embargo since the sixties and more so in recent times because of the American ban on Cuban academics attending the conference in the U.S.”66 The ECDET has networked with hundreds of professors at universities throughout the


66 Interview with Deere, 2nd November 2006.
U.S. who it lists as members in its webpage.\textsuperscript{67} Such moral support is crucial to the survival of the ECDET which does not receive funding from foundations nor from members.

A similar kind of networking is found amongst a group of scholars calling itself the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists (ENCASA), consisting of more than one hundred Cuban American scholars and writers. They hail from twenty six states and sixty different cities and more than eighty percent are affiliated with universities. Other members include full professors, curators, playwrights, poets, novelists, attorneys and editors. ENCASA is particularly concerned with “the anti-family measures spawned by the 2004 Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, its provisions undermining the free exchange of ideas, and restrictions on travel by U.S. citizens”.\textsuperscript{68}

The more recently formed business coalitions have also co-opted the older organizations in their drive for free trade with Cuba as seen in the 2003 American Farm Bureau Federation Convention and the 2002 National Summit on Cuba (mentioned above) in which CIP, WOLA and LAWG were actively involved. Conversely, the older organizations have also co-opted the business community especially those interested in fostering trade with Cuba. Thus, the 2004 National Summit on Cuba hosted by the World Policy Institute engaged both the recently formed U.S-Cuba Trade Association and the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights.\textsuperscript{69} Several other new organizations which emerged in the nineties and after the 2004 restrictions were imposed have drawn on the experience, skill and expertise of the older and popular organizations like CIP, LAWG and WOLA.

\textsuperscript{67} Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel. \url{www.ecdet.org}

\textsuperscript{68} Cuban American Alliance. 1995. “La Alborada.” \url{http://www.cubamer.org/item.asp?id=23} for further details about ENCASA.

\textsuperscript{69} World Policy Institute. New York. “National Summit on Cuba.” \url{http://www.worldpolicy.org/projects/uscuba/archive.htm}
Another group which has been co-opted by the movement is that of politicians, ex-politicians and statesmen. Both the unstructured and semi-structured interviews repeatedly reveal the same names of Congresspersons who have been active in the movement over time. They have all supported Amendments to lift the embargo at some time the other. Some of these have even visited Cuba as part of delegations seeking to promote trade.

On 23rd February, 1999, some members from the Association of Former Members of Congress networked an organization called Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba (AHTC), which sought the removal of restrictions on the sale of food and medicine to the island. Several prominent business interests were involved such as Archer Daniels Midland, Cargill, Caterpillar, the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and the National Foreign Trade Council. Amongst the prominent members are Craig L. Fuller, Former Chief of Staff for Vice President, George Bush; Sam Gibbons, Former Florida Congressman and Frank Carlucci, Chairman of the Carlyle Group and former NSC Chief under President Reagan.

A number of grassroots organizations have also been courted, co-opted and recruited by the anti-embargo movement and vice-versa. As with some of the other organizations mentioned above, there is a reciprocal relationship with each networking with the other. The LAWG and Pastors for Peace are amongst those working most closely with grassroots groups. Some grassroots groups working with LAWG include Network, which is a national Catholic lobby for social justice and peace; Oxfam America, committed to alleviating hunger and promoting social justice and equality; Peace Brigades International, which supports justice for justice and human


72 Americans for Humanitarians with Cuba. www.ahtc.org
rights through non-violent action and Witness for Peace which is dedicated to promoting peace, justice and sustainable economies in the Americas. The latter also works with Pastors for Peace whose annual caravans to Cuba are facilitated by numerous community organizations including church groups, labor unions and the volunteer *caravanistas* themselves who fund their own trip to Cuba with the caravans.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, one notes that the strategies and tactics employed by the organizations are both conventional and confrontational and are fairly heterogeneous across groups. Though most have websites with extensive self-publications and postings of articles and press releases and organize or participate in conventions, seminars and conferences; some take delegations to Cuba while others engage in lobbying and still others in litigation, petitions, demonstrations or illegal visits to Cuba. A particularly unique and outstanding strategy has been CAAEF’s taking the cause to the 61st Session of the UN Convention on Human Rights on behalf of its members. Yet, irrespective of their location, whether in D.C., New York, Miami or California, the anti-embargo movement is ultimately a dense network of organizations which co-opt or have been co-opted by other groups in the movement, collaborate and cooperate extensively, and lend strong solidarity and support for each other’s activities.

These strategies and tactics are the means or instruments employed by the organizations to challenge the state in the hope of realizing their primary goal of changing U.S. Cuba policy. They will be translated into direct activism as they confront several pro-embargo state policies which will be the subject of the next chapter.

---


74 Interview with Gasteyer, 10th August 2006.
CHAPTER 5
SPEAKING TRUTHS TO POWER: CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND CHALLENGING THE STATE

On 27th April, 2005, more than 700 Americans traveled from thirty five states to participate in what they called a “Cuba Action Day” in Washington D.C. It was a day of advocacy on Capitol Hill organized to demand that Congress end the Cuba travel ban that “divides families, denies Americans their fundamental right to travel and free access to humanitarian support, harms Cubans, restricts a market important to American farmers and impedes the creation of American jobs”. The participants also included over 100 Cuban-Americans who are angered by restrictions on family visits. The activists were joined by several Congressmen and Senators including Senators Bacchus and Enzi and Representatives Flake and Delahunt. The Day’s activities was sponsored by the Center for International Policy, the Latin American Working Group, The Washington Office on Latin America and fifteen other organizational co-sponsors.¹

The strategies and tactics discussed in the previous chapter were translated into direct action as the anti-embargo organizations openly challenged the state resulting in activities such as the Cuban Action Day described above. This Day signaled a single event in the history of anti-embargo activism which began since 1969 with the formation of Venceremos Brigade. The decade of the seventies saw the emergence of numerous pro-peace and antiwar movements. Organizations seeking to challenge the state on the Cuban embargo also emerged in that decade. They include the Center for International Policy; the Center for Cuban Studies; the Washington Office on Latin America and Alamar Associates.

This chapter attempts to trace anti-embargo activism as the groups relentlessly challenge the states on several official pro-embargo policies. First, it attempts a brief overview of the anti-

embargo challenge under successive American presidents. Second, it examines the reaction to various state policies including the Torricelli Bill, The Helms-Burton Law, the ban on food and medicine and the Reports of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. Third, it outlines the contours of the traditional Cuban American community and the Cuban American National Foundation and explores the rise of the moderate majority of Cuban Americans in South Florida as they became more vociferous and organized against the embargo in the post-Cold War era.

Rallying Against the Embargo: From Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush

The pro-engagement policy pursued by President Carter (1977-1981) was welcomed by the anti-embargo groups. While in Office, President Carter attempted to soften the U.S. embargo policy to Cuba. Diplomatic ties were partially restored through the establishment of “Interests Sections” in both counties. Carter also dropped the travel ban and allowed subsidiaries of U.S. companies to sell products to Cuba. In addition, he allowed Cuban exiles to send remittances to relatives in the island. In 1979 alone, 150,000 Americans visited Cuba under Carter’s relaxed policies. He would continue his harsh criticism of the embargo even after demitting office. In 2002, he was the first former President of the U.S. to visit the island where he called for an end to the embargo which “freezes the existing impasse, induces anger and resentment, restricts the freedoms of U.S. citizens and makes it difficult for us to exchange ideas and respect”.

The opposite was true of the presidencies of Reagan (1981-1989) and Bush (1989-1993). During these years, exile politics were dominated by the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) and its leader, Jorge Mas Canosa, a multi-millionaire contractor with a penchant for questioning the patriotism of his opponents. With generous donations to Republican presidential

candidates and key members of Congress from both parties, the Foundation, founded in 1981, gained entry to the White House and came to exercise a virtual veto power over American policy toward Cuba. Thus, Reagan tightened currency controls on Cuba. Under George H. Bush, the 1992 Torricelli Bill, which restricted trade, served to consolidate hard-line exile power in both Washington and Miami.

The end of the Cold War resulted in an increase in anti-embargo activism as perceptions of Cuba changed in the United States. First, the island was no longer perceived as an ideological or security threat to the U.S. nor as a Soviet satellite with the end of communism in the socialist bloc. Moreover, Cuba no longer supported revolutionary activity in the Third World. Second, the hardships endured by the Cuban people during the “special period” in the absence of the subvention from the USSR, evoked considerable sympathy amongst Americans and Cuban Americans alike. Thirdly, during the early to mid-nineties, Castro’s communist regime implemented a series of market reforms in the Cuban economy making the island more attractive to American business interests and potential American tourists.

The presidency of Bill Clinton marked a change in exile politics and concomitantly, on contentious politics with regards to the Cuban embargo. This change was ushered in with the formation of moderate Cuban American organizations like Cambio Cubano in 1992 and the Cuban Committee for Democracy in 1993. Indeed, one website lists the names of thirty-seven moderate Cuban American organizations, mostly based in Miami in 1993 (www.cuban-exile.com). Larry Rohter captures this changing dynamic which brought increasing opposition to the hardline embargo policy:

---


With the advent of the Clinton Administration, the foundation’s stock dropped sharply. Hoping to capitalize on the opening, a coalition of business executives, academics and other professionals who say they represent “the moderate or progressive sector of the Cuban-American population” in August formed the Cuban Committee for Democracy to provide an alternative to the foundation. The new coalition brings together several groups that have emerged here in recent months, including Cambio Cubano, led by a former guerrilla commander and political prisoner, Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo. The coalition also has ties to exile leaders in Spain and with dissidents still in Cuba. There are a whole bunch of people disturbed by the fact that a small group of Cubans here have been able to convince Washington that their views represent the totality of Cuban-American opinion,” said Alfredo Duran, a Miami lawyer who is a founder of the coalition and a former state chairman of the Democratic Party. A year ago, Mr. Duran said, it would have been pointless to form such a group. “But now there is a willingness to listen to new views” in Washington, he said, while at the same time “Cuba is in a position to be easily influenced to bring about change.” For years, the foundation and its allies have pushed the United States to tighten the screws on Mr. Castro, mainly through the economic embargo in effect since the Kennedy Administration. The apparent objective is to provoke a popular uprising or military revolt that would enable exile leaders like Mr. Mas to return to Cuba and perhaps even succeed Mr. Castro. But the newly invigorated moderate groups oppose punitive economic steps, arguing in the Cuban Committee for Democracy manifesto that “such measures harm the living conditions of Cubans without affecting the present Communist leadership.” In addition, the manifesto expresses a “willingness to meet with representatives of the present Cuban Government” as a step toward negotiating Mr. Castro’s departure from power (Rohter 1996).

Thus, anti-embargo activists began speaking truths to the power of both the state and the Cuban American National Foundation. Clinton’s 1996 Helms-Burton Law spurred a wave of criticisms after a six-member delegation of the U.S. Congressional Black Caucus visited Cuba on 18th February 1999 to evaluate the embargo. Among the visitors were Maxine Waters and Barbara Lee of California, Sheila Jackson-Lee of Texas and Julia Carson of Indiana. A flurry of protests also erupted from religious groups, human rights organizations, the UN, the European Union and the OAS as well countries like Canada and Mexico which never broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.6

The challenge to the state would intensify when in January 1998, Pope John Paul II visited Cuba and denounced the Cuban embargo. He drew worldwide attention to the question of

---

whether American sanctions on the island should continue, especially on food and medicine. In voicing disapproval of the embargo, the Pope himself became part of the anti-embargo movement. Just before he landed in Cuba, CNN reported that “The Pope is among the embargo’s critics. According to chief Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls, “for the Holy Father this is a moral problem, not a political one. (Those) who suffer the most are the weakest: the poor, the women, the children”. It spawned hope even amongst Cubans that the U.S. would at least revisit the embargo policy. At the same time, anti-embargo activists and faith-based organizations saw the Pope’s visit as an opportunity to step up their protest activity. Clinton heeded some of these calls and in March 1998, announced a relaxation of the embargo including a resumption of direct charter flights and cash remittances and the streamlining of the licensing for the sale of medicine to Cuba. The first of a series of shipments of medical supplies left the U.S. for Cuba on March 23, 1998. These policy changes were expanded upon in January 1999. Catholic leaders and some Cuban Americans praised Clinton’s decision, claiming that the 35-year old embargo had caused civilians to suffer (Moakley 1999).

Despite these strides in U.S. Cuban Relations, the protests continued under Clinton when in February, 1999, the coalition called Americans for Humanitarian Trade With Cuba (AHTC), joined the United States Association of Former Members of Congress to call on the administration to end the embargo on food and medicines to Cuba. Its Executive Director, George Fernández, declared that “the U.S. embargo on Cuba is the single most restrictive policy of its kind. Even Iraq is able to buy food and medicine from U.S. sources… As a Cuban

---

American, I speak for the vast majority of us who do not think the U.S. should be in the business of denying basic sustenance to families and children in Cuba”.8

In 2000 a 23-member task force comprising both liberals and conservatives, called for an end to the embargo in order to “help the island’s transition to a post-Castro era and reduce the chances of U.S. military intervention”.9 This attitude transferred to the Elián González affair in early 2000 when the polls showed most Americans in agreement with the decision to reunite Elián González with his father in Cuba (discussed below). The Clinton administration faced mounting pressure in April, 2001 when the Cuba Policy Foundation in Washington released a poll in which a majority of Americans are said to support the idea of doing business with Cuba and allowing travel to the island.10

President George W. Bush assumed power in 2001 even as condemnation of the embargo persisted at an unprecedented and accelerated pace. On July 23rd, 2002 the U.S. House of Representatives voted 262 to 167 to end the travel ban and allow the sale of American goods to Cuba. Seventy-three Republicans voted against the embargo.11 An editorial in the New York Daily News reported that “…slowly but surely, the tide is turning in favor of lifting travel and trade sanctions against Cuba. More and more Republicans are not willing to let the larger interests of the U.S. and their own constituents be sacrificed to the gods of electoral politics”.12 Representative Jeff Flake, the Arizona Republican who led the effort to repeal the travel ban, said that “This is all about freedom. Our government shouldn’t tell us where to travel and where

---

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
not to travel.\textsuperscript{13} The \textit{Boston Herald} towed a similar line in an editorial the next day contending that “The more travelers there are (to Cuba) the more the truth will spread, and that can only help the transition of Cuba out of tyranny when the tyrant dies”.\textsuperscript{14} House Majority Leader, Dick Armey (R-Texas), supported this view in early August that year in a statement that the U.S. should open trade with Cuba.\textsuperscript{15} On the same day, The \textit{Boston Globe} concurred in an editorial: “As for human rights, opening travel and trade to the island would improve the monitoring of human rights abuses and expose more Cubans to American values. Bush ought to put the interests of both Cubans and Americans before his domestic political needs”.\textsuperscript{16}

These condemnations seemed to have fallen on deaf ears when in 2003, President Bush established the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (discussed below).\textsuperscript{17} He followed with renewed restrictions on family, academic and cultural travel in 2004. Several anti-embargo organizations including CIP, LAWG, WOLA CAAEF and the Center for Cuban Studies, view these measures as amongst the most “draconian” and “inhumane” in the history of the embargo. It spurred widespread anti-embargo activism and spawned new organizations concerned with restrictions in family and academic travel, parcel deliveries and remittances to the island. The significance attached to U.S. Cuba policy by the Bush administration is reflected in the cabinet reshuffle in 2005 when some of the embargo’s firm supporters were appointed such as Carlos

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} J.A. Sierra. “Timetable. History of Cuba.” \texttt{http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/time/timetbl5c.htm}
\textsuperscript{16} Cuba Travel USA. “The Economic Embargo – A Time Line.” \texttt{http://www.cubatravelusa.com/history_of_cuban_embargo.htm}
\textsuperscript{17} Bureau of Western Hemispheric Affairs. “Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.” \texttt{http://www.cafc.gov/cafc/rpt/2004/67850.htm}
Gutierrez and Dan Fisk. In July, 2006, a second 93-page report from the Commission prompted further reaction and criticisms from the anti-embargo movement.

With each post-Cold War President, came a tightening embargo policy. Under George H. Bush came the Torricelli Bill, Under Clinton it was the Helms-Burton Law and George W. Bush endorsed the reports of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. These policies were all legislated in election years – 1992, 1996 and 2004 respectively. Protests against these policies; demands for removal of sanctions on food and medicine; and criticisms of the recent 2006 Report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, is evidence of increased anti-embargo activism in the post-Cold War era. This is analyzed in more depth in Chapter 7.

**Reaction to the Torricelli Bill**

The Torricelli Bill also known as the Cuban Democracy Act, was formulated in early 1992 by Congressman Robert Torricelli (D-NJ). It triggered a barrage of protests from both the domestic and international community including the United Nations. On November 24, 1992, the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly voted against the United States in approving a resolution calling for the lifting of the U.S. embargo. The year before, a similar resolution had not even made it to the floor. The United States was isolated, with only Israel and Romania voting with the U.S. The Torricelli Bill was rejected on the grounds that it violates international law, that food and medicine cannot be used as weapons (Franklin 1993). Congressional aides ridiculed the bill privately as a “dog” and a throw back to the 1960’s (Robbins 1992: 165). Some officials were concerned that it would play into Castro’s hands and would have a negative effect

---

http://www.ifconews.org/Cuba/noticias/helmstoantiCubateam.htm

19 USA.gov. “Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.”

http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~hbf/canf.htm
on American subsidiaries abroad (Robbins 1992: 166). In April 1992, Robert Gelbard, principal
Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, testified for the Bush administration
against the bill. For these reasons, it was not initially endorsed by the Bush administration. It is
only after Clinton declared in Little Havana that “I like it” and raised $125, 000 for his 1992
election campaign amongst Cuban Americans, that Bush signed it into law (Robbins 1992).
Academics and newspaper editorials were also concerned about the implication of the bill for
American diplomatic relations. In an editorial entitled “Making Poor Cubans Suffer More” the
New York Times declared that “this misnamed act is dubious in theory, cruel in its potential
practice and ignoble in its election-year expediency”. 21 The Miami Herald ran a headline stating
“European Commission upset over U.S. Law”. 22 In an article entitled “Cuban Embargo: Off the
Mark”, Elise Ackerman contends that “the measure’s extra-territoriality has US allies fuming…;
that crippling Cuba’s economy will not produce democratic reforms” (Ackerman 1992). William
LeoGrande of American University asserts that “the bill’s sanctions on U.S. companies operating
abroad promised to cause diplomatic headaches with such major trade partners and allies as
Mexico, Canada and Great Britain” (Leogrande 1998: 75). Prominent anti-embargo
organizations also opposed the Bill. Wayne Smith of CIP effectively summarized the arguments
put forward against the Bill:

There will be far more serious problems if the U.S. government tries to implement the
legislation in an aggressive manner. They may indeed not sympathize with Fidel Castro,
but Canada, Great Britain, Mexico and some of our other major trading partners do see
provisions of the act as violations of their sovereignty and have passed blocking legislation
of their own. Legal complications, disruptions in our economic relationships, and even
damage to our political relations could follow. Proponents of the act have led us into
exactly the kind of situation that it should be our primary objective to avoid, i.e., putting


important relationships at risk over an issue that is no longer even a significant foreign policy problem. In so doing, they have done the country a disservice (Smith 1993).  

The concern expressed by CIP with the Torricelli Bill was reflected in a health mission to Cuba which it undertook jointly with the American Public Health Association in June, 1993. As U.S. citizens, the members of the delegation “felt a special responsibility regarding Cuba since our government alone in the world has maintained a 33-year old economic embargo against Cuba. This embargo was recently tightened to include trade- mostly in food and medicines- by subsidiaries of U.S. companies in other countries”. One of the delegation’s goals was to gain an understanding of the embargo’s influence on the health of the Cuban people” (Kuntz 1993). The harsh impact of systemic forces buttressed by the national embargo policy was also noted at that time: “Today, Cuba’s advances in health are in danger of being reversed, due in large part to the current crisis resulting from drastic changes in trade relations with the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. The 33-year U.S. trade embargo, and the recent tightening of the embargo through the passage of “The Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, “contribute to the economic difficulties. The economic crisis known in Cuba as the “special period in peacetime”, has severely strained the nation’s health system and threatens the health of its people” (Kuntz 1993).

As a result, the American Public Health Association joined the increasing dissenting voices against the Cuban Democracy Act. It presented testimony on August 5th, 1992, before the Western Hemisphere subcommittee of the Unites States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations,

---

http://ciponline.org/ColdWar.htm
urging the Congress to reject this bill, as “an attempted attack on the health and well-being of an entire population”.  

Not only did some anti-embargo groups denounce the bill, they also openly defied it as reported in an article headlined “Church Groups Seek to Defy Cuban Embargo”. The article continued that “Church groups in the U.S. are collecting relief goods for donation to Cuba and bringing goods to Mexico in defiance of the U.S. trade embargo; Reverend Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace says groups are refusing to apply for licenses that allow exemptions to embargo because they believe the embargo, under the Cuban Democracy Act, is immoral”.

**Rejecting the Helms-Burton Law**

The Helms-Burton Law or the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996, further sought to tighten the embargo. The 1994 Congressional elections saw a Republican victory with the installation of Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) as Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee and Representative Dan Burton (R-Indiana) as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Western Hemispheric Affairs. Torricelli had chaired the Subcommittee in the previous Congress and the three Cuban Americans in Congress served on it. A provision called Title III sought to tighten sanctions on Cuba by empowering those whose property had been expropriated by the Castro regime to bring litigation against firms that “trafficked” in such property. The hope was to turn international firms away from investing in Cuba thereby toppling the Castro regime.

The outcry against the Helms-Burton Law was even more widespread than that of the Torricelli Bill. This was partly due to the Title III provision which seemed so damaging to U.S.

---


international interests that President Clinton decided to waive it. Even organizations which supported U.S. intervention for change in Cuba, opposed the Helms-Burton Law. Communications Director of the Cuban Movement for Human Rights, Ariel Hidalgo, described it as a “political mistake” (Hidalgo 1996). Caribbean companies and governments believed that the newly-signed Helms-Burton law represents “extraterrestrial” interference in their trade and other economic relations with Cuba (Canute 1996). At the same time, as Cesar Chelala notes, “in disregard of the Helms-Burton law, Cuba’s Caribbean neighbors have decided to increase their trade with Havana” (Chelala 1996). Led by Mexico and Canada, the Organization of American States ordered an investigation into the legality of the Helms-Burton Act aimed at stifling foreign investment (Rohter 1996). A Miami Herald headline read “European Union Announced that it will ask the World Trade Organization to intervene after the U.S. passes the Helms-Burton Law calling for Punishment of Foreign Companies that do Business with Cuba”\(^{26}\)

Anti-embargo organizations within the U.S. also condemned the law. Global Exchange made a call to the public to use the media and organize their community against the Act because “for numerous reasons, Helms-Burton has lit a fire under communities that will prove important in the struggle to move U.S. policy toward Cuba in a new direction. In the interests of democracy in this country and justice for the people of Cuba, we urge you to become involved in the struggle yourself”.\(^{27}\) WOLA declared that “rather than isolate Cuba, Helms-Burton has increased U.S. isolation on the issue” (Spencer 2001). On 10-11 February, 1997, CIP co-hosted a conference with the Canadian Foundation for the Americas and the Institute for European-Latin

\(^{26}\) European Union Announced that it will ask the World Trade Organization to intervene after the U.S. passes the Helms-Burton Law calling for Punishment of Foreign Companies that do Business with Cuba. Miami Herald, May 2\(^{nd}\) 1996.

American Relations to discuss the pros and cons of the Helms-Burton Act. Amongst its many findings, the conference noted the international outrage to the “blatant violation of international law” and the U.S. trend toward unilateralism. Moreover, conference participants observed that opposition to the bill was “deeply and broadly bipartisan”. The opponents included Democrats such as Jimmy Carter, Jesse Jackson and George McGovern and Republicans such as James Baker, Michael Wallop and Lawrence Engelburger, the latter calling it not only mistaken but an “imperial policy” (Smith 1997).  

The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) and Pastors for Peace called for protests at federal buildings and courthouses across the U.S. on March 22, 1996. The actions were called to support a liquid-diet hunger strike by seven members and supporters of the group and to condemn recent measures by Washington - including the Helms-Burton legislation - tightening the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba and Washington’s ban on travel to the island. Pastors for Peace announced that “our future work must include a concerted campaign to support legislation which will exempt food and medicine from the blockade. And from there we will keep working until Helms/Burton, and Torricelli, and the whole blockade are overturned. Our major objective is to do everything possible to awaken the conscience of this nation to the need to end this policy of death”.  

Wayne Smith notes the varying opposition to the Helms-Burton Law:

The Helms-Burton Act provoked a storm of international protests and retaliatory actions. Proponents of Helms-Burton claim that this simply shows the other governments are not interested in advancing the cause of human rights and a more democratic system in Cuba, but this is by no means the case. The European, Canadian, and most Latin American governments have long expressed their hope of seeing Cuba move toward a more open

---


political system with respect for the civil rights of the Cuban people. They disagree entirely with the United States, however, as to how best to advance that cause and hold that more can be accomplished through engagement, trade, and dialogue. During his visit to Cuba in January 1998, Pope John Paul II unequivocally supported that position, as have Cuba’s religious leaders of all faiths, the Jewish community, the National Council of Churches, and the Council of Cuban Bishops (Smith 1997).31

Clamoring for the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act

The biggest breakthrough in U.S. Cuban relations in the post-Cold War era came with the removal of sanctions on food and medicine. Anti-embargo activists found “influential allies” with the coalition called Americans for Humanitarian Trade With Cuba (AHTC), which joined the United States Association of Former Members of Congress to call on the Clinton administration to end the embargo on food and medicines to Cuba. Amongst the “influential allies” were David Rockefeller, A.W. Clausen, former president of the World Bank and G. Allen Andreas, Chairman and CEO of Archer Daniels Midland company.32

This clarion call combined with increasing pressure from the agricultural and business sectors led to the passage of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act in 2000. In conjunction with business interests, state officials continued to clamor for changes in U.S. Cuba policy even after the Act was passed since there were still restrictions attached to regulations on advance payments for goods imported by Cuba and payments through third countries. In November, 2005, for example, Nebraska’s Governor, Dave Heineman, embarked on a trade mission to Cuba to lay the groundwork for panhandle farmers to sell dry, edible beans to the island. The Nebraska delegation included representatives of several bean cooperatives and companies, Nebraska Farm Bureau and the Nebraska Corn Board. They were also interested in


32 See www.ahtc.org
selling corn and soya beans to Cuba.\textsuperscript{33} This was one of three delegations that journeyed to Cuba for trade purposes. Indeed, according to top officials from Alimport, Cuba’s food import company, Pedro Alvarez, Cuba has contracted to buy more than $1.4 billion in U.S. farm goods, including shipping and hefty bank fees to send payments through third nations.\textsuperscript{34}

A press release from the Cuba Policy Foundation on 5 February 2003, headlined “Lifting Cuba Ban Benefits America’s Farmers” was prepared by one of America’s leading agricultural economists, Parr Rosson, of Texas A&M University. It stated that “An end to the ban on American travel to Cuba would provide a boost for America’s farmers... Lifting the travel ban would produce between $126 million and $252 million in annual U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba, above current levels of farm sales to the island, …. and such sales would create between 3,490 and 6,980 jobs for Americans.”\textsuperscript{35}

The business cause has been taken up by several organizations including WOLA which declares that the embargo is bad for U.S. businesses and farmers because it greatly inhibits U.S. businesses from exporting goods to Cuba. A February 2001 report by the International Trade Commission found that “the U.S. loses up to $1 billion a year due to lost trade opportunities with Cuba. With the downturn in the U.S. economy and a suffering agriculture industry, restrictions


on trade with Cuba limit the growth of U.S. industries.”36 In 2003, Nancy San Martin reported on the lucrative trade opportunities in Cuba for U.S. business interests:

One year after an unprecedented trade show attracted 288 American exhibitors to Cuba, experts say the United States has become the island’s largest source of imported food and agricultural products, with sales totaling more than $250 million since last September. During that five-day U.S. Food and Agribusiness Exhibition in Havana, the exhibitors from 33 U.S. states set up booths overflowing with food samples as negotiators worked behind the scenes to snag business deals in a market that had been closed for decades. U.S. executives walked away with signed deals worth some $92 million. Since then, at least another $159 million worth of American products have made their way to Cuba, said John Kavulich, president of U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council in New York, which monitors U.S. Department of Commerce reports”...The thing that makes Cuba an attractive proposition is that it is literally 90 miles from our shores,” said Tony DeLio, vice president of marketing for Archer Daniels Midland Co., a food giant based in Decatur, Ill.” It’s very easy for us to do business there. We sell hundreds of millions of dollars worth of products throughout the Caribbean. Cuba is another stop” (San Martin 2003).

The harsh “special period” in the nineties endured by Cuba also fomented humanitarian concern for the needs of the Cuban citizens. In response to the allegations that the food would end up on the buffet tables of Cuban hotels, John Kavulich, president of U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council in New York (which monitors U.S. Department of Commerce reports), replied that “Well over 90 percent is going into the channels for distribution for the 11.2 million citizens” referring to Cuba’s food-rationing program. “We check it, we track it, we see it . . . Most of the products are being used for the ration distribution system.” This was reinforced by the fact that imports from the U.S. mainly consisted of wheat and soy-related products, “not the kind of food that would end up in hotels”.


If these business interests are not genuine in their purported concern for economic hardships endured by the Cuban people at the end of the Cold War, the concern of a number of humanitarian organizations which have come to form part of the anti-embargo movement, can hardly be questioned. Several charities, educational institutions, and religious groups have been complaining that the sanctions interfere with their missions by limiting their ability to meet, help, and learn from Cubans. They insist that the embargo has failed to achieve its goal, hurts the Cuban people more than the government, and diminishes American influence on the island.

Brian Goonan who oversees aid to Cuba at Catholic Relief Services affirms that “The embargo is a big wall of prohibition. It affects the poor in Cuba; it also affects Americans. You can’t travel, you can’t visit. It’s all about what you can’t do. In other countries, it’s what we can do” Catholic Relief Services, has since 1993 provided more than $26-million in food, medicines, and other humanitarian aid to Caritas Cubana, a Catholic social-services group in Havana” (Perry 2006).

Protesting the Reports of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba

In December, 2003, a Commission for Assistance was established by the Bush administration. The Commission’s first report was published in May 2004, proposing new restrictions on family, academic and cultural travel to Cuba. Described as a “blueprint for invasion” and “the dumbest policy in the face of the earth”, the report met with a barrage of protests from both American and Cuban American citizens especially with regards to its proposals for renewed restrictions on family and academic travel and remittances. The members

---


of the Commission included leading Cuban Americans in the Bush Administration including Dan Fisk, fellow staff member of former staff member Jesse Helms, and Jose Cardenas, ex-employee of the Cuban American National Foundation (Crossen 2006). The Commission did not receive the kind of media attention as the Cuban Democracy Act and the Helms Burton Law. However, several new groups proliferated to protest the measures and together with existing groups, do not hesitate to voice their displeasure with the new measures.

The new restrictions have resulted in a tense relationship between civil society and the state. Amongst those most affected are charities. Although they can still get licenses to work in Cuba, many have been forced to curtail their activities. Through the U.S-Cuba Sister Cities Association, the St. Augustine-Baracoa Friendship Association, in Florida was set up in 1999 to promote ties between the oldest cities in the United States and Cuba, had to transform itself into a humanitarian-aid organization in 2003 to continue operating in Cuba. During its early years, the group sponsored cultural and professional exchanges with Cuban and American doctors, photographers, historians, and others traveling between St. Augustine and Baracoa, on Cuba’s eastern tip. After the restrictions made such exchanges impossible, the association reorganized and now sends delegations to Baracoa three times a year to bring supplies to local groups that help handicapped, blind, and older people — and ships donated goods such as wheelchairs and bicycles to those organizations (Perry 2006).41

Similarly, an organization called It’s Just the Kids, in Washington, was notified by the Treasury Department that its license to build playgrounds in Cuba had been modified. It is now permitted to bring only three volunteers per playground site instead of 25 and must complete its

---

projects within four days, instead of two weeks. Moreover, the group’s license would expire that month, instead of in April 2007. The changes forced the charity to cancel a trip planned for June that had attracted 67 volunteers. Bill Hauf, the group’s founder, calls the restrictions “ridiculous” and says he is mobilizing supporters to protest them. “This project is so good, it can’t be allowed to fade away,” asserts Hauf. “No matter what [U.S.] officials do, I will not give up sending letters” (Perry 2006).

Another group known as Operation USA, in Los Angeles, has been shipping medical supplies to Cuba for ten years. When the Treasury Department renewed its license in January 2006, it added a new restriction: The charity could no longer send teams of doctors to Cuba to train their Cuban counterparts. “It wasn’t a big part of what we did, but it was important to us because it was a way to develop partnerships between Cuban and American hospitals,” says Richard Walden, the Chief Executive (Perry 2006).

Since 2004, the Cuba AIDS Project, in Mount Freedom, N.J., has had to limit who can be sent to Cuba to bring medical supplies for HIV/AIDS patients, restricting the trips to trained health professionals. According to Costa Mavraganis, a board member who coordinates the trips, this has resulted in reduced participation by about half, drastically decreasing the revenue the group earns from registration fees. Raising money elsewhere is not easy, he adds. “The minute they hear Cuba, they run. They don’t want anything to do with Cuba because of restrictions from the embargo” (Perry 2006).

Madre, an international women’s human-rights group in New York, was turned away when it tried to renew its license to send delegations to Cuba to do research on issues affecting women and children. Vivian Stromberg, the groups Executive Director, asserts that Madre is exploring ways to challenge the decision. “Just the fact that you need to apply for a license to go to Cuba
and you don’t need to apply for a license to go to Paris is a violation of our rights,” she says. “The refusal is a further violation of our rights” (Perry 2006).

The Cuba-America Jewish Mission, in Berkeley, California, can no longer send youth groups to Cuba as part of its program to strengthen ties between American and Cuban Jews. June Safran, Executive Director, says that the young people who traveled to Cuba before the Treasury Department changed the rules in 2004 learned valuable lessons. “The children were more serious about their education and more tolerant of people because in Cuba they learned that what you owned did not indicate what your class was. Rather, your position in society was determined by what you could achieve” (Perry 2006).

Oxfam America, in Boston, now works exclusively on agricultural projects in Cuba, according to Susan Bird, who oversees the charity’s Caribbean programs. The charity can no longer get licenses for projects to help Cubans recover from hurricanes, something it did in the past. “We’re seeing the space grow smaller of what we are able to support,” (Perry 2006)

The first report in 2004 ushered in new travel restrictions that, among other things, slashed the number of academic programs that could operate in Cuba by requiring them to last at least ten weeks and to exclude students not registered for degrees at the sponsoring university. The Treasury Department says it awarded 69 licenses to colleges or universities in 2005, down from 181 in 2003. But CIP’s Wayne Smith insists that only a handful of programs are still functioning. Many educational institutes including universities and colleges have joined in the fight against academic restrictions. Through ECDET, Wayne Smith prepared a lawsuit to challenge the new rules.42

---

The most contentious issue, however, seems to be restrictions imposed on family travel remittances and parcels to Cuba which many challengers, both American and Cuban American, view as a flagrant abuse of fundamental human rights. With the new restrictions, relatives can only visit once every three years and visits are limited to immediate family – parents, children, siblings, and grandparents. Cousins, aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces are excluded. On these grounds, Human Rights Watch became a fervent anti-embargo activist and interviewed a number of Cuban Americans who expressed their outrage at the “inhumane” regulations:

But this option is entirely inadequate for people with relatives in poor health, and even worse for those with multiple family members who are ailing. Saray Gómez, for example, visited her family before her father died in January 2004, and as a result is now restricted from visiting her mother who is also seriously ill. Nor is it an option for many of the people we interviewed who have traveled last year and therefore must wait until 2007. “Nelson Espinoza,” for example, said, “I can’t wait three years to see my sister, who is in a very delicate condition, because I don’t know what’s going to happen.” Similarly, “Lorena Vasquez,” who visited Cuba in 2004, is anxious about her sister who has cancer. “It’s likely I won’t see her again,” Lorena Vasquez said. “She won’t last three years.” Moreover, the issue for many is not so much saying goodbye to a family member as helping that person to live. One central purpose of the family visits, as we saw in the case of Marisela Romero, is to bring money and medical supplies. While individuals can still send remittances and supplies through couriers, a collateral effect of the travel restrictions, according to several people, is that it is now more difficult to do so. “Sandra Sanchez,” has been sending medicine to her father, who has cancer, every month, but she finds that it takes longer to arrive because the number of people traveling has decreased.43

The restrictions have aroused more than indignation amongst the Cuban American community prompting angry outbursts amongst them, incensed that the American government should decide who their immediate family is. Human rights watch relates the sad story of Marisela Romero and her ailing father:

Romero had left Cuba in 1992, and after her mother and sister both died in 2002, the only remaining relatives who could take care of her ailing father were her nephew and his wife. Romero hired two people to help them and began making frequent trips to Cuba so that she could pay these helpers, bring money and supplies, and, perhaps most importantly, provide

---

her father with filial affection. “Whenever she came he became very contented,” Marisol Claraco, her nephew’s wife, told Human Rights Watch. “Because even though he had Alzheimer, he knew who she was. … She would lie next to him and talk to him, and he would feel her love and get better.” The new restrictions put a halt to her visits. Since her last trip had been in May 2004, she would not be eligible to visit her father again until 2007. The regulations also effectively prevented her from sending money for his medical care and other expenses. While she was still allowed to send remittances to members of her “immediate family,” the only relative in Cuba who fit that definition was her father, and he was incapable of cashing checks or even signing them over to someone else. (Under the regulations, her nephew did not qualify as a member of her “family.”) It also became much more difficult and expensive to send supplies as it became harder to find other people traveling to Cuba and willing to carry goods for her. Ms. Romero’s absence was felt by her nephew and his wife. “After the restrictions,” Claraco told Human Rights Watch, “I was alone with the old man and my husband was in charge of going and finding what medicines he could.” We were waiting for Mari to come. But she couldn’t come and she couldn’t send the pampers and the medicines. So we had to endure rough times.” After several months, they began to run out of diapers and basic medical supplies, such as iodine and hydrogen peroxide, which they needed to clean his bed sores.44

A report compiled by WOLA’s Geoff Thale and Rachel Farley, reflects the sentiments of the ant-embargo movement on the new recommendations:

There are significant problems with the measures recommended by the Commission, which are laid out here. The measures have been conceived to respond to U.S. domestic political concerns, rather than as serious foreign policy steps. The measures will hurt Cuban-Americans, Cuban families, U.S. students, Cuban dissidents and others, but won’t succeed in bringing down the Castro government. The policy proposals are expensive and a misuse of government resources. Some of them are provocative and dangerous. The policy overall is misguided and unlikely to bring change to Cuba (Farley and Thale 2004: 1).

In May, 2006, the Center for International Policy, with the participation of the Latin American Working Group, the Washington Office on Latin America, Church World Service and the National Council of the Churches of Christ, invited the media to a press conference “to discuss the counterproductive nature of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, which is based on the assumption that the Castro regime is on its last legs and that the U.S. will play a role

44 Ibid.
in overseeing Cuba’s transition to democracy in the post-Castro period”.45

(www.commondreams.org). Referring to President Bush, Wayne Smith launches a scathing attack on the Commission:

The president is determined to see the end of the Castro regime, and the dismantling of the apparatus that has kept it in power.” To bring that about, the administration appointed a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, which, in May 2004, produced a 500-page action plan for the removal of the Castro government and for what sounded worryingly like the US occupation of Cuba: how to make their trains run on time, how to reorganize their schools, and so on. Shortly thereafter, it even appointed a US “transition coordinator”. As Jose Miguel Insulza, the Chilean secretary general of the Organisation of American States remarked, “But there is no transition - and it isn’t your country (Smith, 2006).

In July 2006, the Commission issued a 93-page second report which attempts to counteract perceptions that the first report was nothing but an “American occupation plan”. The recommendations include a budget of $80 million for the next two years to ensure a “transition” rather than a “succession” of Cuban leadership. Yet, the report has been provoking intense criticism from several sources including humanitarian organizations concerned with restrictions on humanitarian aid.

Since 2004, the renewed restrictions on family, academic religious and cultural travel saw the formation of a number of organizations such as the Cuban American Commission for Family Travel, the Emergency Network to Defend Education Travel and the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists. Anti-embargo activism amongst both new and existing organizations also increased in protest of the new restrictions. Wayne Smith encapsulates the sentiments expressed by the anti-embargo movement on the Commission’s latest proposals:

The Bush administration’s Cuba policy has reached a dead end, with no hope of success. Its objective is nothing less than to bring down the Castro regime. Or, as then-Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega put it on October 2, 2003: “The President is determined to see the end of the Castro regime and the dismantling of the apparatus that has kept him

---

http://www.commondreams.org/news2006/0522-05.htm
in office for so long.” President George W. Bush then appointed a Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba with the goals of bringing about “an expeditious end of the dictatorship,” and developing a plan to achieve that goal” (Smith 2006).46

**The Elián González Affair and the Rise of Moderate Cuban Americans**

The responses to the Elián González affair signaled a significant landmark in U.S. Cuba relations particularly with the ensuing rise of moderate Cuban Americans who began to organize themselves to challenge both the state and exile hardliners on U.S. Cuba policy. The saga of Elián González was the most popular story in the U.S. media in 2000. He came to be *el niño milagro*, the miracle child, plucked from the waters, like Moses from the bulrushes, by a fisherman. Elián González was actually a six-year-old Cuban boy who is the sole survivor of a refugee boat that sunk in a storm on its way to the U.S. His mother, the ex-wife of his father, was attempting to escape with the boy from Cuba without his father’s knowledge. Elián was found by fisherman, clinging to a rubber tube off the coast of Miami after being adrift for two days. He was then rushed to a U.S. hospital and was soon identified as the only son of Juan González, a loyal Cuban who had no clue of the risky defection plan of his ex-wife. Elián was placed in temporary custody of his great-uncle Lazaro in Miami, who vowed never to return the boy to Cuba. He soon became the center of an international media and political frenzy as his relatives in Miami, supported by attorneys and activists, fought to seek permanent custody of him.47

On the other side of the Florida Straits, Elián’s father, backed by the Cuban nation, demanded the return of his son to Cuba. The Miami relatives and Cuban exile groups suffered a crushing blow when they lost the long, fierce legal battle to keep Elián in the U.S. Amidst angry outbursts by his relatives and exile hardliners and with the intervention of then Attorney General,


Janet Reno, Elián was finally seized by armed U.S. immigration officers and reunited with his father in Cuba.

The Elián González affair has been disastrous for the Cuban American community on several levels. One of its worse repercussions has been the image of Cuban Americans which ensued. Once perceived as golden exiles, that image became tarnished because of the media portrayal of a handful of seemingly irrational Cuban Americans who fought to the bitter end to have the boy remain with relatives in Miami. Damian Fernández, professor at Florida International University, describes the debacle as “very, very sad and has led to another level of frustration for this community”.48 He forges a nexus between the event and the anti-embargo movement. “Elián was a catalyst for the opposition to the U.S. embargo. It allowed people who had been waiting to attack the embargo policy to come out in full force and wage this policy battle in Washington. Elián served as a lightening rod, and that is why the frustration is running deeper in Cuban Miami”.49 The Cuba Study Group is one organization which emerged as a result of the volatile event.

Although moderate Cuban American organizations such as Cambio Cubano and the Cuban Committee for Democracy existed since 1992 and 1993, respectively, the Elián González debacle underscores the schism that is growing within the exile community in South Florida. The community is by no means homogenous, and the “ignored majority” is becoming more and more vociferous as seen in the many organizations which have proliferated in the last decade. The divide is reflected in the diverse crowds at two restaurants on Calle Ocho: the moderate, La Tinta y Café and the hardline, Versailles.


49 Ibid.
This is also attributable to changing dynamics within the community itself through later immigration waves and younger American-born Cubans. Cuban Americans who arrived in the U.S. in the eighties and nineties are poorer, darker and migrated for economic rather political reasons like most other Latino immigrants in the U.S. As such, they are concerned more with economic survival than political ideology. Even some of the children of the early wave find it difficult to identify with the hardline attitude of their forebears. Recent surveys undertaken by both the FIU/Cuba Poll and the William C. Velásquez Institute suggest changing attitudes to Cuba amongst the majority of Cubans and a growing tendency toward rapprochement and engagement with the island (Lush and Adams 2004, FIU/Cuba Poll).  

The 2004 restrictions on family travel, parcel deliveries and remittances have further angered the community to the extent that even former hardliners vociferously reject them. Amongst these is Joe García from the once rabidly extremist Cuban American National Foundation, now increasingly being described as a moderate organization. Joe García outlines the new contours of Calle Ocho’s realpolitik: “We’re not single-issue anymore, and we care about much more than just the embargo.” He affirms that “some Cuban Americans are stuck in Cold War politics as reflected in the Elián drama but the American public had moved past the Cold War”.  

The 2004 restrictions on family travel resulted in a heated confrontation between an angry protesting Cuban American mob and Representative Lincoln Díaz-Balart at the Miami International airport on June 29th, the day before the new travel restrictions to Cuba kicked in.

---


51 Interview with García, 5th June 2006.
Kirk Nielsen reports that “when they caught sight of Diaz-Balart, they pursued him to the parking lot and unleashed their fury as he stood beside his car. “You’re dividing families!” one person yelled amid a frenzy of shouts and intense finger-pointing” (Nielsen, 2004). The actions of the then Executive Director of CANF, Joe García, are further evidence of a softening in attitudes within CANF toward U.S. Cuba policy and increasing antagonism toward hardliners. Using the vigilant media to full advantage on that fateful June afternoon, García blamed Díaz-Balart for giving bad consul to President Bush on the 2004 restrictions on family travel, as Kirk Nielsen reports:

After MSNBC was done with García, he repeated his catchy putdown, one-by-one, to three local television reporters and again on numerous television talk shows and radio interviews over the next few weeks. He also came up with another zinger: The restrictions were the White House’s way of “throwing some red meat to the right.” Another swipe at Díaz-Balart and el exilio’s hardliners -- Republican loyalists, generous with their political donations, and hungry for a return on the money: if not a military overthrow or criminal indictment of Castro and his cronies, then at least a complete cutoff of travel and monetary remittances to the island...García was at it again. A year earlier he’d created an uproar when he ridiculed Díaz-Balart as being “politically impotent” for his supposed inability to influence the Bush White House on Cuba issues (Nielsen 2004).52

The formation of the Cuban Liberty Council, the breakaway faction of CANF, was in direct response to the actions of members like Joe Garcia, who resigned as Executive Director of CANF and opted to campaign for the Democratic Party in the 2004 elections. The move was perceived by the New York Times as a signal of political diversification of Cuba-Americans” (Aguayo 2004). García admits that CANF is not monolithic and the members have varying views on U.S. Cuba policy. He himself supports the sanctions on trade to Cuba to pressure the Castro regime but does not advocate restrictions on family travel.53 Today, CANF’s website contains


53 Interview with García, 5th June 2006.
links to articles by strong anti-embargo academics and activists such as Paolo Spadoni and Phil Peters. The apparent shift in attitude is also reflected in articles in the CANF website entitled, “Polls show shift among Cuban exiles”, and “Lifting embargo still on table, U.S. officials says”.54

This “softening”, however, was counteracted by the rise of Jeb Bush as Governor of Florida in 1998. Several analysts and anti-embargo activists attribute the recent tightening of the embargo to the fact that Jeb is the brother of President George Bush and a close ally of the hardline Cuban American community. Max Castro, referring to the handful of powerful hardliners, asserts that a “tiny dog is wagging a very big tail in Miami”.55 The Elián saga was only the most public scene in a political drama that will climax when U. S. born Cubans and those who migrated after 1980 come to full political maturity as they register and vote in the next decade. The cracks within the community are widening as former Republican supporters slowly turn away. “I have not the slightest doubt that the issue of the family will supersede the issue of the embargo,” says Silvia Wilhelm of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights. Wilhelm and her organization have even launched frontal attacks against the once-invincible crown prince of the Cuban American dynasty, Lincoln Díaz-Balart, “who aspires to fill the giant shoes of his father, Don Rafael, the revered founder of the South Florida old guard dynasty that thrived for decades on anti-Castro and pro-embargo passions” (Lovato 2004).56 Incidentally, Don Rafael was married to Fidel Castro’s sister, making the rabidly right-winged congressional brothers, Lincoln and Mario Díaz-Balart, the nephews of el Comandante, Fidel, himself.

55 Interview with Castro, 12th July 2005.
According to Lovato (2004), an SVREP survey found that 76 percent of Cubans arriving in Miami before 1980 support Bush. Support for him is strongest among older, less-educated voters, who make up the base of the Diaz-Balart embargo-backers; “but as one moves down the age and departure-from-Cuba ladder, the SVREP survey corroborates one of Karl Rove’s worst nightmare: Cubans today are less inclined to support Bush” (Lovato 2004).

When in 2004 President Bush arrived at Miami Arena to deliver a speech aimed at shoring up support among older, more conservative Cuban Americans, greeting him outside were a group of younger, highly educated twenty-, thirty- and forty-something Cuban American protesters who came to speak truths to power. Waving American and Cuban flags and placards saying “Bush: Don’t Divide the Cuban Family” were members of groups such as Cuban Americans for Change and the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, which oppose the travel and remittance restrictions with the same single-mindedness that has long defined the political culture centered in the faux Spanish Colonial streets of Little Havana. For them, the family crisis has supplanted the embargo. The result is that the forty-plus-year embargo-based unity cemented by aging exile patriarchs and ex-CIA operatives is beginning to unglue; the once monolithic wall of Cuban American politics is cracking.57

The protest was an act of defiance without precedent in the hallowed political history of Little Havana. Lustily waving the Cuban and American flags and chanting “Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, tear down this wall that separates families,” several hundred protesters, also bore placards shouting “The Family Is Sacred” and stormed Diaz-Balart’s offices. As Lovato (2004) asserts, “such contentious action marks a radical change in a country where only weeks ago, an elated crowd of about fifty Cuban American hardliners, greeted three men convicted of terrorist

57 Interview with García, 5th June 2006.
activities, including a plot to assassinate Castro in Panama in 2000. The men had been pardoned, with no apparent justification, by the outgoing Panamanian president. The White House did not protest the decision. Their supporters included politicians affiliated with Don Rafael’s dynasty” (Lovato 2004).

**Frustrations, Successes and Future Aspirations**

Despite these varied and many attempts at speaking truths to power, the anti-embargo movement has not achieved tremendous success in changing U.S. policy, to date. The close alliance between the U.S. administration and the hardline Cuban American community makes policy change an arduous, if not impossible feat. Some anti-embargo groups have made a clear link between political ideology and the embargo policy. Despite their bitter disappointment with the Helms-Burton law passed under Clinton, they insist that the Republican administrations have been more inclined to tighten the policy, and “George W. Bush has been worse than any other U.S. President”. ENCASA declares that “by any measure, U.S. policy toward Cuba has been an abject failure for almost half a century. That policy has become even harsher and more counterproductive under the Bush administration”. Some activists attribute this to the blood relation between the brothers, George and Jeb Bush, who enjoy a cushy relationship with exile hardliners in Miami. These challengers look forward to a change in U.S. administration in 2008. However, the general consensus that the current Bush administration is more stringent than others in its policy to Cuba, has been refuted by two older anti-embargo activists, Saul Landau

---

58 Interview with Smith and Rodriguez, 9th and 11th August 2006.

and Delvis Fernández Levy. They believed that the Kennedy administration was stricter than that of George W. Bush.⁶⁰

Despite their deep frustrations to which they openly admit, the organizations do not perceive themselves as abject failures. They cite the strides made under Carter in currency exchange and tourist travel, and those under Clinton with the Pope’s visit to Cuba in 1998 especially with regard to trade in food and medicine. These combined with the biggest breakthrough achieved with the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, are viewed by the groups as examples of anti-embargo successes. They claim that these are partly attributable to their unrelenting struggle, some for almost four decades. Kirby Jones affirms that their work is not futile since they are the ones with real connections to Cuba. He notes that the false news of Castro’s death in July, 2006, fed to the U.S. media by rabid hard-line exiles which had them prematurely dancing in the streets of Miami, led the media and the administration to realize how little these extremists really knew about the Cuban reality. The media resorted to calling on him for more accurate information on Castro’s health.⁶¹ Though continuing restrictions have dampened their hopes for change under President George W. Bush, they see a glimmer of hope in the recent Democratic control of the House and the Senate. This is buttressed by the very recent ten-member delegation of congresspersons which arrived in Cuba on 16\textsuperscript{th} December, 2006. It was the largest congressional trip ever to visit the island. Led by Reps. Delahunt (D-Mass) and Flake (R-Ariz.), they met with Cuban government officials and foreign diplomats in an effort to normalize relations with Cuba. The trip came just two weeks after Raúl Castro made new overtures for dialogue as Fidel lies sick in a Cuban hospital (Hemlock 2006).

---

⁶⁰ Interviews with Landau and Fernández, 16\textsuperscript{th} August and 23\textsuperscript{nd} October 2006.

⁶¹ Interview with Jones, 16th August 2006.
None of the organizations foresee a Miami invasion of Cuba in the wake of Castro’s demise. Socialism is very much alive and kicking with the vibrant cadre of young communist officials in the Cuban government. Nor do they believe that there will be a sudden transition to capitalism and American-style democracy in a post-Castro Cuba. For them, whatever Cubans may think of the Castro government, most are not eager to see exiles who left over forty years ago return to take over the country. The Cuban government and the Cuban military would see any large scale attempt to return as a political challenge and a national security threat. They also agree that the embargo has not worked in forty-six years and that the “economy is in better shape than it has been in years” (Spadoni 2006). WOLA’s Geoff Thale, encapsulates this view:

Most serious observers, whether sympathetic or hostile to the Castro government, argue that, in the immediate period after Castro’s retirement or death, a relatively stable succession will take place. Popular discontent will not boil over; internal differences among elites will not explode. Continuity, not change, will be the hallmark of the new government. For example, Mark Falcoff, a conservative political analyst and scholar at the American Enterprise Institute has written “What follows Castro is not likely to be a free-market democracy, but rather a blander and more bureaucratic version of the system they have now”(Thale 2006).

In the context of discussions about the post-Castro future, Thale insists that the U.S. “should be taking measures now to increase contact between Cubans on the island, and increase contact between academic, religious and other sectors likely to be in touch with those who will actually shape the post-Castro future in Cuba”. He envisions a vital role for moderate Cuban Americans:

We should recognize that the Cuban American community is going to be a major force in shaping U.S. relations with Cuba in the post-Castro future, and a major force in relation to Cuba itself. In the long run, the grievances that many Cuban-Americans feel will have to be addressed, as part of some process of reconciliation. (Such a process will also have to recognize the grievances that many Cubans harbor against the exile community.) The U.S. ought to begin now to take measures that encourage contact between the Cuban American community and Cubans on the island, both because it will make future relations easier, and because contact encourages and strengthens the moderate sectors of the community and tends to isolate the hardliners. Family, business, cultural, and religious contact between
Cuban Americans and Cubans can only reduce tension at the moment of transition (Thale 2006).

Some scholars believe that the post-Castro era is already here and that the moment of an exile take over is long gone. Just as the anti-embargo activists predicted, Julia E. Sweig argues that the smooth transfer of power from Fidel Castro to his successors is exposing the willful ignorance and wishful thinking of U.S. policy toward Cuba and the abject failure of the embargo policy:

…none of what Washington and the exiles anticipated has come to pass. Even as Cuba-watchers speculate about how much longer the ailing Fidel will survive, the post-Fidel transition is already well under way. Power has been successfully transferred to a new set of leaders, whose priority is to preserve the system while permitting only very gradual reform. Cubans have not revolted, and their national identity remains tied to the defense of the homeland against U.S. attacks on its sovereignty. As the post-Fidel regime responds to pent-up demands for more democratic participation and economic opportunity, Cuba will undoubtedly change - but the pace and nature of that change will be mostly imperceptible to the naked American eye (Sweig 2007).
CHAPTER 6
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: A RATIONAL DEPARTURE

“Beware of economists bearing gifts” (Fireman and Gamson in Zald and McCarthy 1979: 8).

This chapter calls on the burgeoning literary oeuvre challenging the rational model, that Trojan horse in social movement theory which brings with it a radical individualism and presupposes a “pseudo-universal human actor without either a personal history or a gender, race, or class position within a societal history” (Ferree in Morris and Mueller 1992: 7). The premise of single objective reality at the core of the rational choice model, which is skeptical about collective action due to “free-riders”, is contradictory to the very notion of social movements. The operations of the anti-embargo movement challenge the core premise of Olson’s (1965) Logic of Collective Action, used as the gospel to analyze groups’ “rational” behavior both in social movement and interest group theory.

In this chapter we first assess the applicability of the rational market managerial model to the anti-embargo movement which includes discussions on both Olson’s rational model and Salisbury’s exchange theory. Secondly, we apply the framing and discourse facets of the New Social Movement to anti-embargo activities. Thirdly, we explore the relevance of solidarity networks and co-option to anti-embargo activism. We then extend this analysis in an attempt to establish a nexus between anti-embargo activities and social capital. Finally, we draw from both interest group and social movements theories to argue that commitment, moral incentives and psychological benefits seem more appropriate to answer our central research puzzle as to why the anti-embargo movement persists despite limited success over time.
Olson’s Rational Model

Drawing from the economic rational model, the traditional resource mobilization perspective accounts for protest activity by focusing on the availability of resources required for organizing and coordinating political actions. It underscores the significance of organizational bases, resource accumulation and costs and benefits for popular political actors bringing to the fore the convergence between social movements and interest group politics (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Resources are not just viewed as monetary, but are also human and embrace social capital, moral engagement and solidarity networks (Tillock and Morrison 1979, Fireman and Gamson 1979 in Della Porta and Diani 2004c: 8). It also involves tactics since “the type and nature of the resources available explain the tactical choices made by movements and the consequences of collective action on the social and political action” (Della Porta and Diani 2004c: 8).

The rational model partially explains the operations of the anti-embargo movement because the activities of the groups are partly contingent upon the availability of material and non-material resources. In Chapter 3, we detail the range of foundations which have been willing to fund the movement over time. We note that the organizations in the movement demonstrate relative heterogeneity with regard to organizational structure, although several boast of an experienced and professional Board of Directors. We also note the human resources and organizational structure of the anti-embargo groups. In Chapter 4, we continued with a discussion on solidarity networks and co-option as part of the strategies and tactics employed by the movement. We now draw on those discussions to support our test of the rational model as applied to the anti-embargo movement.

We cannot completely disagree that the anti-embargo movement has persisted and that its activities have increased in the post-Cold War era, partly because of the availability of resources
for the sustenance of groups and group activities (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1224-25). The
groups have been able to maintain a professional staff, offices in metropolitan American cities
and to continue their activities of organizing seminars, conferences, exhibitions, protests and
trips to Cuba. These have undoubtedly been possible because of the availability of both material
and non-material resources. As Della Porta and Diani observe, the level of mobilization depends
on the ability of the social movement to “organize discontent, reduce the costs of action, utilize
and create solidarity, share incentives among members and achieve external consensus” (Della
Porta and Diani 2004c: 8).

Yet, the rational market managerial model presented by McCarthy and Zald (1977) does
not fully explain the persistence of these organizations. McCarthy and Zald describe “a
professional cadre” as the individuals who receive compensation and are involved in the
decision-making process and a “professional staff” - those who devote full time to the
organization, but are not involved in central decision making (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1227).
Their analysis neglects the hard-working underpaid staff, the many volunteers and the “external
professional cadre,” who does not receive monetary compensation and are not involved full-time,
but are still an important contributor to the decision-making process in the anti-embargo
movement. Amongst these are also included the numerous prominent members of the various
Boards of Directors we have identified in the organizations in Chapter 3. Moreover, the staff and
the majority of members of the groups have not been receiving adequate monetary
compensation. Also, the non-Cuban American members do not directly reap the benefits of a
change in U.S. Cuba policy since they have no family in Cuba and are not personally interested
in travel, remittances or trade with the island.
Drawing from interest group theory, we can attempt an explanation of this dissonance between the rational model and the operation of the anti-embargo movement. It may be related to the dichotomy between what Hrebrenar (1997) identifies as “self-oriented groups” on the one hand, and “public interest groups” on the other (Hrebrenar 1997: 11-12). For him, “the self-interested groups seek to achieve some policy goal that will directly benefit their own members” and “the public-interest groups (PIGs) seek benefits that will not benefit their membership directly but will be enjoyed by the general public” (Hrebrenar 1997:12). In this respect, the goals of the Cuban American groups, such as the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights and CAAEF, to have restrictions on family travel and remittances removed, suggest that they are self-oriented. The business interests such as USA-Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association would also be labeled self-oriented since trade with Cuba would bring direct financial benefits to their members. On the other hand, the other organizations like CIP, WOLA, LAWG, Pastors for Peace and the Center for Cuban Studies would be categorized as public-interest groups because the achievements of their collective action will benefit the general public.

There is, however, another dimension to this dichotomy that is explored but not adequately explained by the rational approach. We may recall the basic premise of Mancur Olson’s rational model as outlined in Chapter 2. We note that this approach is characteristically an economic mode of analysis arguing that political goals will not be sufficient to induce members to support interest group or social movement activity and hence the problem of free-riding will arise. For Olson, what actually facilitate the group formation are not collective goods but “selective incentives” (Olson 1965). Olson’s “selective incentives” flies against Hrebrenar’s (1997) “public interest groups” which pursue goals that will benefit the general public. Such groups abound in the anti-embargo movement.
Terry Moe (1980), another interest group scholar, aptly points out that Olson’s model is not very comprehensive, even as an economic theory since it focuses on the “formative stages of group activity prior to formal organization”. According to Moe, “he (Olson) makes no effort to move toward a more elaborate examination of organizational structures and processes” (Moe 1980: 5, brackets mine). So even if Olson’s perspectives facilitate an understanding of why self-oriented groups emerge, it does not account for the operations of public interest groups. Moreover, it fails to capture the dynamic of altruistic sustained group activism. Hence, it would be inadequate to help us unravel our central research puzzle as to why has the anti-embargo movement persisted despite limited success in achieving its primary objective of changing U.S. Cuba policy. As seen, the movement has been operational for decades and some groups like Venceremos Brigade, the Center for International Policy, the Center for Cuban Studies and the Washington Office on Latin America, for some thirty years.

**Salisbury’s Exchange Theory**

Expanding upon Olson’s rational model, Robert Salisbury (1970) proposes an “Exchange Theory” contending that members join such groups for the sake of a staff job. This contradicts our findings which reveal firstly that staff members of the anti-embargo movement are not highly paid, some are volunteers and some very highly qualified personnel such as Wayne Smith and Sandra Levinson, have remained at the Center for International Policy and the Center for Cuban Studies, respectively, for more than thirty years, when they could have obtained gainful employment elsewhere.

Similarly, several of these staff members such as Claire Rodriguez from LAWG, Sarah Stephens and Vincent Pascandolo from CIP started off as unpaid interns and claim that they have not become involved for monetary gains nor for advancing their careers. Pascandolo, an enthusiastic, young college graduate explains that he first became involved with the World
Policy Institute in New York, which also has a Cuba project. There he learned more about Wayne Smith’s work with which he was already familiar and was inspired to join CIP because he feels that “there is a need for more dialogue with Cuba and I want to make a contribution in changing the current policy”.\(^1\) Claire Rodriguez is now a paid staff member at the LAWG where she assists Mavis Anderson with the Cuba program. Having personally witnessed the adverse effects of U.S. policy in Central America, she was resolved to do something about it. She had also worked at WOLA as an unpaid intern before joining the LAWG.\(^2\) Similarly, Shane Gasteyer, a staff member at Pastors for Peace, affirms that much of the work of Pastors for Peace is conducted not by a paid staff but by volunteers who come forward from the general public to assist the organization when it is planning a big event like a convention or conference or even the annual caravans”.\(^3\) The many volunteers who support the movement via free labor, are part of the human resource stock of the organizations. Gasteyer continues that this network of volunteers transcends the boundaries of the U.S. state extending to Canada and Mexico. They join the annual caravans to Cuba and are assisted along the way by another source of human resource - numerous community organizations such as peace groups, local churches, labor organizations and college students. Not only do these volunteers offer free labor but also provide physical assets for accommodation and transportation for caravan members on their way to Cuba via Mexico. Even those who hold full-time positions at organizations in the anti-embargo movement are not handsomely paid despite the eminent qualifications which some hold. “This job can never get me rich” declares Claire Rodriguez.\(^4\)

\(^1\) Interview with Pascandolo, 25\(^{th}\) October 2006  
\(^2\) Interview with Rodriguez, 26\(^{th}\) August 2006.  
\(^3\) Interview with Gasteyer, 10\(^{th}\) August 2006.  
\(^4\) Interview with Rodriguez, 25\(^{th}\) October 2006.
Thus, neither Olson’s (1965) rational model nor its expansion into exchange theory by Salisbury (1970), can explain why the anti-embargo movement persists despite limited success over time. The presence of public interest groups seeking collective rather than selective incentives and the altruistic, almost unselfish dedication of staff and members, deny their relevance for explaining the ant-embargo movement. How then do we explain the persistence of the anti-embargo movement given the limitations of Olson’s (1965) and Salisbury’s (1969/1970) rational models based on selective incentives? It may be useful to seek answers from other non-material factors such as tactical frames, solidarity networks and co-option, social capital, commitment, moral incentives and psychological benefits.

**Tactical Framing and the New Social Movements**

Departing from the rational model, we now examine the role of framing, which is one of the most widely discussed tactics of the New Social Movements School. The argument espoused here is that the success of the organizations in mobilizing new members and support is contingent upon its ability to construct and reconstruct images about itself and its grievances. Snow and Bendford (1988) agree that “mobilization depends not only on the availability and deployment of tangible resources, the opening or closing of political opportunities, or a favorable cost-benefit calculus, but also on the way these variables are framed, and the degree to which they resonate with targets of mobilization (Snow and Benford 1988: 213). The three types of framing which they identify – diagnostic, prognostic and motivation as outlined in Chapter 2, are evident in the operations of the anti-embargo movement.

McAdam (1996) observes that the social movements consciously design tactics in order to frame action, attract media attention and sway public opinion (McAdam 1996: 348). His notion of “strategic dramaturgy” is linked to the frequently used strategy of the movement to frame its grievances around the moral principles and values of the challengers and the public, embedded in
broader cultural and ethical beliefs and practices (McAdam 1996). The fundamental norms
guiding these values and principles will be elaborated upon in a subsequent section of this
chapter.

These norms relate to the “injustice frames” identified by Gamson (1992), producing
expressions of indignation or outrage (Gamson 1992: 32). They can explain the moral outrage
that was the driving force of the Central American Peace Movement in the 1980s. Responding to
the civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, thousands of North American organized
to curtail U.S. political involvement in these countries and to stand in solidarity with the Central
American poor in their struggle for a just social order (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). The
same can be said for the anti-war movement in the U.S. in the perception of the war in Iraq being
unjust against the Iraqi people and American soldiers. The injustice frame is also widely used in
the websites of the anti-embargo organizations, so much so that we identify “justice” as one of
the norms guiding anti-embargo activism.

Framing is also linked to Emergent Norm Theory (ENT) which contends that
nontraditional, collective behavior emerges from the crucible of a normative crisis (Turner 1964,
Turner and Killian 1972/1982). The occurrence of an event precipitates a normative crisis,
depending on how the crisis is interpreted and reinterpreted to spawn collective action. The
traditional normative guidelines are then collectively perceived as inappropriate because the
crisis destroys or prompts a dissipation of the interpretation of these norms as relevant guides for
action. Through meanings created through symbolic interaction, members of a society are forced
to act in response to the urgency and uncertainty spawned by the crisis. As a result, they interact
conveying these meanings to each other and creates a new emergent normative structure that
guides their behavior. As the members attempt to define the situation, they undergo a process of
“milling and keynoting, develop cues for appropriate action and experiment with alternative schemes of social action. The crisis produces an “extraordinary” perception of the situation by members who comes to believe that their impending action is not only feasible, timely and permissible, but also necessary and duty-bound. Hence, their collective behavior is seen as appropriate” (Turner and Killian 1987: 9-11, Turner 1996). A useful analogy is that identified by Jutta Weldes who elaborates on the careful construction or framing of the Cuban Missile Crisis as a “crisis” and a “threat”, prompting the United States into action in 1962 (Weldes 1999).

Applying Emergent Norm Theory to U.S. Cuba policy, we can surmise that increasing anti-embargo collective action has emerged from the crucible of a normative crisis precipitated by the end of the Cold War. The traditional normative guidelines of Cuba being a security threat are collectively perceived as inappropriate because the end of the Cold War prompts a dissipation of the interpretation of these traditional norms as justification for anti-embargo policy. The September 11th terrorist attack was another crisis which redirected the security threat to the Middle East providing another “window of opportunities” for anti-embargo activists. Through shared meanings created from symbolic interaction, the activists act in response to the changes ushered in by the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 crisis. Conveying these meanings to each other, they create a new emergent normative structure that guides their behavior. This new structure reverses the U.S. criticism of Cuba back unto itself as an “undemocratic”, “inhumane” and “unjust” Goliath stifling a tiny Cuban David in a unipolar international system threatened by terrorists in the Middle East but not by a tiny communist Caribbean island in a post-Cold War era. The emergent norms prompt the activists to perceive their collective action as just, timely, permissible, appropriate and duty-bound (Turner and Killian 1987: 9-11), spawning new groups such as CAAEF and ENCASA and attracting new members thereby prompting a “cycle of
protest” in the nineties touched off by an unpredictable (systemic) event (Tarrow 1993: 285-286). Tarrow’s (1993, 1998) arguments about the correlation between cycles of contention and tactical repertoires is also relevant to the anti-embargo movement, which was more vocal in the nineties and in the current decade due in part to the domestic and international setting and to renewed restrictions imposed by the Bush regime in 2004 as discussed in Chapter 7. Thus, new frames have emerged depicting the embargo policy as “draconian”, “inhumane” and “anti-democratic” in keeping with the Emergent Norm Theory discussed above.

This relates directly to the “injustice frame” as espoused by Gamson (1992), which has become a significant factor in the strategies of anti-embargo groups as they employ diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames (Snow and Benford 1988) to potential challenges, convincing them of the legitimacy of the grievance and the urgency to address it by becoming part of the movement. The Internet is the most widely used medium through which the anti-embargo movement attempts to convince members of the public of the legitimacy of their grievance (diagnostic), assures them of the merits of their tactics (prognostic), and induces them to get involved in these activities (motivational) (Snow and Benford 1988).

This brings us to Flam’s (1990a, 1990b) contentions that emotions are important to the growth and unfolding of social movements and political protests (In Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001). The new restrictions on remittances and family travel to Cuba produce a “moral shock” (Luker 1984, Jasper and Poulsen 1995, Jasper 1997) creating rational emotions amongst indignant activists but more so amongst moderate Cuban-Americans, because of personal/familial ties to Cuba. In keeping with Steinberg’s (1998) arguments, though they speak with multiple voices, they misrepresent this mutivocality as heterogeneous by creating a common discursive repertoire which embraces the activities of the other groups. The website of
the LAWG is a classic example of an attempt to misrepresent the heterogeneity of the groups by framing the movement as homogenous through having links to other organizations, which champion the same cause. The tactic is useful for the LAWG whose members come from several walks of life but which also specifically seeks to attract grassroots support as Steinberg affirms:

The multi-voiced word in this sense can allow for a misrecognition of heterogeneity as unity, as groups with potentially divergent interests and identities articulate through what they perceive as shared claims and understandings”. This tactic is frequently used in mobilizing grassroots and local actions in building a discursive repertoire and in the production of meanings within a repertoire. However, for mobilizing wider populations to build ties and networks, tactics of mass communication is more effective (Steinberg 1998: 860).

As part of its mobilization drive, new frames are constantly being produced and reproduced by the anti-embargo groups in an effort to educate and sensitize the public to their grievance. Although Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba was clamoring for free trade, they couched their grievance in “humanitarian” terms to evoke sympathy for their cause. Similarly, the “rancor” with which the U.S. treats the American and Cuban people especially with the document detailing the 2004 restrictions, is frequently underscored. Since then, the groups have framed the “draconian” document as a “blueprint for invasion a la Iraq” as they deliberately employ symbolic representations in the hope of transferring the unpopular sentiments of the Iraqi War to the Cuba cause. The disastrous consequences for Cuban American family life, American freedom, human rights, justice and democracy are detailed as articles after articles conveying images of “Families Torn Apart”, “Love, Loss and Longing”, and “suffering caused by family separations” appear in the websites and publications produced by the organizations. In this regard, the skillful framing and reframing of the embargo and its consequences provide one plausible explanation for the ability of the movement to persist over time. As we have seen, these constructions are indeed resonating sufficiently with targets of mobilization to spur increasing and continued activism in the post Cold War era.
Solidarity Networks and Co-option

As discussed in Chapter 4, solidarity networks and co-option are recognized as a movement’s mobilization strategies. They provide a useful departure from the rational model to understand the ability of a movement to sustain itself over time especially when analyzed from a socio-cultural perspective. Fireman and Gamson (in Zald and McCarthy 1979) perceives the role of solidarity, principle and solidary groups as an alternative approach to mobilization in their critique of Olson’s utilitarian, self-interested, rational model. They insist that “solidarity is rooted in the configuration of relationships linking the members of a group to one another”. For them, “people may be linked together in a number of ways that generate a sense of common identity”. They assert that a person’s solidarity with a group is based on five factors: friends and relatives, participation in organizations, design for living, subordinate and superordinate relations, and no exit. A lack of solidarity will result in failed mobilization efforts (Fireman and Gamson in Zald and McCarthy 1979: 22).

According to Gamson (1992), “there is both a social and cultural level involved in loyalty and commitment to a social movement”. Solidarity processes focus on how people relate to social movement carriers – that is, to the various collective actors who claim to represent the movement” (Gamson in Morris and Mueller (1992: 61). Collective identity and solidarity are closely intertwined, but one is possible without the other. Friedman and McAdam (1992) define the collective identity of a social movement organization as “shorthand designation announcing a status – a set of attitudes, commitments and rules for behavior – that those who assume the identity are expected to subscribe to (Friedman and McAdam in Morris and Mueller 1992: 157).

Some members of the anti-embargo movement are in strong solidarity because of their shared objectives and shared historical and cultural background. The latter is particularly true of Cuban Americans who are bonded by common history, ethnicity, family, background,
experiences and grievances against the embargo. The joint grievances compel them to rally
together to protest the restrictions on family travel and remittances more stringently imposed in
the 2004 Report of the Commission for Assistance for a New Cuba. The Cuban American,
Delvis Fernández Levy, of the Cuban American Education Alliance (CAAEF) as well as Silivia
Wilhelm and Alvaro Fernández, of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, express
a strong sense of Cuban nationalism. This is reinforced by an American legislation which they
say “is telling us who our family should be and when we should visit them”. Common ethnic
bonds combined with shared grievances and goals provide the impetus for tenacious solidarity
links amongst Cuban Americans. Though the anti-embargo movement is also comprised of
numerous non-Cuban Americans, even at the leadership level, their commons goals produce
organizational forms that support and sustain the personal needs of Cuban American participants
and “embody the movement’s collective identity” (Gamson in Morris and Mueller 1992: 61).

We can surmise that this identity extends to the public sphere and is also a product of
political consciousness when it is analyzed in the context of social structural locations. We just
identified the ethnicity of Cuban Americans as one such structure. It can also be linked to class,
since generally Cuban Americans who oppose the embargo belong to a lower socio-economic
class than those who support it. In keeping with the constructivist thesis of Morris (1992), we
affirm that this consciousness and the grievances it produces, are constructed and shaped by the
combination of specific group experiences of domination and inequality and of competition with
the more hegemonic culture of the affluent, hard-line Cuban American culture and the wider
American political power structure. This power configuration will be elaborated upon in Chapter
7 which specifically treats with “political opportunity structures”.

---

In discussing communication networks amongst groups, Freeman (1973) affirms that “the network must be co-optable to the ideas of the movement. To be co-optable, the network must be “composed of like-minded people whose background, experience or location in the social structure makes them receptive to the ideas of a specific new movement” (Freeman 1973: 794). Moreover, according to Freeman, in the formation of new groups, firstly, a crisis galvanizes the network into spontaneous action in a new direction. Secondly, if there are no such networks, the emergent spontaneous groups must be acutely attuned to the issue, albeit, uncoordinated” (Freeman 1973: 794-795).

In keeping with Freeman’s (1973), argument, one notes that the academic community represents one such group which was uncoordinated until the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET) was formed in 2004 when the Bush administration imposed stringent restrictions on academic travel to Cuba. It was fairly easy to organize such a network since academics were already keenly aware of the embargo and some already had strong ties with the anti-embargo movement. They were “acutely attuned to the issue, albeit, uncoordinated” (Freeman 1973: 794-795). The new Cuban American groups which emerged in the nineties such as Puentes Cubanos, CAAEF, ENCASA and the Cuba Study Group, easily co-opted the older groups like CIP, LAWG and WOLA which are co-optable because as Freeman (1973) affirms, they are “pre-existing communication networks” and are comprised of “like-minded people whose background, experiences or location in the social structure make them receptive to the ideas of these new movements” (Freeman 1973: 794).

The same theory of “background, experience or location in the social structure” (Freeman 1973), applies to the co-optability of politicians by the anti-embargo movement. Emile Milne, Congressional staff of Representative Charles Rangel (D-NY), explains that Rangel had been an
admirer of Castro since the latter’s visit to Harlem and his stay at the Theresa Hotel in the early sixties. Rangel himself was born and raised in Harlem. He was a law student when he witnessed Castro’s embrace of the American Civil Rights Movement and the great admiration of African Americans for Castro’s revolution. According to Milne, “Rangel has been introducing legislation in Congress to lift the embargo since 1994 but has been unsuccessful because lifting the embargo is not a real priority. The affluent does not have a sufficient stake in it for it to succeed”.

Similarly, Lance Walker, Legislative Assistant to Congressman, Jeff Flake (R-AZ), explains that “Flake had been in South Africa during the time of apartheid and saw the negative effects of sanctions which had a lot to do with framing his perceptions on the embargo. As such, “Flake is more concerned with the issue of free trade which he believes can promote economic interaction and ultimately build political ideas and spawn an educated middle-class”.

This is somewhat different from the admissions of ex-representative, George Nethercutt (R-Wash), who championed the Bill to lift the embargo on the sale of food and medicine to Cuba in 2000. According to Nethercutt, “I was being pressured by my agricultural constituents in Washington who felt they were being undercut by Canadian farmers for a lucrative market for their peas and wheat”. Nonetheless, Nethercutt claims to be “passionate about democracy” and believes that it was “just not fair for a handful of extremist Floridians to determine the fate of farmers in Washington.” He agrees with Flake, that sanctions should not be used as a weapon in foreign policy.

Frank Carlucci’s motives seem to coincide with that of Wayne Smith. As former NSC Chief under Reagan, Carlucci observed that “the embargo was not achieving its goals”. He

---

6 Interview with Milne, 6th June 2005.
7 Interview with Walker, 17th May 2005.
8 Interview with Nethercutt, 8th June 2005.
believes that the embargo is propping up the Castro regime and has thus failed miserably, hence his decision to join the AHTC. For Carlucci, normalizing relations with Cuba is in the U.S. national interest and would bring better results than the current embargo”. Carlucci claims that he had no financial interest in the removal of the embargo but supported the move for humanitarian reasons. His experience as NSC Chief during the Cold War, allowed him “to gain an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet Union and this led to his firm belief that Castro’s regime can fall under its own weight”.9

It is important to emphasize here that although Carlucci supported a business coalition, he never once mentioned financial benefits for the business interests seeking change. Rather, humanitarian gains seemed to guide his motives. This is quite consistent with the name of the organization he belonged to (albeit framed as such) - “Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba” - again adding credence to our argument that the rational model cannot suffice to understand the anti-embargo movement.

The anti-embargo movement also co-opts grassroots organizations. As mentioned, the LAWG works closely with Witness for Peace, Oxfam America and other faith-based organizations. Viewed here as resources in themselves, grassroots movements present an ideal case of non-market-managerial mobilization. Here, the movement draws not on consumer markets and managers of the advanced capitalist model propounded by McCarty and Zald (1977), but on community organization and patterns of social relations embedded in the moral traditions of such communities. In her stimulating study of peasant society and politics in Costa Rica and Nicaragua during the 1970s and 1980s, Leslie Anderson (1994), underscores the somewhat reflexive impulse of the peasants to react to threats to their community, lending

---

9 Interview with Carlucci, 6 June 2005.
credence to our argument that the focus of the rational approach on individualistic self-interest alone is contrary, if not detrimental, to collective action:

Such action is both individualistic and communitarian. A complex and holistic understanding of self in the context of community leads the individual to see that community norms may have to change as the external world changes, in order to facilitate individual and group survival. Because non-violent collective action is reformist activism, the incremental modifications that result from it are the best way for communities to facilitate survival and participation in a changing world. The ecological perception of self within community thus encourages collective action and individual participation out of personal self-interest. If the individual pursues only short-term self-interest, acting as a free-rider in the rational actor self, the limited rationality of this action will undermine community and endanger the individual. At the same time, if the individual adheres blindly to tradition and fails to update community norms, community will also be undermined, endangering the individual (Anderson 1994: 15-16).

Anderson’s thesis on peasant understanding of “ecological interdependence” and the need for “mutual support” and “community cohesion” (Anderson 1994: 14), mirrors the anti-embargo movement’s dependence on solidarity networks for sustenance. Moreover, her study is congruent with the burgeoning literary oeuvre in the mid-nineties on social capital which is the topic of the next section.

**Social Capital**

Social movements literature perceives associations as special interest groups mobilized around the particularistic goals of their members. These associations or interest groups are not formed to replace the functions of state or market but to coerce the state into adopting policies favorable to members’ interests (Oberschall 1973, Gamson 1975, Tilly 1978, Skocpol 1992). The anti-embargo movement, while representing members’ specific goals of removing restrictions on travel and trade to Cuba, also functions in the neo-Tocquevillian fashion, perceiving associationalism as a beneficent commitment to collective goals. This section asserts that although there is an available supply of tangible financial and human resources facilitating groups’ activities, this is not enough to explain their persistence. Lin (2001) notes that “access to
and use of these resources is temporary and borrowed in the sense that the actor does not possess them (Lin 2001: 56) so individuals must persistently build and sustain relationships if they wish to (continue to) access resources (Coleman 1990; Portes 1998). This may be the situation with the anti-embargo movement since in several instances, the same foundations do not continue to support the same organizations for the same cause over the years. Claire Rodriguez of the LAWG affirms that “we are no longer funded by the Ford Foundations as we were some time ago”.

As seen, connections, knowledge, time, skill and expertise are crucial to a movement’s ability to survive. Moreover as Putnam (1993) affirms, “the citizens of the civic community are helpful, respectful and trustful towards each other”. Indeed, “interpersonal trust” is probably the moral orientation that most needs to be diffused among the people if republican society is to be maintained. The norms and values of this civic community are embodied in, and reinforced by distinctive social structures and practices (Putnam 1993). In some respects, the anti-embargo movement is itself a civic community displaying a high level of interpersonal trust which is reflected in the amazingly dense solidarity networks amongst the organizations. While conducting interviews for this study, it was obvious that the groups work very closely with each other. Indeed, several interviewees were sourced on the recommendations of others. These solidarity networks amongst the organizations are established through social relations, which, according to Coleman (1988), are developed via processes such as establishing obligations, creating trustworthiness and creating channels for information (Coleman 1988). Here, we can further include “reliability” where members know that they can count on others for support in

---

10 Interview with Rodriguez, 25th October 2006.
any given area of activity, with regards to changing U.S. policy to Cuba. The high level of cooperation amongst anti-embargo groups bears testimony to this contention.

Like other forms of capital, social capital is premised upon the notion that an investment in social relations will result in a return which is some benefit or profit to the individual or the social unit (Lin 2001). By drawing on the social capital in their relationships, individuals can further their own goals (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988, 1990; Lin 2001) and the goals of their networks or social structures (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Feldstein 2003). Because the groups in the ant-embargo movement share the common goal of changing U.S. policy to Cuba, they are confident that investment in social relations and solidarity networks with other groups will bear fruit. Thus, in keeping with Putnam’s (2000) contention, social capital makes it possible for them to achieve certain aims that cannot be achieved by individuals alone in its absence (Putnam, 2000).

Putnam (1995, 2000), popularized the concept of social capital and can be credited for its entry into mainstream political discourse. Employing the effective metaphor of an American “Bowling Alone” he captured the decline of social capital in American society (Putnam 1995). Following his popular findings on the decline of social capital in “Bowling Alone”, a number of counter-arguments have emerged (Fukuyama, Skocpol and Putnam in Ray (2002). Francis Fukuyama (1997), insists that American individualism has seldom involved hostility to community life altogether”. Later, Fukuyama (2002) would affirm that September 11th was “sufficient to reverse some of the most important aspects of the negative trends that he (Putnam) chronicled (Fukuyama in Ray, 2002: xii, brackets mine). Indeed, Putnam himself would change his tune in a later article entitled “Bowling Together” (Putnam 2002), agreeing with Fukuyama that “the images of shared suffering that followed the terrorist attacks on New York and
Washington D.C., suggested a powerful idea of cross-class, cross-ethnic solidarity (Putnam in Dionne Jr. Drogosz and Litan 2003: 17).

Given that social capital is obtained by virtue of membership in social structures (Coleman, 1990; Portes, 1998), its maintenance and reproduction are made possible only through the social interactions of members and their continued investment in social relationships. Naturally, individuals have limited resources themselves (human and economic capital), so they must access other resources through their social ties, which they use (as social capital) for purposive actions. For this reason, Bourdieu (1986) argues that “the volume of social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he or she can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his or her own right by each of those to whom he or she is connected” (Bourdieu 1986: 249). Social capital, therefore, grows by bringing together resources from disparate sources. As a result, networks and network structures represent dimensions of social capital that influences the range of resources that may be accessed. For Tarrow (1998), these “connective structures” constitute a valuable resource as channels or conduits for resource mobilization. We have seen such “connective structures” in the many collaborative efforts amongst anti-embargo organizations discussed in Chapter 4. These include publications in each other’s websites, joint seminars, conferences and protest action and even shared Executive and Board members.

The common goal of fostering trade with Cuba through removal of unilateral sanctions, has spawned sufficient camaraderie to promote cooperation rather than competition even amongst business interests vying for a share of the limited Cuban market. Also, even though the goal of “free-trade” is a collective good, Olson’s (1965) free-rider issue never emerges as a problem, even amongst profit-seekers in USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association,
which actually share executive leadership, as we have seen. The organizations recognize the value of solidarity and of collective action - of “bowling together” - as Putnam (2003) aptly describes it.

Thus, solidarity networks, co-option and social capital provide better explanations for the sustenance of group activism in the anti-embargo case. Olson (1965) underscores the logic of collective action in contending that individuals are driven to join groups by selective incentives rather than collective benefits because of the free-rider problem. However, he fails to consider the non-material benefits which may prompt members to mobilize. Similarly, in arguing that individuals join groups not for collective benefits but for a staff job, Salisbury (1969) also ignores other non-material benefits which they pursue. None of these models suffice to explain the deep sense of commitment and the underlying ideological, psychological or moral objectives of the movement’s participants. This will be the subject of the next section as we continue our “rational departure”.

**Commitment, Moral Incentives and Psychological Benefits**

Departing from the economic models propounded by Olson (1965) and Salisbury 1969), Terry Moe (1980), contends that individuals mobilize for psychological benefits. These include the pursuit of ideological objectives, the desire to make a difference in the political process, a strong sense of political efficacy, the satisfaction of a personal feeling of obligation, and the need to obtain political information (Moe 1980: 113-144). For Moe (1980), a number of considerations are relevant incentives for action: “altruism, belief in a cause or ideology, loyalty, beliefs about right and wrong, camaraderie, friendship, love, acceptance, security, status, prestige, power, religious beliefs and racial prejudice” (Moe 1980: 113).

Indeed, even before Olson’s (1965), path-breaking *Logic of Collective Action*, interest group scholars, Peter Clark and James Wilson (1961), had identified three types of benefits
which can accrue to an individual. The first is *material*, which includes tangible rewards that can usually be translated into monetary terms. The second is *solidary*, which are social rewards that derive from associating in group activities. The third is *purposive*, which are rewards associated with ideological or issue-oriented goals that offer no significant tangible or benefits to members (Petracca 1992: 102). In establishing a dichotomy between material and non-material resources, we argue that the groups in the anti-embargo movement are motivated to mobilize not by individual, selective material incentives but by collective moral incentives and also for the solidary and purposive benefits which ensue.

This notion of solidary and purposive benefits offered by Clark and Wilson (1961), which somewhat relates to Moe’s (1980) psychological rewards thesis, also serves to explain the ability of the anti-embargo movement to survive and be active in the face of an extremely powerful countermovement. This is reinforced by what Petracca (1992) identifies as “commitment theory”. Its basic premise is that the high degree of time, energy and resources required for involvement in group activities is derived from “belief about good policy” (Sabatier and McLauglin 1990). A mixture of material and ideological/purposive incentives drive individuals to become members of groups and ultimately, leaders, when those benefits are perceived to be large enough. More importantly, however, self-interested behavior becomes intertwined with congruent notions of improving social welfare, either out of self-respect or concern for political efficacy (Tesser 1978, Margolis 1982: 100). As one moves from potential members to actual members and then to leaders, the level of commitment is expected to increase (Sabatier and McCubbin, 1990). This is quite evident in the long-standing moral commitment of some leaders like Wayne Smith, Sandra Levinson and Kirby Jones, discussed at length in Chapter 3. Even if
there was a self-interested motive in benefiting from a job or a career, their commitment to the cause has increased with leadership roles.

It is this “moral commitment,” which perhaps best explains the decision of so many academics, business interests, politicians, ex-politicians and grassroots groups to participate in the anti-embargo movement. The interviews reveal that there is a common thread binding their motives. They are guided not by material self-interests but by broad notions of right and wrong. In viewing the existing Cuba policy as wrong, they hold firmly to liberal norms, which form part of their value-based ideological beliefs rooted in notions of peace, human rights, freedom, justice and democracy. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) forge a nexus between such norms and framing (discussed above). Viewing challengers as “norm entrepreneurs”, they contend:

Norm entrepreneurs are critical for norm emergence because they call attention to issues or even “create” issues by using language that names, interprets and even dramatizes them. Social movement theorists refer to this reinterpretation or renaming process as “framing.” The construction of cognitive frames is an essential component of norm entrepreneurs’ political strategies since when they are successful, the new frames resonate with broader public understandings and are adopted as new ways of talking about and understanding issues (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 897).

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), suggest that norm entrepreneurs or challengers are motivated by empathy, altruism or ideational commitment. For them, “empathy exists when actors have the capacity for participating in another’s feelings or ideas”. They continue that “such empathy may lead to “empathetic interdependence”, where “actors are interested in the welfare of others for its own sake” even if this has no effect on their own material well-being or security”. Altruism exists when actors take “action designed to benefit another even at risk to significant harm to the actor’s own well-being”. They define ideational commitment as the “main motivation when entrepreneurs promote norms or ideas because they believe in the ideals and values embodied in the norms, even though the pursuit of the norms may have no effect on their well-being” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 898).
We see all these components in the actions of anti-embargo groups. Mainstream American activists in WOLA, LAWG, CIP and the Center for Cuban Studies, empathize with the plight of Cuban Americans even though the embargo has no direct effect on their own well-being. Venceremos Brigade and Pastors for Peace have displayed altruism in risking imprisonment by breaking the law for those affected by the embargo. All the groups display ideational commitment in their determination to promote one or more of the norms of human rights, peace democracy, justice and freedom in which they firmly believe.

In examining the mission statements of the organizations, one or more of these norms almost always arise as a primary objective. The principal mission of CIP involves promoting a U.S. foreign policy based on “international cooperation, demilitarization and a respect for basic human rights”.11 The LAWG and its sister organization, the Latin American Working Group Education Fund, seek to encourage U.S. policies towards Latin America that “promote human rights, justice, peace and sustainable development”.12 WOLA aims to “promote human rights, democracy and social justice in Latin America”.13 Viewing U.S. Cuba policy as a complete violation of human rights, Pastors for Peace also seek to “foster peace, human rights and justice”.14 Freedom of information is a major objective of the Center for Cuban Studies.15

---


Freedom of academic travel is motivating force of the ECDET\textsuperscript{16} and freedom to family is the primary goal of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights and CAAEF\textsuperscript{17}.

The salience of liberal norms in the discourse of politicians, academics and the leaders and staff of the organizations is evident from publications in their websites. Again, the notion that the organizations are propelled by liberal norms undermines the rational model and underscores the non-material, ideological, moral, psychological and ethical motivations which sustain the movement. Such moral commitments have been defined as sources of value other than being “better off”, no matter how “better of” is defined (Etzioni 1988, Hirschmann 1986). For Hirschmann (1986), such values act as meta-preferences – the choice of ends rather than means of achieving a specified end. He identifies democracy as a collective good both as a given set of rules and as informed participation in public choice as a process of individual and collective striving (Hirschmann 1986: 149-55). Etzioni (1988) identifies such moral commitments as “often explicitly based on the desire for pleasure in the name of the principle(s) involved” (Etzioni 1988: 45). Ferree (1992), affirms that “many social movements are committed to such moral principles and attempt to realize them in the process of collective mobilization itself as much as in the stated outcome of such endeavors” (Ferree in Morris and Mueller, 1992: 33).

An electronic content analysis undertaken of forty documents in the websites of CIP, WOLA, LAWG and CAAEF for the frequency of liberal norms (human rights, peace, justice, freedom and democracy) as espoused in their mission statements, both confirms the presence of normative goals of the organizations and underscores which norms the organizations prioritize. A search was made for these terms and hit counts recorded. Table 6-1 shows the number of hit

\textsuperscript{16} Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel. \url{http://www.ecdet.org/about.htm}

\textsuperscript{17} Cuban American Alliance. 1995. “Board of Directors.” \url{http://www.cubamer.org/about_us.asp}
counts of each liberal norm emerging from documents in the websites of some of these more popular organizations of the anti-embargo movement. The bar-chart in Figure 6-1 of graphically illustrates the frequency of electronic hit counts of certain liberal norms in publications in the websites of major organizations.18

Though all the groups do not attribute the same significance to each norm, human rights seems critically important to CIP, WOLA and LAWG. CIP claims that human rights is of primary importance because it is fundamental to the existence of the individual (Interview with Smith, 9th August, 2006). Table 6-1 of (and the interviews), suggest that the preservation of human rights are salient in the agenda of the three major D.C. policy groups, CIP, WOLA and LAWG. The term “human rights” appear 515 times in the forty documents searched (see Appendix I for list of articles searched). The LAWG shares the Cuban American CAAEF’s concern for “freedom” especially since the 2004 restrictions hamper their freedom to travel and to family. However, as Claire Rodriguez asserts, the LAWG is reluctant to tout the concept of “democracy” since it also applies to the Cuban system and the LAWG prefers to avoid allegations of infringement on Cuba’s sovereignty.19 Hence, the relatively low hit count for “democracy” for the LAWG. “Peace” and “justice” do not appear as frequently in the publications though they are identified as primary goals in some groups’ mission statements. Nonetheless, the numerous appearances of these norms in the publications of the organizations suggest they are significant motivation for the movement’s continued operations, thereby justifying our case for a “rational departure” in this chapter.

18 See Table 6-1 and Figure 6-1 on page 179.

19 Interview with Rodriguez, 26th October 2006.
Underlying these non-material motivations embracing the core values of human rights, freedom, peace and justice, is a frantic effort by both mainstream and Cuban Americans to preserve the highly-prized institution and norm of democracy in the United States. Democracy provides the pillar upon which these core American values rest. The demands made by social movements have been challenging both democratic deviants and pseudo claims to democracy in as much as they call for re-adjustments in the decision-making processes. In employing the foundational components of Robert Dahl’s theory (1956, 1971), to explain democracy in Nicaragua, Anderson and Dodd (2005) note the role of contestation. In agreement with Dahl (1956, 1971), they affirm that “politics is not just a struggle for personal and factional power among contending elites who are in essential agreement over ideas and issues, but rather a conflict over alternative political visions that citizens care about” (Anderson and Dodd 2005: 41). Thus, we contend that social movements as a whole act as challengers and “maintainers” of democracy. Democracy is the underlying motivational force propelling the anti-embargo movement.

This is buttressed by our findings from the content analysis. The term “democracy” emerges 147 times in our electronic search, closely paralleling the hit count for “freedom” which occurs 148 times. “Freedom” and “democracy” are coterminous and are frequently used interchangeably in the U.S. This is seen in the harsh condemnation of the Report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba by the Emergency Network of Cuban American Scholars and Artists (ENCASA) based on its view that “these recommendations ultimately undermine both the national interests of the U.S. and the values and ideals that we claim to stand for”:

While the report professes that its goal is the spread of democracy in Cuba, the Commission’s past recommendations (strengthened by the new report) have added further
restrictions on travel to Cuba by Cuban-Americans, scholars, students, and humanitarians — a foreign policy which not only belies American commitment to basic freedoms but also runs completely counter to that conducted with respect to other communist countries, for which the prevailing assumption has always been that democracy is spread through American travel and the dissemination of democratic ideals.\textsuperscript{20}

The irony is not lost. On the one hand, the United States imposes and continues to tighten a forty-six year old embargo on Cuba on the grounds of Castro’s flagrant disregard for human rights and democracy. On the other hand, organizations and individuals within the United States strongly criticize and condemn the embargo on the grounds of the U.S. “inhumane” restrictions on citizen’s fundamental “freedoms” often viewed as synonymous with human rights and democracy.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have attempted a “rational departure”, from traditional resource mobilization perspectives. In all fairness to Olson (1965), we should acknowledge that his was not a model designed to explain unsuccessful social movements. Rather, it was an approach geared toward an understanding of mobilization in powerful labor unions, lobby and interest groups. It happened to catch the fancy of a number of social movements scholars and so became popularized as a resource mobilization perspective. Although we have discounted it for the most part in this chapter, it has nonetheless serves as a useful platform from which to launch our analysis on a “rational departure”.

We have argued that material incentives are not the primary motivations behind the continued efforts of the anti-embargo movement to change U.S./Cuba policy. We agree with McCarthy and Zald (1977) that the availability of financial resources has facilitated the organizations’ operations but disagree that this movement resembles any kind of “movement

industry”, “movement sector” or even “social movement organization” (SMO) which operates like a competitive market-oriented business firm.

Moreover, Olson’s model proves particularly misleading when we examine mobilization tactics (primarily framing), solidarity networks, co-option and social capital as facilitators to the movement’s sustenance and continued activism in the post-Cold War era. While the notion of selective incentives is applicable to self-oriented groups, it fails to explain the motivations of public interest groups which constitute the bulk of the anti-embargo movement. We contend that other non-material motivations such as moral commitment, solidary and purposive benefits and belief about good policy, serve to better explain the persistence of the anti-embargo movement despite its limited success over time. Hence, we depart from the rational model in affirming that the anti-embargo movement could not be sustained without a deep and abiding normative commitment from its members and leaders.

This is evident in the long-standing commitments of icons of the movement such as Wayne Smith, Sandra Levinson and Kirby Jones as detailed in Chapter 3. The dedication of unpaid interns and professional members of the Board of Directors as well as the personal experiences and unrelenting commitment of underpaid staff members, serve to strengthen our argument. This is buttressed by the role of social capital and the dense solidarity networks within the movements and with politicians, ex-politicians, academics and grassroots organizations. Moreover, the non-material impulse is illustrated by the overwhelming presence of normative concepts in the organizations’ publications.

Although “human rights” appears as the most salient liberal norm guiding the movement’s operations, underlying this is a deep-seated quest to preserve the very bedrock of democracy upon which certain core American values rest. The many fundamental “freedoms” for which
anti-embargo challengers struggle such as freedom of information, freedom to travel, freedom to trade and freedom to family, are perceived as vital facets of, if not identical to the “democracy” norm which Americans hold in such high regard. It is no surprise that the hit counts for “freedom’ and “democracy” are almost equal in a search of documents in the organizations’ websites. In the next chapter on “political opportunity structures”, we will analyze how democratic systems actually facilitate collective action.

The superficial economic lure of the rational model in the quest for empirically testable formulations, fail to adequately capture what the anti-embargo movement really is, who its members actually are and what they do. For indeed, social movements are ultimately about human beings and their collective behavior. As Perrow (1986) asserts, “in the rational model, human forms are retained but all that we value about human behavior - its spontaneity, unpredictability, selflessness, plurality of values, reciprocal influence, and resentment of domination- has disappeared” (Perrow 1986: 41).
Table 6-1. Frequency of 5 liberal norms in 40 documents published in websites of prominent anti-embargo organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Human Rights</th>
<th>Peace</th>
<th>Justice</th>
<th>Freedom</th>
<th>Democracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAWG</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOLA</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAEF</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP, LAWG, WOLA, CAEF (TOTAL)</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6-1. Frequency of 5 liberal norms in 40 documents published in websites of prominent anti-embargo organizations as reflected in Table 6-1. The X-axis represents the number of hit counts in the websites and the Y-axis represents the major organizations.
CHAPTER 7
POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES: SYSTEMIC, NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL IMPULSES TO ANTI-EMBARGO ACTIVISM

In his 1978 classic text, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, Charles Tilly introduced a “polity model” for the analysis of collective action. He elaborated a set of conditions necessary for mobilization underscoring the opportunity-threat to challengers and facilitation-repression by authorities (Tilly 1978). More popularly known as “political opportunity structures”, the dual dimensions of Tilly’s polity model link collective action to the state, which was completely ignored by previous studies focusing on resource mobilization. For Tilly, politics and collective action are intricately intertwined though movements vary in their strategy, structure and success in different kinds of states. Tilly’s (1984b) assertions found resonance with students of social revolution like Theda Skocpol, in his argument that the development of the national social movement was “concomitant and mutually interdependent with the rise of consolidated national states” (Tarrow 1998).

Tilly’s (1984b) model was later taken up by McAdam McCarthy and Zald (2004c) who emphasize that changes in the structures of political opportunities can contribute to shifting fortunes in social movements. Sidney Tarrow, inspired by Tilly (1978), defines the political opportunity structure as “consistent …dimensions of the political environment which either encourage or discourage people from using political action. In particular, the opening up of political power, the shifts in ruling alignments, the availability of potential allies, and the emergence of cleavages within and among elites are considered the external resources that trigger contentious action” (Tarrow 1998: 18). For Tarrow, there is no formula to predict exactly when contentious politics will emerge since the specifications of opportunities and constraints varies in different historical and political contexts and because different factors may vary in opposing directions. Hence, “the term “political opportunity structure” should not be understood
as an invariant model inevitably producing social movements, but as a set of clues for when contentious politics will emerge, setting in motion a chain of causation that may ultimately lead to sustained interaction with authorities and thence to social movements” (Tarrow 1998: 20).

Particularly applicable to this study is the dimension of collective action embraced by political opportunity structures which Tarrow calls “cycles of contention” or “waves of protest”. Tarrow (1998) defines these as periods of turbulence and realignment. The historical period under study is the post-Cold War era. In attempting to determine whether the perspectives of Tilly (1978) and Tarrow (1998) speak to this investigation in any way, we seek answers to a number of questions. Is this period characterized by a wave of anti-embargo protests? Have systemic, national and societal forces led to an increase in anti-embargo organizations? Moreover, have they facilitated or constrained anti-embargo activism?

Though Tilly’s (1978) model is resolutely structural, grounded in conditions that are apparently outside the control of actors or agents, he completely ignores the international system as part of this structure. Even Tilly’s disciples fail to capture the international dynamic, hardly employing systemic factors to explain collective action. This is not surprising since social movement research is predominantly Comparative and rarely accommodates the field of International Relations.

In this chapter, we hope to fill the academic lacunae of the Tillian tradition by exploring the opportunity-constraints structures facilitating-inhibiting group activities in the anti-embargo movement. This entails an understanding of the systemic, national and sub-national forces impacting on the anti-embargo movement. The systemic underscores external factors such as the end of the Cold War, neoliberalism and globalization, and the Pope’s visit to the island. The state level dynamics focus on the national setting in the U.S. and Cuba such as Cuba’s liberal reforms,
the various American post-Cold War state policies including the Torricelli Bill, the Helms-Burton Law, the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act and the Reports of the Commission to a Free Cuba. It also includes the domestic environment in Cuba. The sub-national, local or societal forces emphasizes the Cuban American community in Miami including its power alignment with the state; the Elián González affair; recent changes within the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF); and increasing challenges to the embargo from the moderate majority of Cuban Americans in South Florida. There are significant overlaps between these so they should not be viewed as entirely independent of each other.

**Systemic Forces and Expanding Opportunity Structures**

The notion that the level of civic engagement in a society is related to external events may prove useful in explaining the rise of social movements at the end of the Cold War. Fukuyama (2002), contends that “the high level of civic engagement and trust that characterized the United States in the 1950’s was not some kind of “normal” baseline for society, but was itself a somewhat abnormal period shaped by external events. The Great Depression, World War II, and emerging Cold War were traumatic events that reinforced an American sense of community and identity” (in Ray, 2002: xii). Putnam corroborates this with data he gathered after September 11th concluding that “as 2001 ended, Americans were more united, readier for collective sacrifice, and more attuned to public purpose than we have been for several decades... Indeed, we have a more capacious sense of “we” than we have had in the adult experience of most Americans now alive” (in Dionne Jr. Drogosz and Litan 2003: 17). There seems to be some correlation between the existence and activities of social movements and structural factors. Speaking generally, Smith (2000) asserts that after the Cold War, “a host of independent forces including the media, the universities, private foundations, gender, ethnic, and racial communities, and citizens action
groups have proliferated, giving new form and strength to society relative to the state (Smith 2000: 92).

This becomes even more pertinent when one considers the proliferation of organizations in the United States attempting to change U.S. Cuba policy in the aftermath of the Cold War. Thus, we argue that a “window of political opportunities,” as espoused by McAdam (in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 23-40), has been provided by several international events. These include the end of the Cold War; the wave of globalization and concomitantly, neoliberalism and free-trade which stands in opposition to sanctions like the Cuban embargo; and the Pope’s visit to Cuba in 1998.

The End of the Cold War and the Onslaught of Globalization

The increasing number of anti-embargo organizations in the United States in the aftermath of the Cold War can be attributable to changing attitudes to Cuba due to the collapse of communism in the Eastern bloc and the end of bipolar conflict in the international system. In the early nineties, international and American outrage against the embargo was intensified. The literature and surveys show changing attitudes of both mainstream and Cuban Americans to U.S. Cuba policy in the post-Cold War era (Mayer 2001, Grenier and Gladwin, FIU/Cuba Poll-1991-2006). This is largely because Cuba was no longer perceived as an ideological threat to the U.S or the world for that matter as reflected in Mayer’s (2001) report of the ABC/Washington Post (1993-1998) and Yankelovich (1983-2000) polls in Tables 7-1 and 7-2.1

Some U.S. citizens even defy the embargo on the grounds that Cuba is no longer a security threat to the U.S. In 1993, for example, the San Francisco-based Global Exchange, a non-profit, educational travel organization, undertook a trip to Cuba risking ten years imprisonment and

---

1 See Tables 7-1 and 7-2 on page 211.
fines of up to $250,000. The group of 175 U.S. citizens consisted of doctors, business people, and an Alabama mother of six. Medea Benjamin, Executive Director of the organization, claimed that their aim was to expose what they call an “archaic” and “unconstitutional” U.S. policy limiting travel to Cuba. She insisted that

The United States is the only Western democracy that treats travel as a crime. It makes no sense that we can travel almost anywhere in the world, but our own government prevents us from visiting Cuba…Since the demise of the Soviet Union, our government can no longer say that Cuba threatens our national security (Scott 1993).

This argument has been taken up by several academics who perceive the embargo as senseless in a post-Cold War era. Moreover, they contend that it is not achieving its goal of toppling the Castro regime. Rather, they believe it is conveniently used by the Cuban leader to bolster domestic support for himself and his regime which defeats the very purpose for which it was implemented (Smith 1998, Buckley 1998).

Increasing sympathy for the Cuban people (if not the Castro regime), also emerged because of the grueling “special period” the island endured in the nineties and economic and social hardships suffered by the Cuban people after the Soviet Union withdrew its five billion dollars annual subvention and ceased propping up the Cuban economy. The drastic restructuring of the international system at the end of the Cold War and the new priorities of the Soviet Union led to an economic crisis in Cuba in the early to mid-nineties as affirmed by Pérez López:

The principal cause behind the island’s economic crisis during the 1990s has undoubtedly been the shift in trade and economic relations with the former socialist countries, a shift that began in 1989 as those economic partners abandoned central planning and began a transition designed to lead to market economies. In the latter part of the 1980s, the former Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe purchased 85% of Cuba’s exports, provided a like share of the country’s imports, and were the main source of the islands development financing. The disappearance of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and their subsequent demand that trade relations be conducted via convertible currencies and following normal commercial practices, meant that Cuba lost the very favorable economic treatment to which it had become accustomed and on which its economy had depended (Pérez López 1997).
We can therefore surmise that the changing international dynamics due to the collapse of Communism in the Eastern bloc in 1989 led to increased anti-embargo activism for several reasons. First, it dispelled images of Cuba as a Soviet satellite. Silvia Wilhelm of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights admits that this was certainly a motivating force behind the establishment of the organization, Puentes Cubanos, of which she is President.\(^2\)

Second, the economic crisis and the resulting suffering endured by the Cuban people aroused the sympathy of the American public and hence spawned anti-embargo activities. This prompted some Americans to engage in anti-embargo activities such as joining the annual caravans that take much-needed aid to Cuba organized by Pastors for Peace. In 1997, Pastors for Peace took over 150 tons of food and medical supplies across US-Mexican border at Laredo (Texas) to Cuba (Hall 1994.) The sentiments expressed by Ian Williams cogently demonstrate how such sympathy can be evoked:

> The effects of the economic crisis demonstrate that neither the U.S. government nor the Cuban American National Foundation nor their supporters in Congress have the welfare of the Cuban people at heart when they try to exacerbate the situation. In Old Havana, families of eight live in two rooms, and the water supply is turned on only five hours a day. While food is adequate, soap is rationed to one bar a month for two people, and shampoos, detergents and similar items are available only in the hard-currency shops. A teacher showed me how she made nail polish with acetone, varnish and old house paint. In a suburb of Havana, I found that the local clinic’s ambulance was out of commission for lack of tires (Williams 1992).

In addition to Cuba’s economic crisis, the continued sanctions on Cuba in the age of globalization and neoliberal economic policies, evoked the ire of anti-sanctions organizations such as USA Engage, which works in collaboration with the National Foreign Trade Council. Jake Colvin, Director of USA Engage, asserts that “USA Engage was formed in 1997 to counteract U.S. unilateral sanctions against Iran and Libya in the mid-nineties. Moreover, there

\(^2\) Interview with Wilhelm, 21\(^{st}\) August 2006.
was a need to change the course of the conversation on Cuba after the Helms-Burn law was passed in 1996. Colvin insists that sanctions are contrary to the goals and interests of the United States in an era of globalization. This position is reiterated in the organization’s website: “In an integrated, globalized economy, positive U.S. economic engagement - including the ability of American farmers, workers and businesses to compete in emerging markets - is central to our own economic prosperity and to the worldwide growth of democracy, freedom, and human rights”.

That there were increased activities of the anti-embargo movement from the Cold War to the post-Cold War era is evident from data collected via an electronic content analysis of five major U.S. newspapers – The *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Miami Herald*, the *New York Times*, *USA Today* and the *Washington Post*. A search for the word “Cuba” and the name of prominent organizations involved in anti-embargo activities reveal an overwhelming increase in frequency for the later period in every case. This suggests that anti-embargo activities spiraled in the post-Cold War era confirming our contention that political opportunity structures had an impact on the movement’s activities. Table 7-3 and Figure 7-3 show the increasing hit counts of twenty-five prominent anti-embargo organizations in the U.S. from the Cold War (1980-1989) to the post-Cold War era (1990-2006).

**Pope John Paul’s Visit to Cuba**

The increase in anti-embargo activism may also be linked to the visit of Pope John Paul II to Cuba in January, 1998. The visit resulted in a change in U.S. policy as a result of perceived changes in Cuba. According to John Joseph Moakly (ex-D-Mass), who visited Cuba while the

---

3 Interview with Colvin, 19th August 2006.


5 See Table 7-3 and Figure 7-1 on pages 212 and 213 respectively.
Pope was there, “the Pope’s visit created a change in atmosphere in Cuba that hasn’t been seen since the revolution... we need to be part of Cuba’s changing political and social situation by engaging in a dialogue of thoughts and ideas” (Moakley 1999). Another source noted that Protestant groups have been involved in the effort (Swarns 1998).

Anti-embargo activists and faith-based organizations saw the Pope’s visit as a “window of opportunity” (McAdam in McAdam in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 23-40), to step up their protest activity. Catholic leaders and some Cuban Americans praised Clinton’s decision to reduce restrictions on travel and humanitarian aid, claiming that the embargo had caused civilians to suffer. Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark, N.J., chairman of the U.S. Bishop’s International Policy Committee, issued a statement praising Clinton’s action, saying he and others who visited Cuba during the Pope’s visit “cannot forget the outpouring of joy and enthusiasm of the Cuban people ... and neither can we forget so many signs of a general deterioration: the pitiful condition of state-run health clinics or the empty shelves of food stores.” He added, “We welcome the willingness of our government to facilitate the more adequate response to the needs of the people of Cuba at this time.” According to Executive Director, Kenneth F. Hackett, Catholic Relief Services also shipped medical supplies to Cuba of more than $5 million worth, On March 23, 1998, Catholic Medical Missions Board in New York City shipped supplies to Cuba as part of $6 million in stockpiled medical aid, including $1 million worth of insulin collected from American pharmaceutical companies. Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua of Philadelphia said that Clinton’s action “slowly opens the door of hope” for Cuban people and will help to strengthen them “not only physically but emotionally and spiritually.” During a March 20 mass for Cuban Americans and other Hispanics, Cardinal John O’Connor of New York, who led a delegation to Cuba during the Pope’s visit, urged that restrictions on travel
to Cuba be lifted. Similarly, the Rev. Rodney Page, Executive Director of Church World Service, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches declared that “We are pleased to know that President Clinton has been listening to the growing clamor of the churches”.

Charles Krause, reporting for the Jim Lehreh News Hour, interviewed Ricardo Alarcon, President of the Cuban National Assembly after the Pope’s visit, asking him: “Do you think that this trip and his statements about the embargo will change the political climate in the United States?” Alarcon responded:

I would like to hope that his message, particularly his appeal for an ending of the embargo would have some response that would be listened to and in the same manner that we take every other comment that he made. I think he is a person that deserves to be listened. His views have to be considered, and perhaps his visit will contribute - not to change immediately - not drastically adopt a particular attitude by the U.S. authorities, but let’s hope that it will contribute to promote a necessary reassessment of a policy that His Holiness has said is unjust and morally unacceptable. I think that those are two concepts that should have persons of goodwill, whatever their political persuasions, think a little bit about.

Thus, a “window of opportunities,” as described by McAdam (In McAdam in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 23-40), opened up triggering a wave of protests by anti-embargo challengers in the aftermath of the Cold War. The event marks a major political watershed creating political opportunity structures which was facilitated by the wave of protests by the anti-embargo movement. Activists seized the opportunities ushered in by the public perception of Cuba as no longer posing a security threat to the U.S. This was buttressed the winds of globalization blowing through the international system. All this led to the formation of new groups like USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association as well as increased activism by

---


non-business organizations like WOLA and CIP and humanitarian groups and faith-based organizations which have taken up the business and Cuban cause as part of their agenda.

**State-level Impetus to Anti-Embargo Activities**

Social movement scholars have been focusing a great deal of attention to the state because they generally target the state and it is through state action that challengers can realize their goals (Kreisi 1995, Kreisi et al 1995, Goodwin 1995, Jenkins 1995). Amenta and Young (1999) contend that states systematically influence social action by influencing the return to their collective action. Thus, when states repay challengers’ actions generously, social mobilization would be greater than when such returns are small (Amenta and Young 1999: 155).

This hypothesis does not hold true for the anti-embargo movement, which has demonstrated higher levels of collective action even when their goals are counteracted by state polices resulting in a virtual negative rate of return from the state. Indeed, this forms the basis of the central research puzzle addressed in this project: why does the movement persists in collective action when the returns from the state are consistently negative? We have identified the external dynamic or systemic forces as one precipitator of anti-embargo activism. Here we continue this argument at the domestic level contending that state level facilitators or national forces spawn both a proliferation of groups and anti-embargo activism in the post-Cold War Era. We attribute this to three factors, namely the liberalizing economic reforms which the Cuban economy itself has been undergoing since the mid-nineties, type of government and specific state policies.

**Cuba’s Liberal Economic Reforms**

At the end of the Cold War, Cuba was also perceived as more inclined toward adopting the American capitalist policies. Thus, attempts at liberal reforms by Castro in the nineties have made the island seem less “evil” to the American people. Wayne Smith observes that “Havana initiated a number of reform measures in 1993, permitting farmers markets and small private
enterprises including private restaurants and repair shops, use of the U.S. dollar as legal daily tender and more favorable terms for foreign investment. These all led toward a more open economy…” (Smith 1998).

During the “special period” in the mid-nineties when Castro undertook market reforms to prop up the fledgling Cuban economy, the island became an attractive prospect for potential business investors. This became more of an imperative for American interests when European, Canadian and Mexican investors began to take advantage of investment opportunities in the Cuban economy. It led to the creation of Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba in 1999 and prompted American business interests to coalesce under the banner of USA Engage and the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association formed in 1997 and 2005 respectively. The fear expressed by U.S. corporations of European competition and of losing a lucrative market of eleven million Cuban citizens just ninety miles off the shores of Florida, is encapsulated in the words of Thomas J. Donohue, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce:

We’re saying on behalf of the American business community that it’s time to look at this another way,” said Thomas J. Donohue, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce after a three-day visit to Cuba in 1999. “Who does well there?...It’s the Canadians, the Germans, the French, the Italians. All of our friends....Ask Bill Marriott or the guys at the Hilton, do they want to let everybody else in the world buy up those beaches? We need a new approach” (DeYoung 1999).

This may seem as more of an “economic” than a “political” opportunity. Social movement scholars have recognized that the earliest formulation of the concept “political opportunities” was vague because “any environmental factor that facilitated movement activity was apt to be conceptualized as a political opportunity” (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 25). Indeed, Gamson and Meyer recognize the problem affirming that “the concept of political opportunity structure is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up virtually every aspect of the social movement argument – political institutions and culture, crises of various sorts, political
alliances, and policy shifts…Used to explain so much, it may ultimately explain nothing it all” (in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 24). We defend our insistence in viewing the economic reforms in Cuba as a “political opportunity structure” because it was triggered by changes in the political climate of the international system – the collapse of the Soviet Union. As for globalization, it has both economic and political dimensions. Moreover, while Gamson and Meyer (1996) are cognizant of the danger of overstretching the concept, they themselves fail to account for “economic opportunities” and its role in the opportunity structure debates in social movement literature. At the same time, we must recognize the gap in the literary oeuvre on political opportunities in its failure to capture systemic or international dynamics to explain collective action.

There was also a groundswell of sympathy for the Cuban people from relatives in Miami, even those opposed to Castro and his socialist policies. Larry Rohter explains that the support offered by exiles in Miami for their relatives in Cuba in the face of the deepening economic crisis surpassed humanitarian aid to include visits to Cuba:

As Cuba’s economic and political crisis deepens, exiles here are reaching out to their kin on the island as never before by sending aid, exchanging visits and seeking their advice on how to ease Fidel Castro from power. Thousands of exiles, responding to the pleas of family members still in Cuba, have defied calls to starve the island into submission and are sending money and supplies through the scores of shipping agencies that have sprung up here. Still others have responded to Mr. Castro’s recent invitation to exiles, whom he once spurned as “worms” and “scum,” and are visiting their families in Cuba. New flights making the Miami-Havana run are booked weeks in advance, and relatives of top Cuban officials have also come to seek out moderates here to discuss ways the two groups can cooperate (Rohter 1993).

Between 1991 and 1993, the Cuban economy shrunk by over 50%. Electrical power outages became the norm rather than the exception. Robert Gelbard, Deputy Assistant for Inter-American Affairs reports that “across the island, major factories stand idle for want of fuel and spare parts. Public transportation between and within major cities was drastically reduced. The
diet of the Cuban population suffered dramatically. Basic foods were severely rationed and supplies were often so low that people could not redeem their ration cards. There is a growing black market for food and even reports of clandestine restaurants where Cubans go for meals”… (Gelbard 1993).  

Ruben Berrios presents his case for lifting the embargo

At present the Cuban government is struggling to keep its fragile economy afloat. The rationing of basic staples and other consumer goods has been intensified and the lack of spare parts and fuel, previously imported from the socialist bloc, has to a large extent paralyzed economic activity. The consequences for employment are obviously adverse.  

Thus, anti-embargo activism was spawned by increasing sympathy for suffering Cuban citizens and the possibilities of lucrative trade opportunities due to liberal reforms undertaken by Castro after the collapse of Communism in the Eastern bloc.

Type of Government

Tarrow (1983, 1989b) perceives the concept of political opportunity structure as three dimensional: the degree of openness or closure of formal political access; the degree of stability or instability of political alignments; and the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners (Tarrow 1983: 28). Later, he adds a fourth element: political conflicts within and among elites (Tarrow 1989b: 35).

Type of government is directly related to Tarrow’s “degree of openness or closure of formal political access”. There has been a substantial body of literature dedicated to the argument that democracy fosters social action and therefore democratic states are more open to social movements (Marshall 1963, Tarrow 1994, Amenta and Young 1999). By reducing the level of legal restrictions on institutional participation, democratic states allows for an increase in

---


collective action by everyday people. Social movements take advantage of such rights to hold meetings, conferences and seminars, issue press releases, mobilize in mass protests and now use the internet as a medium to criticize state policies and solicit support from the public. As seen, several of these have been employed by the anti-embargo movement including the rather democratic procedure of asking citizens to write to their representatives. Interestingly, the struggle to preserve the very institution of democracy perceived as a norm, even a fundamental human right, has spurred anti-embargo activism. Some groups become emboldened in the belief that democracy is a right and are prepared to break the law to preserve it.

The degree of state centralization may also impact on the level of mobilization. Commenting on the relations between type of state and collective action, Tarrow (1998) contends that “Federalism is a particular invitation to movements to shift their venues into institutions, because it provides so many alternative pockets for participation (Tarrow 1998). From one perspective, the state is perceived as “an autonomous, irreducible set of institutions which shape political conflict in the interest of its own survival and aggrandizement” This gave way to the view of the state as “the arena of routinized political competition in which class, status and political conflicts…are played out (Bright and Harper 1984: 3). Lipsky and Olson (1976) assert that decentralized systems frequently “process” the most challenging elements out of popular politics, as the United States did following the race riots of the 1960s. (Lipsky and Olson 1976). In agreement with Tilly (1986) and Kreisi (1995), we contend that federal or decentralized states tend to foster political mobilization because they multiply the targets for action. Federalism produces several polities with power and varying degrees of susceptibility to the goals of challengers providing a variety of incentives to mobilize around them (Amenta and Young 1999: 156). Although this mobilization may be more fragmented because the polity
operates at varying levels as Kreisi (1995) observes, such a decentralized polity invites a wider variety of challengers and a diversity of forms of collective action. The horizontal division of power across the national government embracing the executive, legislature and judiciary also facilitates contentious action. For example, the autonomous powers of the legislature and the courts, make them more susceptible and open as targets for challengers.

Federalism has encouraged anti-embargo activism amongst several interest groups in the United States. These include farming, business and Cuban American interests. Faced with a tough re-election bid in the swing district of Washington, Republican representative, George Nethercutt, was forced to accommodate the demands of farming and agribusiness challengers in 2000.\(^\text{10}\) Decentralization also facilitated the many fact-finding missions to Cuba taken by CIP, WOLA and the U.S-Cuba Trade Association which included interests from Kentucky, Georgia, Texas, Montana, Kansas and Massachusetts, amongst others, as discussed in chapter II.

Moreover, the horizontal division of power of the national government facilitates lobbying in Congress by organizations such as USA Engage. It also allows for the many members of Congress to lend solidarity to the ant-embargo movement.\(^\text{11}\) They have all supported Congressional amendments to lift the embargo at some point in time. Their support has been organized through the bipartisan fifty-member Cuba Working Group of the House formed in April, 2002 and the twenty-one Senate Working Group on Cuba established in March, 2003. The Working Groups were established to examine U.S. policies toward Cuba, including trade and travel restrictions, focusing on Americans’ right to travel and Cuba’s potential as a U.S. export

\(^{10}\) Interview with Nethercutt, 8\(^{th}\) June 2005.

market. They accommodate a strategic alliance with the anti-embargo movement which is consistent with Tarrow’s third element of political opportunity structure - “the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners” (Tarrow 1983: 28). Furthermore, the autonomous judiciary system accommodates use of the courts as evidenced by the litigation undertaken by the Center for Cuban Studies and the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET). This autonomy is seen in the decision of Attorney General, Janet Reno to send Elián González back to Cuba in 2000, even though powerful members of the Executive were against it.

One can safely conclude that divisions of powers foster different kinds of collective action or multi-front strategies designed to suit the various aspects of the central state (Amenta and Young 1999: 157-158). However, it should be noted that while Federalism may have facilitated contentious action in the United States, successive administrations have not repressed the anti-embargo movement. Rather, it seems that anti-embargo activism has been “tolerated” for the most part. Tilly (1978), defines “toleration” as the space between repression and facilitation. He also underscores a dichotomy between “facilitation” and “repression”, defining the latter as “any action by another group which raises the contender’s cost of collective action” (Tilly 1978:100). He adds that “For some combinations of groups and collective actions, a given government does not react at all…the governments neither impedes them nor helps them…the police studiously ignore them” (Tilly 1978: 107).

The role of threat is of particular significance to this state level analysis. Most of the organizations interviewed admit to adhering to the law and therefore not threatened by the state. However, as seen, Venceremos Brigade and Pastors for Peace have openly broken the law and been issued with threatening letters by the Office of Foreign Assets Control. This has simply

12 Cubanet Cubanews. Washington, DC. “U.S. Senate Announces Cuba Working Group.”
http://www.cubanet.org/CNews/y03/mar03/24e3.htm
intensified their resolve to continue their activities producing outrage amongst insiders and outsiders and prompting more members to join. Thus, rather than repress contentious action, the threat issued by the state and its inability to carry out them out has the effect of spurring activism amongst other groups who seek similar outcomes (Tarrow 1998: 24).

**Policy-Specific Opportunities**

Amenta and Young (1999) argue that “state policies and programs can encourage, discourage, shape or transform challengers because policies themselves affect the future flow of collective benefits to the constituencies of challengers” (Amenta and Young 1999: 162). This is consistent with what Tarrow (1996) calls “policy-specific opportunities” (in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 42). Some state policies produce a kind of activism paradox, provoking rather than repressing contentious action by the anti-embargo movement. This is seen in all major policies implemented by several post-Cold War American administrations including the 1992 Torricelli Bill, the 1996 Helms-Burton Law, the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act and the 2004 Report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.

The 1992 Torricelli Bill saw the formation of Cambio Cubano in that year; the leading anti-embargo organization, the Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD) in 1993 and the Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF) in 1995. CAAEF’s president, Delvis Fernández Levy, explained that given that the embargo was being tightened at a time when it should be relaxed with the end of the Cold War and Cuba’s domestic crisis, it was imperative for anti-embargo groups to organize under the banner of CAAEF’s coalition. The widespread criticism of the Bill has been discussed in a previous chapter but it paled in comparison to the reaction to the Helms Burton Law which spurred confrontational strategies by groups such as Pastors for

---

13 Interview with Fernández, 23rd October 2006.
Peace formed in 1998. Seeming incomprehensible in the much touted “unipolar world”, Jorge I. Domínguez affirms that “the U.S. hostility toward the Cuban government heightened as the Cold War came to an end and precisely when Cuba ceased to pose a security threat to most US interests. Neither realism nor neorealism can explain this temper tantrum in US policy toward Cuba, or why US-Cuban relations went from a Cold War to a Colder War” (Domínguez 1997: 55).

Table 7-4 and Figure 7-2 underscore the increased media attention and dissenting voices of the Helms-Burton Law compared to that of the Torricelli Bill in five U.S newspapers. This increase can be attributed to Title III, the extraterritorial provision of Helms-Burton that resulted in heightened protests and hence increased media attention. The international outrage of the Helms-Burton Law was also more intense than that provoked by the Torricelli Bill which may account for the increased media attention. In addition, domestic protest of the Helms-Burton Law by the anti-embargo movement from business, policy, humanitarian and faith-based organizations found their way into the media, particularly the Miami Herald where the hit counts for both Bills were highest and the hits counts for the Helms-Burton Law increased more than three-fold compared to the Torricelli Bill.

The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act was the single major breakthrough in U.S. Cuba policy in the post-Cold War era. Its passage was the result of collective action by high-profile members of the American society. In making a case for the role of “influential allies” as facilitators of collective action, Tarrow (1998), contends that “challengers are encouraged to take collective action when they have allies who can act as friends in court, as guarantors against repression, or as acceptable negotiators on their behalf”

14 See Table 7-4 and Figure 7-2 on page 214.
Anti-embargo activists found “influential allies” with the coalition called Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba (AHTC) which joined the United States Association of Former Members of Congress to call on the Clinton administration to end the embargo on food and medicines to Cuba. In keeping with Tarrow’s (1996) thesis, they acted both as “negotiators” on behalf of challengers and as “guarantors against repression” as is evident in their mission statement:

We call upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to lift all restrictions on the sale of agricultural products and medicines to Cuba including restrictions on travel to Cuba, which hinder the ability to meet with Cuban counterparts, block efforts to achieve humanitarian trade and violate Americans’ fundamental right to freedom of movement. These changes would be totally consistent with current U.S. policy as expressed by the Department of State and spelled-out in the Cuban Democracy Act and the Helms-Burton laws to “support the Cuban people”.

Tarrow also emphasizes a third element of political opportunity structure - “the degree of stability or instability of political alignments” (Tarrow 1983). Shortly after the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act was passed, Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba disintegrated. In a similar vein, support from congresspersons is not always guaranteed. Some are actually given money by the U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC to vote against amendments which aim to relax the embargo in any way.

None of the above state policies seems to have spawned as much anti-embargo groups or activism as the Report of the Commission for Assistance to a New Cuba implemented by the Bush administration in 2004. As seen in Chapter 5, it led to the formation of the Cuban American Commission for Family Rights, the U.S.-Cuba Trade Association, the Emergency Coalition to Defend Education Travel (ECDET) and the Emergency Coalition of Cuban

15 Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba. www.ahtc.org

American Scholars and Artists (ENCASA). The new restrictions on academic travel have also spawned a barrage of protests from educational institutes including colleges and universities and led to the formation of the Emergency Coalition to Defend Academic Travel (ECDET) as well as those mentioned above. With these new groups came an increase in protest action such as the confrontation in Miami with Díaz Balart discussed in Chapter 5, CAAEF’s taking the cause to the 61st Session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission on 31st March 2005, the jointly sponsored Cuban Action Day of 27th April 2005 and the nationwide photo exhibition tour entitled “Love Loss and Longing: The Impact of U.S. Travel Policy on Cuban-American Families”, sponsored by the LAWG and WOLA and unveiled in D.C. in May, 2006. The exhibition garnered support even from organizations like Oxfam America and the Philadelphia-Cardenas Sister Cities Association, amongst others.17

That state policies can trigger collective action is evident in the actions of humanitarian groups, including faith-based organizations which also joined the movement in opposing the second 2006 Report of the Commission. Church groups affirm that one of the Commission’s proposals, which would no longer allow the Commerce Department to grant licenses for humanitarian aid through the Cuban Council of Churches, violates religious freedom. Church World Service has a long history of providing humanitarian aid to the Cuban people through the Cuban Council of Churches, which represents many of Cubans Protestant churches (Washington Post, July 15th, 2006). On 31 July, 2006, members of concerned groups met over new restrictions on the Churches’ aid distribution to Cuba.18


18 They included Reverend. John L. McCullough, Church World Service’s (CWS), Executive Director and CEO; Donna Derr, Director of CWS Emergency Response Network; Mavis Anderson, head of the Cuba project at CWS
In conclusion, we reaffirm that while the state policies geared toward tightening the embargo curtailed the anti-embargo movement’s ability to legally continue relations with Cuba, this has not translated into a higher cost of collective action, and according to Tilly (1978), would not be perceived as repression. Indeed, we are inclined to argue that these measures facilitated rather than repressed collective action producing the “enabling environment” or the political opportunity structure necessary for anti-embargo activism.

**Societal Facilitators to Anti-Embargo Activism**

In this section, we examine the sub-national, local or societal forces as part of the political process model that impact on the operations of the anti-embargo movement. It cites the changing structure of the hardline community identified here as a *countermovement* embodied in the Cuban American National Foundation, the Elián González affair and the rise of the moderate majority in South Florida as crucial to the rising activities of the anti-embargo movement.

**The Countermovement and Power Alignment**

Schwartz (1976) presents a general formulation of the relationship between movements and countermovements. He contends that “When a protest organization challenges social structures, they act to defend themselves in a variety of ways which evolve from and respond to protest activities” (Schwartz 1976: 150). This implies a dynamic model of political interaction in which mass action forecloses choices for other groups (especially elite groups) — a complex process of social change can ensue” (Schwartz 1976, 1988). Such other groups form a countermovement which Meyer and Staggenborg (1996) define as “a movement that makes

---

The anti-embargo movement faces a formidable countermovement in the hardline Cuban American community in South Florida. This small but powerful community represented by the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) has for decades been able to persuade U.S. state officials to enact anti-Castro, pro-embargo legislation purportedly geared toward toppling the Castro regime. The 1992 Torricelli Bill, 1996 Helms-Burton Law and 2004 Report of the Commission for Assistance for a Free Cuba, were all legislated in election years to court invaluable Cuban American votes in the marginal constituency of South Florida. The countermovement mainly comprises right-winged, conservative factions of the community which are fairer, richer, and dominate both the political and socio-economics of Miami. It has a hold on U.S. domestic politics which the anti-embargo movement has had little success in breaking.

The confrontation between the anti-embargo movement and the countermovement plays out at three levels: the community in South Florida, the American Congress, and the Executive branch. These are all so intricately intertwined that it is sometimes difficult to separate them. Unlike the anti-embargo movement which does not have the ear of the government, the countermovement has powerful connections in the Executive, in the Congress and in the community which ironically provide the enabling environment or the political opportunity structure for anti-embargo activism. Indeed, some community members are themselves Congresspersons including Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; Senator Mel Martinez and the brothers, Mario and Lincoln Díaz-Balart, both Republican congressmen. Their ties with the executive are realized through close association with ex-Florida Governor, Jeb Bush, the elder brother of current President, George W. Bush, as William Finnegan reports in the New Yorker:
The elder Bush’s standing in the exile community has always been ambiguous; his patrician style never played that well in Little Havana. This is not to say that the Bush family as a whole hasn’t become extremely popular among Cuban exiles. (“They consider them their family,” a Miami Democratic Party leader told me ruefully.) But Jeb Bush’s constituency among the exiles is mainly the product of his own hard political work. From early on, he carefully learned the elaborate, sorrowing, furious culture of el exilio.

Indeed, Jeb Bush is largely responsible for the fact that most Miami Cubans are Republicans. Though perennially described as “right-wing Cuban exiles,” most of them started out as Democrats. They were (and are) liberal on the social issues that tend to divide Americans, and they share a historic belief in the welfare state—a belief that the Cuban Refugee Program, the most generous immigrant-assistance effort in the history of the United States, only encouraged. President Kennedy, who was initially adored, was blamed by many exiles for the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion, in 1961. And yet their bitterness did not drive them into the Republican Party, which in Miami was weak and uninterested, in any case, in Latino immigrants. Ronald Reagan stirred Cuban-Americans with his messianic anti-Communism. But even he was mistrusted by the exiles, who had been forced to learn, repeatedly, that the interests of any American President only periodically coincided with their own.

Jeb Bush, however, they trusted. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Republican congressman from South Florida, described Jeb to me as “a soul mate.” Diaz-Balart, who comes from a prominent political family—his aunt was Fidel Castro’s first wife—recalls that his grandparents were admirers of Franklin Roosevelt. Diaz-Balart himself was a Democrat until the nineteen-eighties, although the local party didn’t take much notice. Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen—another scion of a prominent family, who is also now a Republican representative in Washington—couldn’t get through the Democratic primaries in Miami.

Both Diaz-Balart and Ros-Lehtinen credit Jeb Bush with persuading them to switch parties. When Jeb became chairman of the Dade County Republican Party, in 1984, he simply looked at South Florida’s demographics, saw the opportunity, and went to work making the Republican Party the natural home for Cuban exiles. In 1979, registered Democrats still outnumbered Republicans among Cuban-Americans by forty-nine per cent to thirty-nine per cent. By 1988, only twenty-four per cent were Democrats, and sixty-eight per cent were Republicans.

While Ileana Ros-Lehtinen’s politics would seem to put her at odds with Jeb’s radical antistatism, their bonds, too, go deeper than the issues. He managed her first successful campaign for Congress, in 1989. “Jeb took a lot of bullets for me,” she told me. What she meant, I gathered, was that Jeb had let himself be identified with causes that, outside the exile community, are seen as dubious at best. For instance, Ros-Lehtinen was one of the leading voices calling for pardons for anti-Castro activists accused or convicted of using violence. One of the more notorious was Dr. Orlando Bosch, who spent eleven years in prison in Venezuela for his alleged role in blowing up a Cuban airliner with seventy-three people on board. (Bosch has never admitted the crime, but he has sought to justify it.) After leaving prison, Bosch was arrested for illegally entering the United States, and the
Justice Department, which believed that he had been involved in dozens of acts of terrorism, recommended that he be deported. But Bosch was so popular among Cuban exiles that the Miami City Commission once declared a Dr. Orlando Bosch Day, and when President George H. W. Bush ordered Bosch to be set free in 1990, most observers regarded Jeb Bush as the essential intermediary in the case (Finnegan 2004).

This not only explains the countermovement’s ties with the Congress, but also with the Executive. However, these are not the only alliances which the community has forged with state officials. Other politicians have vigorously courted the Cuban American community in the past. Amongst these are Former House Majority Leader, Tom DeLay, and Connecticut Senator, Joseph Lieberman.

DeLay’s rabid anti-Castroism dates back to when he was twelve. An airplane carrying his family had stopped for refueling in Havana soon after Fidel Castro took assumed power. Delay was marched out on the tarmac “between these stinking soldiers with big German shepherds,” as he recalled on NBC’s “Meet the Press” on April 23, 2000. The family was held for three hours without explanation. The result is that DeLay has long been a leading congressional critic of Castro’s Cuba. At a May 1999 Appropriations Committee markup, he pointed to a group of former Cuban political prisoners at the back of the room to illustrate his objections to lifting sanctions, a move that might have allowed U.S. firms to send food and medicine to Cuba. In 2005, as House Majority Leader and Texas representative, DeLay supported Florida Representatives, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Lincoln Díaz-Balart and his brother, Mario Díaz-Balart, in blocking the Flake Amendment to ease restrictions on trade to Cuba. This strong opposition to communist Cuba has won DeLay considerable financial support from the Cuban community in Miami. His leadership PAC, the ARMPAC, received a total of eight contributions from Miami, all on 13 December 1999 (shortly after Elián reached Florida), for a total of $10,750. All eight

---

donations came from first-time contributors to DeLay’s PAC. Two of them, Domingo R. Moreira and Delfin Pernas, have also contributed more than $15,000 to the Free Cuba PAC since 1997. “I’m 53 years old, and I can still smell those soldiers,” DeLay told NBC (Greenblat, Foerstel and Willis 2000).

Similarly, Senator Joseph Lieberman has supported legislation to tighten the U.S. embargo against Cuba, including the Torricelli Bill and the Helms-Burton Act during his twelve years in Congress. He has also consistently backed funding for Radio and TV Marti, controversial government-financed stations that broadcast anti-Castro, pro-democracy, programming into Cuba. Lieberman’s Cuba connection dates to his 1988 Senate campaign when he challenged incumbent Republican, Lowell Weicker, former Governor of Connecticut. Weicker was targeted by Cuban exiles after he met twice with Fidel Castro in Cuba and publicly advocated warming relations with the communist-run island. After one meeting, Weicker returned from Havana with a box of Cuban cigars, a present from Castro (Boadle 2000).

That year, (1988), Lieberman was introduced to the late Jorge Mas Canosa, founder of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), by supporters within Miami’s Jewish community. Lieberman affirms that “Jorge Mas Canosa and I really just struck it of. To me, part of the coming together was natural. I agreed with their position on Castro” (Boadle 2000). However, the financial reasons for his sympathy for the Cuban cause should not be overlooked. Lieberman’s campaign received considerable financial backing from CANF that helped him defeat Weicker by just 10,000 votes. Lieberman has since become a popular senator, and in 1994 he was re-elected in a landslide. Hard-line Cuban Americans have continued to put their faith and their money in Lieberman’s stand on Cuban issues. Like, DeLay, he strongly opposed the

---

decision of the Clinton Administration to send Elián González back to Cuba. In 2000, Floridians donated more than $100,000 to his Senate re-election campaign, including major donations from the leaders of CANF (Adams 2000). In 2000, Lieberman was the top recipient among three senatorial candidates of campaign contributions by the Free Cuba PAC, the political action committee of CANF. Free Cuba PAC contributed the maximum $10,000 to the senator’s reelection campaign, according to the Centre for Responsive Politics, which tracks campaign funding (Boadle 2000).

The countermovement’s alliance with the Congress is therefore strongly linked to its campaign financing which is only surpassed by the Jewish-American lobby as reflected in Tables 7-5, 7-6 and 7-7. The data covers the entire 1979-2000 period, and include contributions to federal candidates and political parties. The solid tilt toward the Democratic party is due in no small part to the contributions of the two top Cuban American donors, Florida businessmen Alfred Estrada and Paul Cejas, who together account for approximately 26% of all Democratic donations. Without those two donors, the party split is more even, with 53% of the Cuban-American money going to Democrats and 47% to Republicans.21 Table 7-5 reflects the major contributions of ethnic minorities in the United States. Table 7-6 shows to whom the contributions are made and Table 7-7 illustrates the party distribution of the contributions.22

This configuration of power of state and countermovement relevant for the confrontation with the challengers” as espoused by Kriesi (in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 169) accounts for the limited success of the anti-embargo movement in changing policy. The post-Cold American governments have not been very reform-oriented where U.S. Cuba policy is


22 See Tables 7-5, 7-6 and 7-7 on page 215.
concerned. This lack of success, however, has not thwarted anti-embargo activism. Rather the power alignment between the state and the countermovement has combined with shifts in the internal dynamics within the Cuban American community, to further spur collective action.

**Shifting Dynamics within the Cuban American Community**

As McAdam McCarthy and Zald (2004c) insist, *changes* in the structures of political opportunities can contribute to shifting fortunes in social movements. Such changes have been visible within the Cuban American community in South Florida in the post-Cold War era. In November, 1997, CANF’s leader, Jorge Mas Canosa, died. During the Reagan administration, Mas Canosa had assisted Republicans in solidifying their political base amongst anti-Castro Cubans, forging an alliance that catapulted him to national prominence. He was uncompromising in his strong opposition to easing American sanctions on Cuba’s communist regime. Upon his death, Wayne Smith of CIP declared that “had it not been for Jorge Mas Canosa, we probably would have had normal relations with Cuba… He has almost single-handedly blocked all that”.  

Mas Canosa’s leadership of CANF contributed to making it the most powerful countermovement constraining the ability of the anti-embargo movement to change U.S. Cuba policy. His death led to expectations that some change in policy would be imminent. Indeed, now in 2006, CANF is perceived by many as a moderate Cuban American organization since the views of its members are not monolithic as Joe García affirms. CANF’s break with hardliners which formed the Cuban Liberty Council and the presence of the Democrat García in CANF, conforms to Tarrow’s fourth element of the political opportunity structure – “political conflicts within and among elites” - which precipitates increased anti-embargo activism (Tarrow 1989b: 35).

---


24 Interview with García, 5th June 2006.
The Cuban American community is divided along class and ethnic lines due to differences between the early and later waves of Cuban migrants to the U.S. The first wave was predominantly white, rich and constitutes the hardline, anti-Castro right-winged community. The later waves are poorer and darker and comprise the moderate majority who claims discrimination in the political and socio-economic arenas particularly in the employment sector of South Florida. According to Alvaro Fernández, “Cuban Americans are not openly up in arms against the pro-embargo policies because there is a real fear of reprisals in Miami”.25 Similarly Max Castro, a vocal anti-embargo activist and former Miami Herald columnist, claims discrimination in the academic arena at the University of Miami and points to similar discriminatory trends at Florida International University.26

The Elián González affair places in stark relief the ideological schism in the impassioned Cuban American community. It sparked the beginning of a catharsis as angry Cuban Americans began not only to debate but to contest the status-quo. Following the debacle, some Cuban Americans admitted to being angrier than they have been in years. This outpouring of emotion saw the formation of Puentes Cubanos in 1999 and the Cuba Study Group in 2000. Other existing moderate Cuban Americans became more organized and vocal against U.S. Cuba policy. The Elián debacle also underscores the social division within the community as the early wave of powerful, affluent anti-Castro exiles pitted themselves against the moderate majority which arrived in Cuba after 1980 or were born in the U.S. These later waves are more inclined toward rapprochement and dialogue with Cuba. According to the online magazine, Progreso Weekly, “These are the people whose views are reflected in polls that show a majority of the Cuban American community in favor of dialogue between the two nations, in favor of easing travel

25 Interview with Fernández, 7th July 2005.
26 Interview with Castro, 12th July 2005.
restrictions, and in favor of rethinking the failed strategy of the embargo”.27 According to a very recent poll, seventy-two percent of Cuban Americans agree that the U.S. should negotiate with the island.28

Even so, the division is not only about relations with Cuba. It is also reflected in partisan politics in the United States as poll after poll reveal generational differences in political ideology. Younger Cuban Americans are less inclined to vote Republican, are increasingly registering to vote and are more vocal about Bush’s new pro-embargo policies.29 The Carpetbagger Report notes that “Cuban-Americans are wondering why Bush, who says bringing democracy to Iraq is a paramount international priority, won’t offer a similar benefit to people suffering under a communist regime just 90 miles from the U.S. border”.30 Current President, George W. Bush, is the target of much anti-embargo sentiments since moderate Cuban Americans forge the nexus between him and his brother Jeb who is close to the hardline community. They blame him for the “draconian” policies of 2004 which impose restrictions on family travel, remittances and parcel delivery to their relatives in Cuba. These issues touch the very hearts and souls of Cuban Americans.

---


The Systemic, National and Sub-national Impulses All Converge in a Peculiar Setting

produced by the end of the Cold War which has resulted in an increasingly divided Congress, no longer united against the Soviet Union. This partisanship is out in U.S. electoral politics, particularly in the marginal constituency of the state of Florida which became hotly contested. The electoral catastrophe resulting in a near tie between Democrats and Republicans in 2000 intensified the division between the parties. This was buttressed by the strong Cuban American lobby in the Congress who has been wielding powerful leverage on the Executive because of the bid to court invaluable Cuban American votes.

There was therefore, a confluence of international, national and local forces which triggered a countervailing force leading to a tightening of the embargo in a post-Cold War Era. Though it may seem illogical that the embargo would be tightened at a time when Cuba no longer poses an ideological threat, this countervailing force of a divided Congress and hotly contested state of Florida provides a ready and logical explanation for the “draconian” policies in a post-Cold War era.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show that the anti-embargo movement has been able to persist despite limited success in changing policy because of the political opportunity structures produced by systemic, national and societal forces. These include external factors such as the end of the Cold War, globalization and neoliberalism, and the Pope’s visit to Cuba in January, 1998. At the national level, Cuba’s special period, reform of the Cuban economy in the mid-nineties, type of government and state policies such as the Torricelli Bill, the Helms Burton Law and the Reports of the Commission for Assistance to a New Cuba have spurred challengers into action. Local or societal dynamics within the Cuban American community including the formidable
configuration of power posed by the alliance between the countermovement and the state; the
Elián González debacle; changes within CANF itself; and the meteoric rise of moderate Cuban
American voices due to the pro-engagement stance of later migration waves, have both spawned
new anti-embargo groups and triggered post-Cold War activism. Finally, the countervailing force
produced by the growing divisions in the Congress and played out in the hotly contested
constituency of South Florida, provides a logical explanation for post-Cold War tightening of the
embargo.
Table 7-1. ABC/ Washington Post poll showing pre- and post-Cold War responses to Cuba as a threat to the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source and Question</th>
<th>1983</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABC/Washington Post:</strong> As things now stand, would you say that Cuba is a threat to the national security of the United States, or not? [If yes], would that be a major threat or a minor threat?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Threat</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Threat</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a Threat</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1501</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-2. Yankelovich tracking poll showing responses to Cuba as a threat to the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yankelovich:</strong> Would you say that Cuba represents a very serious threat to this country, a moderately serious threat, just a slight threat, or no threat to our country at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Serious</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Serious</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at All</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>…*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>1,218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anti-Embargo Organization</th>
<th>Year Founded</th>
<th>Total Count 1980-1989</th>
<th>Total Count 1990-2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alamar Associates (A)</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. American Civil Liberties Union (B)</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. American Farm Bureau Federation (C)</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. American Friends Service Committee, Latin America and Caribbean Programs (D)</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. American Jewish Congress (E)</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Catholic Relief Services (F)</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Center for International Policy (G)</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Church World Service (H)</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Episcopal Church, Office of Government Relations (I)</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Latin American Working Group (J)</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Global Exchange (K)</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Grey Panthers (L)</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Human Rights Watch (M)</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Madre (N)</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Marazul Charters (O)</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. National Foreign Trade Council (P)</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Presbyterian Church (USA) (Q)</td>
<td>1706</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. United States Chamber of Commerce (R)</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. United Church of Christ (S)</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (T)</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Venceremos Brigade (U)</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Washington Office on Latin America (V)</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (W)</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. World Council of Churches (X)</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. United States Catholic Conference (Y)</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7-1. Comparison of anti-Embargo activism from Cold War to post-Cold War as reflected in Table 7-3. The X-axis represents 25 anti-embargo organizations and the Y-axis represents their frequency in the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Miami Herald*, the *New York Times*, *USA Today* and the *Washington Post*. 
Table 7-4. Comparison of frequency of “Cuban Democracy Act/Torricelli Bill” and “Helms Burton Law” in five U.S. newspapers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Newspaper</th>
<th>Cuban Democracy Act Number of Hits</th>
<th>Helms Burton Law Number of Hits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Science Monitor</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami Herald</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA Today</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All (total)</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lexis Nexis Academic

Figure 7-2. Comparison of Appearances of “Cuban Democracy Act/Torricelli Bill” and “Helms Burton Law” in five U.S. Newspapers as reflected in Table 7-4 above. The X-axis represents and the Y-axis represents the number of hit counts in the 5 major U.S newspapers listed in Table 7-4.
Table 7-5. Lobby Groups’ Contributions to Political Action Committees in the 1980s and 1990s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lobby Groups</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jewish-American</td>
<td>$16.8 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban-Americans</td>
<td>$754,000 (Free Cuba PACs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian-American</td>
<td>$292,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian, Greek, Lebanese,</td>
<td>&lt; $200,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7-6. Contributions to Candidates and Political Action Committees in the 1980s and 1990s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>$3,890,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Committees</td>
<td>$3,190,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership PACS</td>
<td>$168,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban-American PCS</td>
<td>$1,346,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other PACS</td>
<td>$201,085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7-7. Cuban American Contributions to Political Parties in the 1980s and 1990s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>$4,317,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>$2,904,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Parties</td>
<td>$25,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS

Thawing of the Glacier

And so, we conclude our voyage of inquiry into an era of anti-embargo activism. This academic expedition began descriptively and ended analytically as we recounted the story of the anti-embargo movement from 1960 to 2006. Though an under-explored dimension of U.S. Cuba policy, we have demonstrated that traditional analyses have failed to capture the intriguing organizational dynamics of anti-embargo activism which for decades, have been fermenting beneath the cold, hostile hard-line policies of right-winged Cuban American exiles in South Florida. The operations of the anti-embargo movement suggest significant thawing of the glacier, not only in the Sunshine State, but throughout the United States. These activities are invariably collective, collaborative and cooperative, but at once normative and ultimately contentious even as the movement continually redefines, reconstitutes, reproduces, reframes and reconstructs itself.

Descriptively, we have detailed the history, goals, resources, organizational structure, strategies, tactics and challenge to the state as the organizations mobilize to speak truths to power. We have observed that in their drive to change U.S. Cuba policy, the primary goal of the organizations is predominantly the same, though this may vary in sub-focus. We have also stressed that the groups are funded mainly by private foundations though several embark on their own fund-raising drives and few are financed by private individuals. Moreover, we have demonstrated that the groups reflect a fair degree of heterogeneity in terms of organizational structure, even while they generally tend to employ a small staff and draw on external Boards of Directors and members for voluntary support. Though they vary in size, some even quite small,
this does not detract from the depth of the commitment from certain outstanding leaders who have now become popular icons of the movement.

With respect to strategies and tactics, we have observed that the groups reveal an overwhelming preference for conventional measures. These include organizing conferences, seminars, conventions, non-violent protests, lobbying, litigation, leading delegations to Cuba and taking advantage of strides in information technology to advertise their grievances and exhort support from the general public via their well-developed websites. However, we have pointed out that a couple of the groups choose to deviate and employ more confrontational strategies and tactics in their avowed refusal to legitimize the embargo by adhering to the law. We have also shown that the organizations have been challenging the state for decades in response to policies adopted by successive American administrations. As noted, this has fermented an intriguing contestation between challengers and state as the movement persistently engages in speaking truths to power at both the national and sub-national levels.

Analytically, we have sought answers to our research question as to why has the anti-embargo movement persisted despite such limited success over time. To unravel this puzzle, we have opted to employ a social movements theoretical framework given the limitations of International Relations for capturing domestic group dynamics with little influence on foreign policy outcomes. Since the field of Comparative Politics does not generally accommodate foreign policy analysis, employing a social movements perspective to treat with groups seeking to influence foreign policy and introducing the international setting as a facet of political opportunity structures, serve to bridge the Comparative/International Relations divide in Political Science.
Drawing firstly on perspectives on resource mobilization, we have argued that the rational model partially explains but does not suffice to facilitate a full understanding of the altruistic and philanthropic thrust of the movement. As such, we have sought answers in alternative perspectives treating with tactical frames, solidarity networks, co-option, social capital, commitment, moral incentives and psychological benefits. Recognizing that the resource mobilization approach neglects the interplay between state and challengers, thereby ignoring the vital political element, we turned to the political process model to complement this approach. More popularly know as “political opportunity structures”, we have applied this perspective to support our argument that anti-embargo activism is embedded in the “enabling environment” produced by the international, national and sub-national settings. Moreover, we have underscored that anti-embargo groups and activism have been facilitated by “windows of opportunities” triggered by a myriad of factors. Introducing systemic structure to social movement discourse, we have identified elements of the international political opportunity structures as the end of the Cold War; the crisis in Cuba during the “special period” of the mid-nineties; and the Pope’s visit to Cuba in 1998. At the national level, we have cited successive anti-embargo state policies; the nature of the American state and its particular system of government, as impetus to group formation and group activism. The configuration of power created by the countermovement of exile hardliners and elements of the state; the Elián González debacle; shifting dynamics within the Cuban American community, and the counterveiling force of a divided Congress and intense political contestation of Florida, provide the basis for our discussion on sub-national or societal impulses to anti-embargo activism.

In concluding that both non-rational explanations such as commitment theory and political opportunity structures complement each other to explain why the movement persists despite
limited success over time, we recognize that this work speaks to the larger picture of the role of civil society in policy reform. Moreover, it addresses the fundamental question of why human beings act collectively. After all social movements are generally the seedbeds of the great revolutions of our time. They have been able to overturn entire regimes when they are successful. The Cuban, Chinese and Mexican revolutions are fine examples.

The Anti-Embargo Movement and a Post-Castro Cuba

So what does the future hold for the anti-embargo movement given the imminent departure of Fidel Castro from the scene?

Our crystal ball reflects a complex tapestry of intricately woven strands drawn from elements of the American and Cuban governments, hard-line and moderate Cuban Americans and anti-embargo activists. Realistically speaking, it is hardly likely that anti-embargo activism will be reduced, much less disappear unless there is a radical reformulation of American policy to Cuba. As such, we can surmise that the movement will remain alive and kicking unless its primary goal of changing U.S. Cuba policy is realized. While challengers remain hopeful that the recent Democrat control of the House and the Senate will result in a removal of restrictions at least on the ban on family travel, this may remain a dream given that even Democratic President, Bill Clinton, supported a tightening of the embargo through the infamous Helms-Burton Law in an electoral bid to capture critical Florida votes in the 1996 general elections. So we remain skeptical, if not cynical, as to whether a Democrat administration in 2008 will result in reform of U.S. Cuba policy in light of the existing and sustained alliance between state entities and hard-line exiles in South Florida. As long as these exiles maintain a lock on U.S. domestic politics, a radical reformulation of American Cuba policy may not be forthcoming. If policy change is to come at all, it will most likely be initiated at this very sub-national or societal level. But it will emanate from the now more vociferous and organized moderate majority in South Florida. As
discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, shifting dynamics within the community is now evident through a perceived moderation of the Cuban American National Foundation and the generational schism produce by successive migration waves.

 Nonetheless, a minority of exile hardliners continue to vigorously and aggressively pursue their almost half-a-century-old objective of toppling the Castro regime, even as the almost eighty-year-old Comandante, Fidel, lies ailing in a Cuban hospital. This singular obsession consuming and feeding their passions since the 1960’s, has only grown more passionate as Castro ages, tending toward crescendo at the tiniest hint of vulnerability in the Cuban system. But from all indications, these exiles seem to have completely missed the boat which is firmly anchored across the Florida Straits. As we have illustrated, some believe that the post-Castro era has already arrived in Cuba and the transition has already taken place, albeit from Fidel’s socialism to Raúl’s socialism – a virtual imperceptible difference. Though Raúl Castro has already been making overtures to the United States for a policy of engagement, and the largest American Congressional delegation ever to visit Cuba was undertaken in December 2006, Cubans are only prepared to change the Cuban way. Cuba’s healthy and educated population is not yet about to start paying for health care, rent, or tuition. Socialism is very much intact in the island and recent statistics indicate that the Cuban economy is stronger than it has been for a long time. This is a severe blow to the rallying cry of some American statesmen and a few seemingly irrational Cuban American hardliners who still dream of returning to Cuba to recover expropriated property and control the political and economic destiny of the island. Thus, after Raul’s departure, it is highly likely that he will be replaced by a socialist successor government which will decide whether, where, and how fast to reform the policies it inherits. If such reform ever materializes, it will be the anti-embargo organizations, not the hard-line Cuban exiles who
will be playing a pivotal role in Cuba’s future and in U.S. Cuba relations. They are the ones who really understand the imperative for dialogue, engagement and rapprochement with their socialist neighbor. After all, these have been the objectives of their activism for over thirty years - as encapsulated in the words of Phil Peters of the Lexington Institute:

> It is not necessary to invent new theories and paradigms for this socialist country that happens to be a Caribbean neighbor. Rather, we should look to the mainstream of American foreign policy. We should continue our principled defense of human rights. We should cooperate with our allies rather than castigate them for having the same trade relations with Cuba that we have with other communist countries. …And rather than hold our eleven million Cuban neighbors at arms length, we should respectfully and confidently open every avenue of contact with them at a time when history is leading them toward a new world, and they are looking for answers (Peters 2003). ¹

---

APPENDIX A
ARTICLES SEARCHED FOR LIBERAL NORMS IN WEBSITES OF PROMINENT ANTI-EMBARGO ORGANIZATIONS

Center for International Policy (CIP)


Smith, Wayne S. “End the Travel Ban to Cuba”. November, 2001


____________. “Cuba after the Cold War: What Should U.S. Policy Be?” March, 1993


Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)


Cuba (Homepage).

“Encasa/US/Cuba – Emergency Scholars of Cuban American Scholars and Artists for Change in U.S./Cuba Policy”.


**Latin American Working Group (LAWG)**


**Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAEF)**


“ENCASA Rejects Bush Administration's Cuba Commission Report”. July 12, 2006


“Recreate a bipartisan, even veto proof majority for our fundamental right to travel to Cuba”. Fund for Reconciliation and Development. November 9, 2006.


“Who gets to Judge Human Rights?” La Alborada.
APPENDIX B
LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND DATES INTERVIEWED


APPENDIX C
LIST OF WEBSITES

www.ahtc.org – Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba
www.alamarcuba.com – Alamar Associates
www.americanradioworks.publicradio.org – American RadioWorks: Power Trips
www.angelfire.com - Economic Embargo Against Cuba - History
www.cafc.gov – Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba
www.canf.org - Cuban American National Foundation
www.ccedusa.org. – Cuban Committee for Democracy (CCD)
www.ciponline.org – Center for International Policy (CIP)
www.CNN.com – CNN World News
www.commondreams.org – Breaking News and Views for the Progressive Community
www.creynolds.org – Christopher Reynolds Foundation
www.cubafoundation.org – Cuba Policy Foundation
www.cubamer.org – Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF)
www.cubanartspace.net - Center for Cuban Studies Art Space
www.cubanet.org - Cubanet
www.cuban-exile.com – Cuba Information Archives
www.cubanfamilyrights.org – Cuban American Commission for Family Rights
www.cubanlibrariessolidaritygroup.org - Cuban Libraries Solidarity Group
www.cubasolidarity.net – USA-Cuba INFOMED Project
www.cubastudygroup.org – Cuba Study Group
www.cubastudygroup.org – Cuba Study Group
www.cubastudygroup.org – Cuba Study Group
www.cubaunderground.org – Cuba Study Group
www.cubafoundation.org – Cuba Policy Foundation
www.cubanfamilyrights.org – Cuban American Commission for Family Rights
www.discoverthenetworks.org - Careth Foundation
www.findarticles.com – Look Smart, Find Articles
www.fordfound.org – Ford Foundation
www.globalexchange.com - Global Exchange
www.historyofcuba.com – Economic Embargo Timeline
www.hrw.org – Human Rights Watch
www.ifconews.org – Pastors for Peace
www.lawg.org – Latin American Working Group (LAWG)
www.opensecrets.org
www.pbs.org - Public Broadcasting Service
www.progresoweekly.com – Progreso Weekly
www.publicwelfare.org – Public Welfare Foundation
www.themilitant.com – Socialist Newsweekly
www.state.gov – U.S. Department of State
LIST OF REFERENCES


Center for International Policy. Washington, DC. “About US: Funding Sources.”

The Center for International Policy’s Cuba Program. Washington, DC. “Cuba Program.”


Center for International Policy. Washington, DC. “Joint Programs.”

Center for International Policy. Washington, DC. “The Center’s Mission.”


Chelala, Cesar. “Health of Cuban People is Endangered.” St. Louis Post-Dispatch. 6 May, 1996.


http://www.colombiainternacional.org/Doc%20PDF/SR-


http://www.wfn.org/2006/08/msg00052.html and 

Cubanet Cubanews. Washington, DC. “U.S. Senate Announces Cuba Working Group.” 


Cuba Study Group. Washington, DC. “Board of Directors.” 

Cuba Travel USA. “The Economic Embargo - A Timeline.”


“European Union Announced that it will ask the World Trade Organization to Intervene after the U.S. Passes the Helms-Burton Law Calling for Punishment of Foreign Companies that do Business with Cuba.” Miami Herald, 2 May, 1996.


Public Welfare Foundation. Washington, DC.  


Reardon, Eileen. People’s Weekly World. “Seventh U.S./Cuba Friendship Breaks the Blockade.”  


Rose, Gideon. 1998 (October.) “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy.” World Politics 51 (1).


1998 (Fall). “Our Dysfunctional Cuban Embargo.” Orbis 42 (4).


Southern Voter Registration Education Project (SVREP Survey).


USA.gov. “Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba.”


Venceremos Brigade. “About Venceremos Brigade.”


Venceremos Brigade. New Jersey. “Who we are and what we do.”


Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). Washington, DC. “Board of Directors.”


World Policy Institute. “National Summit on Cuba Archive.”


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Indira Rampersad was born in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. She holds a bachelors degree in language and literature, a Master of Philosophy in Latin American Literature, a graduate diploma in international relations and a Master of Philosophy in International Relations, all from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad. She has been a political columnist for the Trinidad Guardian and Express newspapers and has been awarded two Fulbright scholarships for study in the U.S. In addition, she has completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science from the University of Florida, Gainesville.