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**CASTRO'S CUBA:
QUO VADIS?**

Francisco Wong-Diaz

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FOREWORD

The United States, particularly the Army, has a long history of involvement with Cuba. It has included, among others, the Spanish-American War of 1898, military interventions in 1906 and 1912, the 1961 Bay of Pigs Invasion, the 1962 Missile Crisis, counterinsurgency, and low intensity warfare in Latin America and Africa against Cuban supported guerrilla movements.

During the Cold War, Fidel Castro's Communist takeover on January 1, 1959, heightened U.S. concerns and highlighted the threat Cuba posed as a strategic ally of the Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet bloc in the 1990s raised hopes for an end to the Communist regime in Cuba. However, after almost 5 decades of authoritarian one-man rule, the Cuban dictator remains firmly in power. On July 31, his brother, Raul Castro, assumed provisional presidential power after an official announcement that Fidel was ill and would undergo surgery.

This monograph is designed to contribute to the process of understanding the strategic and political implications attendant to Castro's eventual demise or incapacitation. Dr. Francisco Wong-Diaz draws attention to the need to anticipate possible transition or succession scenarios and examines the consequences that might follow and the role that the United States might be called to play.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to offer this report as part of its ongoing analytical program in support of Army participation in national security policy formulation and implementation.


DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

FRANCISCO WONG-DIAZ is an attorney and professor of law, political science and international relations at the City College of San Francisco. He is a Member of the Committee on the Present Danger, the World Association of International Studies (WAIS), and the State Bars of California and Florida. He served as Associate Dean and Director of the Inter-American Center at Miami-Dade College, and was a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley Graduate School of Business, visiting researcher at the Hoover Institution, and a Rackham Fellow at the University of Michigan. Dr. Wong-Diaz has also served on the editorial board of the *California Lawyer* and taught at the University of Michigan, University of Detroit, and San Francisco State University. For over 2 decades, he has provided political analysis and commentary for *Univision*, KDTV-14, in San Francisco, California. He specialized in national security law at the University of Virginia National Security Law Center and is listed in *Who's Who in America*. His publications include *American Politics in a Changing World* (2nd ed., 2004); scholarly articles; and contributions to the *New York Times*, *Washington Times*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *Marin Independent Journal*, *FrontPage Magazine*, and other outlets. Dr. Wong-Diaz holds a B.A. with honors from Northern Michigan University, an M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan, and a J.D. from UC-Berkeley Boalt Hall School of Law.

SUMMARY

This paper serves multiple purposes, the most important of which is contributing to the depth of knowledge about Castro's Cuba and Cuba's Fidel in a time of transition. Evidence supporting the analysis and conclusions is derived from open sources.

Interest and concern about the unfolding Cuban reality increased after Fidel Castro provisionally delegated his presidential powers to his brother, Raul, on July 31, 2006, allegedly due to a life-threatening illness. Images of Castro collapsing while making a speech in 2003, falling on stage and breaking his left knee and right arm in 2004, or scoffing at reports by the Central Intelligence Agency in 2005 that he suffered from Parkinson's disease while clearly favoring a limp arm have been flashing on television screens for several years.

This monograph examines alternative scenarios in the twilight of Fidel Castro and in a post-Castro Cuba. They constitute a triad of outcomes; namely, a violent regime change, a peaceful transition to democracy, or a dynastic succession. Regime change is a possibility since Cuba is one of Freedom House's two not-free countries in the Americas and a state sponsor of terrorism. However, after 47 years of one-man rule, a violent overthrow of the Communist dictatorship is highly unlikely. There is no organized armed opposition within Cuba, and the repressive state machinery operates effectively against real or potential enemies. The Cuban armed forces (FAR) remain loyal after having been purged, and are tightly controlled by Raul. In addition, on August 6, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice publicly stated that the Bush administration had no intention to invade Cuba.

The global war on terror, Iraq, nuclear proliferation issues raised by Iran and North Korea, and the current terrorist attacks against Israel are the hot foreign policy priorities of the Bush administration. The United States would need to feel directly threatened before considering the use of force against Cuba. So despite U.S. Government rhetoric in the July 5, 2006, report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (CAFC) about liberating Cuba, Castro knows that he will retain power as long as he lives.

A peaceful transition to democracy and a free market economy is also unlikely as long as Fidel is alive. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was hope that Cuba might undergo something similar to the “color” or “flower” revolutions that transformed many of the former Warsaw Pact countries. Unlike the Europeans, however, Cuba’s Communist party and security services remain loyal, and there is no solidarity movement or opposition leader with a credible plan. Cuban civil society is rather weak, and dissidents are unable to work openly and in full coordination. More importantly, the main reason why no color, flower, or cedar revolution will ever occur in Cuba is that Castro and his closest lieutenants have studied those events very closely, identified and anticipated the relevant contingencies, and learned how to deal with them.

A dynastic succession based on collective leadership is the unfolding Cuban scenario. Castro wants to retain personal power for as long as he can to protect his dominant position and interests. To accomplish this, first, he has sought close commercial and security ties with China, Venezuela, Bolivia, and even the mullahs of Iran. Next, he organized a succession process. Under Cuban law, the first Vicepresident of the Council of State, his brother Raul, assumes the duties of the

president. Raul, who turned 75 on June 3, assumed provisional power on Monday, July 31, following an announcement that Fidel was ill and would undergo surgery. Raul has physical ailments, too, and there is no clear indication that anyone else has been groomed to replace him.

So at age 80, the Cuban dictator's place in history, for better or for worse, already has been established. For almost 50 years, the Cuban people have suffered political repression and tyranny under his one-man rule.

Castro's eventual passing, the so-called "biological solution," would constitute good and transformative news for Cuba if progress is made along a range of issues from development of true and honest representative institutions of governance to improvement of the Cuban people's quality of life. The overarching American foreign policy objective should be to pressure the successor regime while encouraging a strong bias among Cuban elites for internally generated democratization, the rule of law, and transparency in reciprocity for graduated normalization of relations with the island.

CASTRO'S CUBA: QUO VADIS?

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989 and the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on December 21, 1991, many predicted an end to Fidel Castro's Communist rule. Against all odds, however, his totalitarian regime has survived the devastation of its economy from the loss of billions of dollars in Soviet economic and military subsidies, chronic economic mismanagement, an American embargo tightened by the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act in 1996, and branding as a state sponsor of terrorism.¹

This unlikely outcome largely is owed to underestimation of Castro's experienced political leadership, ruthlessness, and pragmatic instinct for survival, together with a continued lack of understanding on the part of the United States of the political culture of his corrupt regime. Over the years, he has outlived 10 U.S. presidents and 16 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Directors. An unusual individual with an eidetic memory, Castro is totally narcissistic but able to learn new tricks and teach old ones. As Brian Lattell writes:

Since the dawning of his political career in the late 1940s Fidel Castro has demonstrated exceptional, often remarkable leadership qualities. Few of them would be considered admirable in a democratic society or ethical by any standard, but they have been critical to his success in holding on to power for more than 47 years, longer than any other leader in the history of the Western Hemisphere except one. Only the 19th century Brazilian emperor, Pedro II, in power for 49 years, ruled longer than Castro has.²

On July 31, Fidel's brother, Raul, assumed provisional power following an announcement that Fidel was ill and would undergo surgery. So friend and foe alike wonder about Castro's capacity to rule and speculate about what will happen to Cuba after his inevitable death or incapacitation.³ On June 23, 2001, images of Castro collapsing while making a speech flashed across television screens. In May 2003, he suffered another fainting spell in Buenos Aires, Argentina. On October 20, 2004, in Santa Clara while leaving a graduation ceremony, he tripped and fell on stage, breaking his left knee and right arm. About a year later, on November 17, 2005, at the University of Havana, Castro scoffed at reports by the CIA that he suffered from Parkinson's disease, insisted he would step down if he became too ill to govern, and went on to speak for 5 1/2 hours. On July 26, the anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks that originated his revolution, the eyes of the world once more turned to Bayamo, Cuba, not only to hear what the Maximum Leader might say or do but also for any signs of his mortality.⁴

This paper briefly considers alternative Cuban scenarios in the twilight of Fidel Castro. One must remember that he entered center stage with a bang on January 1, 1959, and might wish to exit in the same manner. The main purpose of this paper is to help anticipate and deal with future contingencies in order to narrow the choice of solutions. While it is not my intent to provide a complete analysis of the policy options available, a failure to deal properly with the social upheaval that might follow the end of Castro's reign would have significant consequences for the United States. As Niels Bohr once said, however, "prediction is difficult, especially about the future."⁵ It is a useful caveat to keep in mind, for history is replete with failed prognostications about, in Lockwood's felicitous phrase, Castro's Cuba and Cuba's Fidel.⁶

A TRIAD

The contentious debate over Cuba's future direction harks back to the early 1960s and the John F. Kennedy administration. One of the earliest arguments was made by RAND analysts Roberta and Albert Wohlstetter, who put out a proposal for a study of Post-Communist Cuba.⁷ Since that time, predicting the future course of Cuba after Castro has been a popular topic that can be viewed as a triad of potential outcomes; namely, regime change, democratic transition, or dynastic succession. It constitutes a useful framework for analysis and will be examined in that order.

Regime Change.

Cuba is one of two not-free countries in the Americas, one of six countries on the State Department list of states sponsoring terrorism, and, in the words of Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes, a former supporter and apologist, a "suffocating dictatorship."⁸ Cubans, for example, can be imprisoned for such political "crimes" as being disrespectful, dangerous, or insulting to the symbols of the homeland. Nonetheless, the violent overthrow of the regime is highly unlikely to occur. Cuban civil society is rather weak, and the opposition is unable to work openly and in full coordination. There also is no organized armed opposition within Cuba. The repressive state machinery operates effectively against real or potential enemies within both the state apparatus and the society at large. And if revolutions are said to be led by the middle classes, Cuba sent it abroad decades ago.⁹ The masses are conveniently mobilized and rallied by the government against internal opponents and dissidents, as well as against the American hegemon as needed. They

also are reminded of the threat presented by the hordes of returning exiles claiming restitution for expropriated and confiscated land and property in spite of the fact that some exile leaders are seeking reconciliation, giving reassurances about negotiating property claims, and have long admitted lacking the wherewithal to help overthrow the regime by force.¹⁰

The Diaspora is riddled with dissension, paranoia, and distrust, in no small part instigated by the Castro regime. Indeed, it is a truism that the exile community long has been penetrated by the Cuban Intelligence Service (CuIs), a resilient institution that continues to work aggressively in the United States. Cuba's *Directorio General de Inteligencia* (DGI) successfully has placed spies, sleeper cells, and illegal operatives who have reported and sometimes encouraged exile activities and generated infighting among the various groups. Major Florentino Aspillaga Lombard, the Cuban DGI resident in Prague who defected to the United States in 1987 contended that most, if not all, of the Cuban agents recruited by the CIA from the mid-1960s onward were doubles--pretending to be loyal to the United States while working in secret for Havana. Four years later, CIA analysts and counterintelligence officers glumly concluded the major was telling the truth. This meant not only that much of what the agency knew about Cuba was wrong, but also that a great deal of what Cuba knew about the CIA was right.¹¹

In a 1998 CNN interview, Castro made the rare admission that Cuba has dispatched spies across the United States to gather information about "terrorist activities" by anti-Castro political groups. He said, "Yes, we have sometimes dispatched Cuban citizens to the United States to infiltrate counterrevolutionary organizations, to inform us about activities that are of great interest

to us.”¹² Indeed, Cuban spies have found considerable success penetrating U.S.-based exile groups. A notable example is that of Juan Pablo Roque, a former MiG-23 pilot who defected to the United States in 1992, became a paid source for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and joined the ranks of the Brothers to the Rescue (BTTR). He redefected back to Cuba just days after the early 1996 BTTR shoot-down, denouncing the exile group on Cuban television, and accusing it of planning terrorist attacks against Cuba and Castro. Another example involves the case of Jose Rafael Fernandez Brenes, who jumped ship from a Cuban merchant vessel in 1988. From 1988-91, he helped establish and run the U.S. Government-financed TV Marti, whose signal was jammed from its inception in March 1990, due in part to frequency and technical data provided by Fernandez Brenes. Likewise, Francisco Avila Azcuy ran operations for Alpha 66, one of the most violent anti-Castro exile groups, all the while reporting secretly to the FBI and Cuban intelligence. Avila planned a 1981 raid on Cuba, telling both the FBI and the DGI all about it. His information helped convict seven members of Alpha 66 for violating the Neutrality Act by planning an attack on a foreign nation from U.S. soil. He also informed on the personal lives and tastes of 40 top anti-Castro leaders.¹³

During the Cold War, the United States rightfully treated Castro’s regime as a potential threat to our interests and adopted a policy of isolation and containment. However, no one seriously believes today that the United States is planning to conduct offensive combat operations to overthrow Castro. In the current global environment, any credible American initiative to effect a regime change would have to be based not on the old strategic calculus of the Cold War, but on an estimation of Cuba’s capability to threaten U.S. security. Wayne S. Smith, former Chief

of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana from 1979-82, contends there is no threat because we have achieved our strategic objectives; namely, Cuba has no troops operating in Africa, and it no longer assists revolutionary movements and has no military ties with the former Soviet Union.¹⁴ However, on May 6, 2002, Under Secretary of State John R. Bolton made the allegation that Cuba had a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capability and, as a state sponsor of terrorism, presented a real threat. The perception of a Cuban threat is highlighted not by its military, commercial, and investment ties with China, but by its aggressive intelligence collection activities targeting the United States. Castro has maintained Cuba's role as an intelligence collection platform previously for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and now for China. In particular, operations continue near Havana at Torrens (also known as Lourdes), the massive 28 square-mile signals intelligence (SIGINT) base set up by the Soviet Special Forces (GRU) military intelligence in the mid-1960s.¹⁵

In his CNN interview, Castro further denied spying to collect information on the U.S. military. "We aren't interested in strategic matters, nor are we interested in information about military bases," he said. This is, of course, not true. The U.S. Department of State issued a fact sheet on July 30, 2003, examining Cuba's history of espionage against the United States as the latest evidence that Castro's regime "has long targeted the United States for intensive espionage activities."¹⁶ Cuba probably has shared the output of his intelligence services with China and other U.S. rivals. The motivation clearly is more than defensive as Castro, who is pathologically anti-American, has been engaged in a protracted, asymmetrical conflict with the United States.¹⁷ Over the decades, the dictatorship has gone from operating training camps for guerrillas and terrorists, supporting insurgency movements, exporting

revolution, or acting as a Soviet mercenary in proxy wars, to its current ties and joint operations with Iran and China--all indicative of a willingness to pursue policies inimical to American interests.¹⁸

The case of Ana Belen Montes, a Puerto Rican who was the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) top Cuban analyst until she confessed to spying for Cuba for 16 years (from 1985 to the time of her arrest on September 21, 2001), is of great significance. She was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison in September 2002. Montes did tremendous damage to our national security by revealing Pentagon contingency plans, sources, and methods, as well as giving the Cuban Government the names of four U.S. covert intelligence officers working in Cuba. Moreover, as the foremost Department of Defense (DoD) briefer on Cuba and trainer of new analysts, she gathered and submitted writings, documents, and profiles about officials; and influenced policy, recruitment, and promotional assignments. Her betrayal was significant due particularly to her influence on policy and strategy. After the demise of the USSR, a consensus had emerged among American analysts, reflected in a 1998 DoD report to Congress, that Castro's Communist government posed "a negligible threat to the United States or surrounding countries." Montes was a major source of this estimate, and after her arrest, DIA officials remarked that they had to discard most of what they thought they knew about Cuba.¹⁹

In June and September 2001, five members of the so-called Red Wasp Network were convicted of espionage or related crimes. These Cuban spies sought to infiltrate U.S. Southern Command headquarters. One was convicted for delivering a message to the Cuban Government that contributed to the death of four fliers from BTTR who were shot down in 1996 by Cuban MiGs in international airspace.²⁰

In 2000, Mariano Faget, a Cuban-born Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) official with 35 years of service and high security clearance, was caught in a sting operation and later sentenced to 5 years in prison. During his years of spying, Faget most likely provided false papers, classified information, and illegal entry to Castro's operatives. Two Cuban diplomats associated with the case were expelled from the United States for espionage activities. Earlier, from 1983 to 1998, 15 members of the Cuban mission to the United Nations (UN) were expelled for espionage activities, including three who were handlers for the Wasp Network in 1998.²¹

An intriguing recent case is that of Alberto Coll, a Cuban-born lawyer who served in the first George W. Bush administration as an assistant secretary of defense and became the Dean of the Strategic Studies Division at the Naval War College. Like Ana Montes, he, too, consistently declared that Cuba presented no security threat, favoring dialogue with Castro and ending the embargo. As part of his job, he visited Cuba frequently and was caught making a false statement about his last visit in 2004. There is no proof that he was a covert operative, but on July 25, 2005, he was convicted, fined, and placed on 1-year probation. Coll lost his security clearance and agreed not to seek work that would involve classified information. He is now at DePaul University Law School teaching International law and organizing academic visits to Cuba. It is conceivable that Coll, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, fell into a traditional "honey trap" operation to recruit him as an agent of influence.²²

Finally, on January 2006, Carlos M. Alvarez Sanchez and his wife, Elsa Prieto Alvarez, two Cuban exiles prominent in Miami academic, intellectual, and religious circles, were arrested and charged with spying since

the 1970s. Assigned by the DGI to infiltrate the Cuban community, they became close friends with Florida International University president and community leader Modesto Maidique and conducted psychological screening for the Miami-Dade police department.²³

From all his spying activities, Castro has gained invaluable and tradable intelligence about American military plans, capabilities, sources, methods, and operations affecting Cuba and other countries. He plays defense and offense against the United States, his main enemy, a country to which he dedicates his primary attention and energy.²⁴ So he probably is well aware of the ongoing policy shift in the Bush Doctrine. Thus, on May 16, 2006, the U.S. Government announced that it would restore diplomatic relations with Libya after 27 years of conflict. Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi, knowing that a nuclear program was unfeasible and fearing that after Afghanistan and Iraq he was next in line, dismantled his WMD program and closed terrorist training camps, opening his files to reveal the A. Q. Khan network in exchange for an end to sanctions, security guarantees, and removal from the Department of State list of states sponsoring terrorism. The U.S.-Libya rapprochement, however, began in 2003 when Libya agreed to pay restitution to the families of 270 people who died aboard Pan Am Flight 103, which Libyan agents were responsible for bombing. Libya agreed that year to end its nuclear and other WMD programs and allow America and Britain to verify the process.²⁵

Castro, unlike Qadhafi, had received a promise not to invade the island from President Kennedy as part of the deal with the Soviet Union that ended the Missile Crisis of 1962. While Operation MONGOOSE, led by Attorney General Robert Kennedy with his brother's approval, sought to eliminate Castro, the United States

has kept its promise not to invade the island.²⁶ Since that time, and despite regular pressure from Cuban exiles for an armed intervention, the United States never has desired to invade Cuba nor truly committed the diplomatic, military, and economic resources required for the violent overthrow of Castro. In fact, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice insisted on August 6, 2006, on NBC's *Meet the Press*, that an invasion was not in the works. "I want to lay one thing to rest," she said. "The notion that somehow the United States is going to invade Cuba because there are troubles in Cuba is simply far-fetched. And it's simply not true. The United States wants to be a partner and a friend for the Cuban people as they move through this period of difficulty."

Since the global war on terror, the Iraqi muddle, and the nuclear proliferation issues raised by Iran and North Korea are the current foreign policy priorities of the Bush administration, the United States would need to feel directly threatened before considering the use of force against Cuba. So Castro knows, that notwithstanding U.S. Government official rhetoric, he is treated as a distraction and will be allowed to remain in charge as long as he does not cross the red line--namely, aiding, abetting, harboring, planning, or conducting acts of terrorism against the American homeland.²⁷

A Peaceful Transition to Democracy and a Free Market Economy.

While the Castro brothers are alive, this is doubtful. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was hope that Cuba might undergo something similar to the "color" or "flower" revolutions that transformed many

of the former Warsaw Pact countries. Unlike Eastern and Central Europe, however, Cuba's dissident groups are small in numbers, thoroughly penetrated by the internal security forces, betrayed by spies, and embarrassed by accusations of external support. They seek dialogue as a means to achieve the regime's peaceful transformation but lack access to the masses.²⁸

The University of Miami's Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies (ICCAS) Cuba Transition Project supported by a grant from the Agency for International Development (AID) has been examining the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and Nicaragua to determine what lessons it might hold for Cuba.²⁹ Two identified weaknesses of the European model are the geographic proximity of Cuba to its main opponent, the United States, and the unique internal historic conditions existing in Cuba, specifically, five decades of personalistic authoritarian leadership. Moreover, the Cuban Communist Party (CCP) remains loyal, there is no charismatic opposition leader with a solid plan, no significant anti-Castro student activism in Cuba, no working class solidarity movement, and the few nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) allowed to operate in the country are highly restricted.

Adding to the practical problem of stimulating a peaceful transition is the ambivalent Cuban policy of the Bush administration. While its official pronouncements give the impression that it seeks regime change in Cuba, in fact, it is planning to deal with a post-Castro succession scenario. On October 10, 2003, Bush established the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (CAFC), an interagency group chaired by then Secretary of State Colin Powell. The Commission was directed to report to the President by May 1, 2004, with recommendations for developing a comprehensive program to achieve the mission. The five recommendations proposed were:

1. Bring about a peaceful, near-term end to the dictatorship;
2. Establish democratic institutions, respect for human rights, and the rule of law;
3. Create the core institutions of a free economy;
4. Modernize infrastructure; and,
5. Meet basic needs in the areas of health, education, housing, and human services.³⁰

Bush formed the U.S. Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba “to explore ways we can help hasten and ease Cuba’s democratic transition.”³¹ Yet, on December 4, 2004, Assistant Secretary of State Robert F. Noriega announced that Bush is committed to the “liberation of Cuba” during the next 4 years. What did he mean by “liberation”? Certainly not a military intervention or covert operation to achieve regime change while Cuba is under Castro. Noriega stated that Washington had a blueprint of plans for providing social, economic, and other types of assistance to Cuba in the post-Castro era to prevent Castro’s supporters from retaining control of the country after his death. He said that Washington wants to “ensure that vestiges of the regime don’t hold on.”³²

In July 2005, Secretary Rice, who now co-chairs the Commission together with Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, announced the appointment of Caleb McCarry, a former Republican staff member of the House International Relations Committee, as Cuba transition coordinator--or point man on regime change in Cuba. McCarry has a \$59 million budget to “hasten the transition” and prevent Raul Castro, Carlos Lage, Perez Roque, and other leaders from continuing the current system.³³

On July 5, 2006, the Commission issued a second updated report that indicates extensive strategic planning on the part of the U.S. Government to promote a full transition to democracy after Castro dies or is ousted. It is based on the expectation that the Cuban transition government would be inclined to request American assistance and unrealistically assumes that pro-democracy forces within the island would be bolstered and emboldened by U.S. willingness to provide assistance. The report considers the first 6 months after Castro's demise to be critical if a democratic transition is going to succeed. A whole range of assistance programs are included in the planning, ranging from \$80 million for a "democratic fund" for 2 years to help strengthen civil society to legal experts for election and judicial training, an aid package, and technical and health assistance. The report also includes a classified annex of measures to destabilize the regime which begs the crucial question of what specific actions might be undertaken to prevent Raul and others from succeeding Fidel. The report's credibility is weakened by the underlying assumption that Castro will not survive within the next years, the hope for popular protests and demonstrations in the future, and the presumption of an American readiness to intervene directly in internal Cuban affairs upon his death.³⁴

Juan J. Lopez argues that Cuba's failure to undergo a transition to democracy is due to a "lack of belief in political efficacy." But Cuban exiles and dissidents have sought international support for Castro's peaceful departure from the island into exile in Spain. Castro did not give any serious consideration to the plan. Then Pope John Paul II visited Cuba on January 21-25, 1998, and called for democratic change. The Pope's visit raised the hopes of those who wanted to dialogue their way into a transition, but Castro disregarded his plea and soon

thereafter stepped up prosecutions and harassment of dissidents. It is not a lack of political efficacy on the part of Cuban people, but the diabolically effective repressive machinery of the regime that kept them from emulating their European counterparts.³⁵

Edward Gonzalez has suggested that one of three regime types that might follow after Castro is a democratic transition regime drawn from the ranks of dissidents and opponents.³⁶ However, in 1996 Manuel Marin, a special European Union (EU) representative, brokered a deal between the United States and Castro. Under the proposal, Castro would allow dissidents organized as the Concilio Cubano the opportunity to meet openly in Havana, and, in exchange, the United States would provide new loans and credits. After finding all he needed about the group, Castro ordered a crackdown on the Concilio members. This action confirms Aguirre's view that a democratic transition regime is unlikely to replace the one-party rule any time soon because the authoritarian institutions remain strong and stable.³⁷ James Cason, former Chief of Mission of the U.S. Interests Section in Cuba from 2002-05, met openly with the dissidents and consistently denounced Castro through his 3-year stint. But overt or covert support for dissidents oftentimes amounted to the kiss of death as the events of March and April of 2003 demonstrated. In that year, European and American intellectuals saw their support for Castro shaken and hopes for a peaceful transition dashed when the government again ordered a crackdown against the pro-democracy opposition. Seventy-five people, including 27 independent journalists, 10 independent librarians, and signature collectors for the Varela Project--a citizens' initiative to hold a national referendum on civil liberties--were sentenced to an average of 20 years in prison following a 1-day trial. Jose Saramago, a Portuguese

writer who won the 1998 Nobel Prize for literature and considered himself a close friend of Castro, said Cuba “has lost my confidence, damaged my hopes, and cheated my dreams.” Even hardcore supporters joined in signing a statement issued by the leftist Campaign for Peace and Democracy entitled “Anti-War, Social Justice, and Human Rights Advocates Oppose Repression in Cuba.”³⁸

A June 29, 2006, report by the *Coordinadora Nacional de Presos y Ex-Presos Politicos* (CNPP), an umbrella organization of 85 human rights groups in Cuba, revealed that there are 347 political prisoners in Cuba, of which 121 are prisoners of conscience. In addition, the report warned about a great new wave of arrests and repressive measures (“*gran ola represiva*”) against dissidents and opponents in the coming months in advance of the forthcoming Fourteenth Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Havana on September 15-16.³⁹

Hoover scholar Bill Ratliff has examined the similarities between post-Mao China and a post-Castro Cuba and suggested the innovative argument that the Chinese transition model of development first, then democracy might be adopted by Cuba. As he notes, however, Fidel has rejected the Chinese model of socialist capitalism despite his brother’s open admiration of it.⁴⁰ It is reasonable to assume that Cuba can draw many useful lessons from China to the extent that the two are comparable. Unlike Cuba, China occupies a vast continental mass inhabited by a huge population with a history of regional warlords and linguistic differences. Whether a successor regime in Cuba might choose to follow the Chinese road is an open question, however, since the Chinese “model” itself is still a work in progress. In fact, there is an ongoing debate among China watchers over whether China will collapse, democratize, remain authoritarian, or achieve what Minxin Pei calls “partial reform equilibrium.”⁴¹

Irving L. Horowitz alternatively has suggested that the Cubans might adopt a Turkish model of nationalistic military/civilian authoritarian control to drive development.⁴² Turkey has developed democratic traditions over several generations and is accelerating its transformation into a modern nation in order to achieve integration with the EU. Turkey has been presented as a model to the Middle Eastern countries; as a blend of Islam and democracy, a Muslim country fulfilling European cultural criteria. It also is a Muslim country with strong generals in a tough neighborhood and historic conflicts with Greece. Like Cuba, Turkey occupies a geographically strategic position; like China and unlike Cuba, Turkey was once a proud empire. The Turkish military acts as the guarantor of national legitimacy and secular republicanism. Since single-party rule ended in 1950, they intervened in civilian politics in 1960, 1971, and 1980, to maintain the democratic process. Whether Cuba's FAR could become the main driver of a democratic transition after Castro's departure is an intriguing question. Their role certainly would be easier than the Turkish military since in Cuba there are no tribal, ethnic, or religious conflicts that the armed forces would have to ameliorate, mediate, or eliminate. The sole historic cleavage from the pre-Castro era is racial tensions between white and black Cubans. Since the Revolution, a new one appeared between the Party "haves" and the "have nots" rest of the population.

The FAR, nonetheless, is not only the most efficient and effective *nonsectarian* institution in the country but also the main institutional stakeholder with multiple tasking ranging from national defense, internal security and repression, to tourism, mining, aviation, and the sugar industry. Equally important, the FAR has maintained the revolutionary tradition and has never fired on the people

since the government came to power. No other military in Latin America, except the Ejercito Popular Sandinista/ Ejercito Nicaraguense which the FAR helped to create, has behaved in such a manner.⁴³

Since the FAR will continue to play a most critical role in any Cuban political system, U.S. policy initiatives could integrate military-to-military security cooperation and confidence-building components along the lines of the U.S.-Cuba Cooperative Security program of the Center for Defense Information (CDI). But, the 1989 purge of Minister of the Interior (MININT) General Jose Abrantes and the show trial and execution of General Arnaldo Ochoa Sanchez made it clear to the military and security services that Fidel and Raul will eliminate rivals ruthlessly and severely suppress any organized movement within the armed forces toward liberalization or transition to democracy.⁴⁴ Against that historic background and concerned about the possibility of a bloodbath, exile leader Carlos Montaner has suggested that, to effect a peaceful transition, reformers and democrats must form an alliance *after* Castro's death.⁴⁵

The reality is that no color, flower, or cedar revolution will occur because Castro and his closest lieutenants have studied those events very closely, anticipated the relevant contingencies, and contemplated how to deal with them. Dominguez argues that they learned four specific lessons from the fall of Eastern European Communism: undertake as few political reforms as possible; get rid of deadwood in the Communist party early on; deal harshly with potential or evident disloyalty; and do not allow a formal opposition to organize.⁴⁶ Julia Sweig, in turn, identified six elements in Castro's survival strategy: alliances at home; a diverse supply network; cultivating sympathy in the international community; astute use of the press; manipulating the activities of the Diaspora;

and taking advantage of its geographic proximity to the United States.⁴⁷ Whether they learned four lessons or used six strategic elements, it is obvious that they have been doing whatever is necessary to survive and stay in power. As Bueno de Mesquita notes, authoritarians are good at limiting strategic coordination activities by the opposition--such as disseminating information, recruiting and organizing members, choosing leaders, and developing strategy to increase power and influence. Thus, they usually are able to prevent democratization.⁴⁸ Cuba, the strategic "Key to the Gulf," the Pearl of the Antilles, has been a global crossroads of people and ideas since it was first discovered and settled by Spain in 1492. In addition to its geopolitical position, Cuba also has valuable natural resources--nickel, cobalt, iron ore, copper, manganese, salt, timber, and possibly oil--to trade in the global economy.⁴⁹ If there is going to be a transition in the land of tropical socialism, it characteristically might be Cuban. To wit, Cuba would not have a so-called "peaceful transition to democracy" as desired by the United States and the exiles, but rather at best a transfer of authoritarian rule devoid of Castro's personalism.

From a public policy standpoint, moreover, we must reassess the desirability of pressing for a rapid Cuban transition to democracy in light of recent findings indicating that democratizing states are more prone to start wars than mature democracies or authoritarians. However, since Cuba is unlikely to start a war with its neighbors, these studies draw into question the soundness of the democratic peace hypothesis as applied to the Cubans.⁵⁰

A Succession Regime.

A regime based on collective leadership is the most likely scenario since Fidel himself already has set the

process in motion. It is anchored on the assumption that his brother, Raul, who turned 75 on June 3, would survive Fidel. Raul plays a pivotal role in Fidel's regime by occupying four key positions--first vice-president of the council of state and of the council of ministers, as well as the general of the army and minister of the FAR. Under current law, the first vice-president will assume the duties of the president, and in 1997 Raul was recognized formally as Fidel's successor. The Castro clan also includes Fidel's firstborn son, Fidel Castro Diaz Balart ("Fidelito") and five other sons with his common-law wife, Dalia Soto del Valle, but apparently no one else has been groomed to replace Raul. Two overlapping camps of elites loosely identified as Fidelistas or Raulistas and divided between *historicos* (the "*barbudos*" or "*bearded ones*" of the revolution) and the post-revolutionary generations of new Socialist men and women constitute the winning coalition below the Castro brothers.⁵¹

Fidelistas are mostly *historicos* in the party and economic sectors who take a hard line position on security issues and preservation of the socialist tradition. Raulistas largely are composed of newer generation military and technocratic personnel who are strong on security issues but willing to experiment with economic development short of a full free market mechanism. They represent the competing civilian leadership and military organization aspects of the regime along generational and ideological fault lines. In addition to Fidel and Raul, and absent the unknown factor of a dark horse or hidden clique, the leading players in implementing the strategy are *historico* General Abelardo Colome Ibarra, General Alvaro Lopez Miera, Vice-president Carlos Lage Davila, Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque, National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, Government Ministers Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz and Yadira Garcia, and

historicos General Jose Ramon Machado Ventura and General Juan Almeida in his role as the symbol of the Afro-Cubans.⁵²

Fidelistas and Raulistas alike are found distributed throughout the cadres in the FAR, MININT, and security services, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRS), ministries, state enterprises, and managerial bureaucracy. The Catholic and Protestant church, Afro-Cuban sects like the *santeros*, and human rights groups will play a tertiary role. All these elements will either coalesce to protect their interests in a post-Castro Cuba or clash as the collective leadership group vies to retain power.

The reasons behind Castro's succession strategy are pragmatic and understandable. Longevity runs high among the Castro clan and the possibility remains of both brothers surviving into the next decade. But what if events do not follow that order? A collective leadership approach will cement elite cooptation and maintain the loyalty of critical elements within the regime.

Castro, the absolute ruler, wants to retain personal power for as long as he can to protect his dominant position and interests. Bueno de Mesquita suggests that for an authoritarian, staying alive politically is a measure of success; by that measure, Castro is incomparably successful.⁵³ The Castros not only enjoy the use and abuse of power but have profited from it. The recent financial revelations regarding the wealth amassed by Castro over the decades have put a dent on his façade and have raised the stakes for survival. Accordingly, the May 5, 2006, issue of *Forbes* magazine estimated Fidel Castro's personal worth at \$900 million, ranking him as the world's seventh richest leader. In a speech of May 25, 2006, a visibly upset Castro challenged *Forbes* to prove it.⁵⁴

Forbes' estimate is imprecise due to Cuban economic reporting practices and the way it was calculated. They

assumed that Castro owns about 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) based on his partial ownership of state enterprises such as Havana's Convention Center, Medicuba, Cimex, and a few others. Cuban defectors have been quite consistent over the years about the extent of Castro's financial interests in state enterprises. Major Aspillaga, mentioned above, revealed that Castro has Swiss bank accounts. The real amount probably is higher, according to Eugenio Yanez, if one were to include the larger state enterprises like Artex, Cubatabaco, Acemex, Cubatour, Caribat, Cubatecnica, and others.⁵⁵

The charges of personal corruption at the highest levels of government are very significant because corruption is now so endemic that some consider Cuba one of the world's most corrupt states. In fact, Castro's personal money-making activities in his capacity as Cuba's ruler date as far back as a 1960 deal with Nikita Khrushchev, whereby he would receive honoraria for the publication of his lengthy speeches and articles in Russian. Unless proper measures are taken to address corruption, it will hinder any future regime by inviting increased organized crime activity and turning the country into a mirror image of pre-Castro Cuba.⁵⁶

Castro needs to maintain domestic control and guarantee external security to secure his position. The state security and intelligence apparatus are ruthlessly efficient and constantly monitor and intimidate the opposition. The historical record since the early beginning shows that Castro seldom has hesitated to eliminate suspected or potential rivals and enemies. In 1959, after the defeat of Batista, for instance, the country was swamped with popular playing cards ("*postalitas*") with the faces and biographies of revolutionary leaders. Those of Commander Camilo Cienfuegos were more valuable

than those of Fidel--i.e., 10 of Camilo traded for 1 of Fidel. Camilo disappeared early that year in a mysterious plane accident. Since those days, the growing list of erstwhile Castro collaborators who were pushed aside or disposed of has included President Manuel Urrutia, Commander Hubert Matos, Comandante Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo, General Ochoa Sanchez, Antonio De La Guardia, General Jose Abrantes, Carlos Aldana, and Roberto Robaina. In Ratliff's pointed words, "it is fatal to be popular in Cuba unless you are already dead, like Che Guevara."⁵⁷

External actors with significant interests in the ongoing succession process that will be contesting their agendas in a post-Castro regime include both states and nonstate actors. The main stakeholder in Cuba's future is the United States. China, Venezuela, and Iran are countries with strategic, security, commercial, and ideological interests; the European Union, in particular Spain and England; as well as Canada, Mexico, Bolivia, and Brazil also have important commercial and financial interests on the island. Beyond their bilateral foreign policy considerations with Cuba, these countries also partake in the global competition for natural resources, markets, and access to a skilled labor force. Cuba, Bolivia, and Venezuela also are joined by the Bolivian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), a trade and cooperation agreement in opposition to the unsuccessful U.S. Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Nonstate American groups with direct or indirect interests in Cuba include the exiles, business, educational, artistic, and agricultural groups; NGOs like Greenpeace, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch; think tanks like the Center for Defense Information; and news media outlets.⁵⁸

A critical element of Castro's strategy to retain power and maintain external security has been the use of Cuban soft power. Joseph S. Nye has defined soft power as

“ . . . the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals. It differs from hard power, the ability to use the carrots and sticks of economic and military might to make others follow your will.”⁵⁹

Castro’s manipulation of soft power is global, sophisticated, and very effective in creating a multiplier effect. Hal Klepak notes that “Castro’s influence in the region is subtle. His revolution has survived for almost 50 years, and there are lessons that may be useful for other national leaders.”⁶⁰ After almost 5 decades of dictatorship, repression, and human rights violations, Castro’s media image as a symbol of defiance remains not only in the developing world but among so-called “progressive” circles in the United States and Europe. News media manipulation of the revolutionary mythology dates back to the famous Herbert Matthews reports from the Sierra Maestra in the 1950s, perhaps the classic example of Cuban disinformation, and has continued to the present day.⁶¹

The success of Cuban soft power strategies also is manifested in the omnipresent Che Guevara t-shirts, posters, and berets worn by youths;⁶² tourist campaigns touting Cuba as a travel destination; the Venceremos brigades; globalization of Cuban music, films, theater productions and cuisine; performances by Cuban ballet dance troupes, musicians, and salsa bands in global venues; touring baseball teams; front organizations for educational and academic exchanges; offers of free medical education programs and biotechnological training; medical diplomacy by cadres of volunteer physicians and health care providers; etc.⁶³ In fact, the regime’s ability to shape global perceptions has been so effective that former CIA Cuban specialist Brian Latell failed to recognize that Castro was truly anti-American for over a decade. Latell reveals that he had been enthralled with Castro for

many years and became “disenthralled” in 1976 after “I finally came to understand that Fidel was pathologically hostile to the U.S.”⁶⁴ How this failure to see and clearly understand Castro for so long might have affected or biased his analysis, estimates, and recommendations remains unanswered, however.

Following, I briefly outline the contours of five possible succession scenarios. They are merely suggestive of future developments since events in Cuba, whether slow or sudden, may occur in a drastic manner and we need to avoid being caught by surprise. One thing that must be kept in mind, however, is that Castro is a strategic thinker, and many of his seemingly arbitrary or ad hoc decisions are, in fact, carefully calculated. It is quite plausible, therefore, that, like the U.S. Government, the Castro brothers and their closest lieutenants have held periodic continuity of government exercises to deal with future contingencies. For instance, the late General Manuel “Barbarroja” Piñero, the first MININT minister, explained that when news first arrived about Che Guevara’s death in Bolivia, the Cuban leader demanded confirmation and then began to work on the death announcement. In Piñero’s words, “We knew it would have a terrible psychological effect on our people, all revolutionaries, and people all over the world--which was why it was important to give them the news carefully . . .”⁶⁵

Scenario 1: Fidel and Raul both survive for the next 3-5 years with declining physical abilities but functioning mental faculties. The likely course of events would include minimal changes in external policies and tactical and strategic rotation of personnel within the FAR, critical ministries, and the security apparatus to discourage disloyalty. Problems managing the economy will remain with increased discontent over housing, electrical shortages and blackouts, corruption, and internal repression of dissidents and potential rivals.

The governing coalition group becomes more Raulista in membership with the increasing militarization of the country. Repression is tightened to maintain control, prevent instability, and demoralize the internal opposition. Stronger ties are sought with China, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Iran as countervailing forces against U.S. pressure to democratize.

Scenario 2: Fidel dies suddenly. This leadership vacuum leads to the immediate accession to power of Raul Castro and his minions coupled with a de facto state of martial law and high military alert. Public announcement of Fidel's death might be delayed until internal security arrangements are in place, and key military installations, airports, and harbors have been secured. An official month-long mourning period begins during which the special purges of potential rivals and challengers to Raul in the party apparatus and bureaucracy begin to take place. The sanctification of Fidel begins in earnest with popular mobilization in staged events, parades, monument dedications, etc. Pockets of dissenters and opponents are imprisoned or eliminated after being activated by agent provocateurs. Unlike the engineered migrations used by the regime in the past, a regulated emigration to Florida is allowed as Raul seeks to avert American intervention and obtain international acceptance by appearing statesmanlike, poised, and reassuring in public. Militarized socialism becomes more institutionalized as loyal Raulistas are inserted in the key ministries and state enterprises. The University of Miami Cuba transition group, led by Jaime Zulicki and Brian Latell, in a simulation of decisionmaking under Raul immediately after Fidel Castro's death, concluded the succession would be smooth and quick.⁶⁶

Scenario 3: Fidel becomes severely incapacitated or declines faster than his younger brother. The succession

process set in motion by Fidel on July 31 was a test run for a Raulista takeover. After redeploying the armed forces throughout the island, Raul begins the process of succession by removing, jailing, or eliminating Fidelistas to consolidate power. A sort of cultural revolution to emphasize discipline and purge the ranks begins. Fidel's public appearances diminish and are replaced by broadcast of prepackaged videotaped speeches and exhortations for special occasions. The transition from public to electronic appearances will resemble that of Osama Bin Laden from hiding. Raul increases his personal public appearances to fill the open spaces vacated by Fidel. The governing group becomes more firmly Raulista and less Fidelista, with the consequent militarization of key civilian ministries. General Abelardo Colome Ibarra, Minister of the Interior and Raul's closest friend, leads the process. Closer military ties with China are sought to counterbalance American interventionism and provide an opportunity to play the Cuba-Taiwan card, that is, trading Chinese penetration of Cuba for U.S. withdrawal of support for Taiwan.⁶⁷ Venezuelan commitment to subsidize oil supplies in exchange for continued health and educational support are sought.

Scenario 4: Raul dies suddenly, and Fidel is aging physically but mentally in full faculty. A major succession crisis occurs as Fidel and his closest lieutenants might face an internal power struggle. Raulistas in the military and security services might move quickly to purge Fidelistas in the Communist Party and CDRs. An attempted purge of military ranks led by General Abelardo Colome Ibarra, Raul's closest friend and a *historico*, leads threatened Raulistas to defect, while others appeal to the United States for intervention. Elite groups within the military and entrepreneurial sectors claiming ability to lead and maintain stability and order

clash with Fidelistas seeking to mobilize the masses on patriotic and ideological grounds. Castro loyalists seek external support from Venezuela and China to retain control. There is an increased possibility of a bloodbath initiated by an attempt on Castro's life coupled by a military coup.

Scenario 5: Raul becomes severely incapacitated, and Fidel is aging with reduced mental faculty. General Abelardo Colome Ibarra and the succession command conduct purges to maintain control and prevent internal dissension from spreading to the general population. Increased defections, an attempted coup, and assassinations are possible. Repressive machinery is tightened while elites vie for power. A very dangerous and unstable situation develops as both brothers might be kept alive temporarily to be displayed as symbols of unity or eliminated followed by a declaration of regime change and appeals for external help and support. A potential bloodbath might follow as loyal military units move to establish order, clashing with popular groups on the streets. A military junta assumes control but is unable to garner popular support or mobilize the population. As dissension spreads, the tourist industry comes to a standstill, and the economy begins to tilt toward collapse. Waves of mass emigration ensue, and an international crisis develops as the United States moves to blockade the island and interdict vessels. The possibility of a military confrontation with the FAR increases as members of the regime seek to divert attention from the internal struggle by unifying the population against a common enemy threatening the national sovereignty.

Implications.

Cuba has undergone a nontransition from Communism. Altogether, the succession scenarios

outlined above highlight a set of issues facing both the United States and the Cubans regarding security, authoritarian control, stability, leader indispensability, institutionalization, and elite cooptation. They confirm that we currently are engaged in a Castro death watch, waiting for the so-called “biological solution” and the aftermath of a succession process leading to some sort of collective leadership. In the meantime, we need to search for a clear understanding of the internal rivalries, factions, and shifting balance of power within the present regime.

For decades, U.S. policy toward Cuba has been dominated by a policy of isolation through an embargo on trade and travel restrictions. Wayne Smith, who once wrote that Castro may be the best guarantor of Cuba’s peaceful transition to a market-oriented economy and more democratic government, has long argued that lifting the embargo would deprive Castro of the U.S. threat and open up the system to transformation.⁶⁸

Bill Ratliff and Roger Fontaine want a policy of engagement by lifting the embargo because, from their perspective, Castro has more to gain from the sanctions as they provide him with a scapegoat for his own repression and economic failures.⁶⁹ Castro would never let engagement happen, however, because, as Carlos Fuentes accurately noted, “he needs his American enemy to justify his own failings.”⁷⁰ Ratliff and Fontaine make that point themselves when they note that “whenever Washington has lightened up, Castro has tightened up and effectively prevented further improvements.”⁷¹ Paradoxically, the unconditional lifting of the embargo might even strengthen Castro’s hold by providing him with another victory over the United States and raising his global standing once more.⁷²

James Petras, a hardcore Marxist supporter of Castro who once called the dissidents American-paid

propagandists, reluctantly has admitted six obvious failures of the Cuban government unrelated to the embargo.⁷³ He listed them as being a huge housing crisis (one million units needed), a health system infrastructure that is worse than some African countries, a failed energy policy leading to “*apagones*” or blackouts that people use to write graffiti against the government, high level corruption, racial discrimination after 40 years of social revolution, and an egocentric Castro leadership that permeates all sectors.⁷⁴ Likewise, leftist Maurice Halperin, who began visiting Cuba in 1935 and as an octogenarian returned to the country for 1 month in the 1990s, blamed Castro for the problems of the country.⁷⁵ In sum, Castro needs the embargo to sustain his totalitarian regime and will not cooperate effectively in its elimination, while the United States will not lift the embargo unconditionally without a move toward democracy and a market economy. Whether a succession regime would be more willing to cooperate with the United States is an open question ultimately to be answered by the type of unfolding scenario.

We have an opportunity to observe and test-run for how long, how well, and in what manner a post-Castro successor regime might exercise power. On July 31, the radio broadcast statement read by Carlos Valenciaga, Castro’s secretary, announced the dictator’s provisional delegation of seven different power positions to 11 different functionaries due to an “acute intestinal crisis, with sustained bleeding, that obliged me to face a complicated surgical operation.”

To his brother and official successor, Raul Castro, he delegated his three functions as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (CCP), Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (FAR), and President of the Council of State and Government.

His roles as “principal promoter” of national and international public health programs, education, and energy were delegated respectively to Dr. Jose Ramon Balaguer Cabrera, Jose Ramon Machado Ventura, Esteban Lazo Hernandez, and Carlos Lage Davila, all members of the CCP Political Bureau. Since Castro also personally managed and prioritized the funding of the three programs, in his absence a three-man commission composed of Carlos Lage Davila; Felipe Roque, Minister of Foreign Relations; and Francisco Soberon Valdes, Minister-President of the Central Bank, was established to disburse the monies.

In proclaiming this power distribution, Castro disclosed to the world the possible contours of his succession plan. As expected, Raul assumed the mantle of power in a collective leadership system composed of Fidelistas in charge of the economic and social programs and Raulistas in charge of the armed forces. In the mix, we find older generation Machado Ventura and Afro-American Lazo Hernandez, and Lage Davila and Felipe Roque of the younger generation.

In a well-choreographed show of humility, the proclamation presented this arrangement as a “task recommended” to the Communist Party and it “begs” the postponement of the dictator’s 80th birthday celebration until December 2, Cuban Armed Forces Day and the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.

CONCLUSION

For better or for worse, Castro’s place in history already has been established. For almost 50 years, the Cuban people have suffered political repression and tyranny under his one-man rule. On the other hand, the UN Human Development Index (HDI) Report for Year 2005,

relying on data from 2003 and before, ranks Cuba (with an HDI of 0.817) at No. 52 out of 177 countries--above Mexico and Panama, but below Costa Rica, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina.⁷⁶ Whether history will absolve or condemn him will depend on what happens to the long-suffering Cuban people after his demise. *Fidelismo/Castroism*, not being a true ideology like Marxism or even Al-Qa'idism, will probably dissipate and die with him. It is quite likely that his political legacy might be a return to traditional Latin American politics of military rule or weak civilian governments beholden to military leaders. In that regard, De Mesquita's useful insight that authoritarian regimes are difficult to dislodge because they are growing more sophisticated and that authoritarianism leads to stability is quite apropos.⁷⁷

In a post-September 11, 2001 (9/11), post-Saddam Hussein world, the United States can ill afford a Cuban collapse and attendant instability. An authoritarian successor regime might be preferable to a failed state. This is the reason why an American military intervention to depose Castro or his successor is neither advisable nor likely. While Castro is alive, American foreign policy toward Cuba will remain the choreographed *pas de deux* of the past 5 decades. An uncomfortable and conflictual relationship is one whose organizing principle is Cuban anti-Americanism and American isolation of Cuba encouraged by Fidel Castro's dictatorial "*kakistocracy*" (rule of the worst citizens).

The inevitable passing of Castro will constitute good and transformative news for Cuba if progress is made along a range of issues from development of true and honest representative institutions of governance to improvement of the Cuban people's quality of life. Cubans will have to overcome the long shadow cast by a culture of authoritarian one-man rule where, for decades,

individual initiatives have not been allowed to surface and prevail because Castro, the micromanager par excellence, had to either approve or direct them all. The overall post-Castro American foreign policy objective should be to engage the succession regime and encourage a strong bias among Cuban elites for internally-generated democratization, the rule of law, and transparency in exchange for an across-the-board normalization of relations with the island. U.S. military command will need to perform regular and timely updating of contingency planning to interdict vessels to and from the island and to protect and evacuate American diplomatic personnel and tourists in case of violent unrest.⁷⁸ As the 2006 report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba reflects, we must be at the ready to propitiate the process, since in the final denouement, the vested military and civilian elites will inexorably begin a struggle for power postponed by Castro's longevity, and they will seek powerful allies. When that time arrives, in *cauda venenum*, preventing a bloodbath, avoiding a total economic collapse, foreign intervention, and massive uncontrolled migration to Florida will be the biggest challenges we will face from Cuba since January 1, 1959.

ENDNOTES

1. The Cuban economy began its last recovery in 1995 following a series of measures aimed to reduce the budget deficit, shore up the peso, and promote tourism and foreign investments. One important measure was to introduce the dollar as a parallel currency to take advantage of the visits and remittances by the exiles. After the 2003 crackdown on dissidents, however, the Bush administration tightened the 4-decades-old U.S. embargo of the island, increased Radio Marti news broadcasts into Cuba, curtailed visits home by Cuban-Americans, and limited the amount of money Cuban-Americans can send to relatives. See Carmelo Mesa Lago, "The Cuban Economy in 2004-2005," and Jorge A. Sanguinetti, "The Cuban Economy," *Cuba in Transition*:

Vol. 15, Miami: Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE), August 4-6, 2005; Jorge I. Domínguez, Omar Everleny, Pérez Villanueva, and Lorena Barbería, eds., *The Cuban Economy at the Start of the Twenty First Century*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS), 2005. On the axis of evil countries, see "Axis of Evil," en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axis_of_evil. In May 2006, the United States agreed to drop Libya from the list. Condoleezza Rice, the incoming Secretary of State, in her prepared remarks before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 18, 2005, elaborated on the concept "Outposts of Tyranny" and gave a list of six countries deemed most dangerous and anti-American. It included the two remaining "Axis of Evil" members, Iran and Syria, as well as Cuba, Belarus, Zimbabwe, and Myanmar. On the legislation, see "Cuban Democracy Act of 1992" at congress.nw.dc.us/cubanclaims/legislation_3cuban_demo.htm, and "Cuban Liberty and Democracy Solidarity Act (Libertad) of 1996" at congress.nw.dc.us/cubanclaims/legislation_5cuban_liberty.htm.

2. Brian Latell, "Fidel Castro and the Media," *The Latell Report*, Cuba Transition Project (CTP) at the University of Miami's Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies (ICCAS), May 2006. On Castro's realist pragmatism, see Michael H. Erisman, *Cuba's Foreign Relations in a Post-Soviet World*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000.

3. He turned 80 years old on August 13, 2006. See Mark Falcoff, *Cuba The Morning After--Confronting Castro's Legacy*, Washington, DC: AEI Press, 2003.

4. Castro returned to his roots on July 26, 2006, by holding the commemorative event in the historic city of Bayamo, the capital of the Granma province. In an interview with Ignacio Ramonet, Castro responded to the November 2005 CIA claim that he had Parkinson's, by replying: "Well, it doesn't even matter if I have Parkinson's. Pope John Paul II had Parkinson's disease and he went around the world for years while suffering from the disease." Ignacio Ramonet, "Fidel Castro: The Revolution is Based on Solidarity," May 2, 2006, www.ahoracu/english/SECTIONS/special/2006/abril/07-04-06.htm. Cuba hosted the annual meeting of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM) on September 15-16, 2006.

5. This popular quote by Danish Physicist Niels Bohr is mistakenly ascribed to Yogi Berra.

6. Lee Lockwood, *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel: An American Journalist's Inside Look at Today's Cuba in Text and Picture*, New York: Vintage Books, 1967. The voluminous list of publications on Castro includes Jules Dubois' early *Fidel Castro: Rebel, Liberator or Dictator?* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1st edition, 1959; Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba Under Castro: The Limits of Charisma*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974; Andres Oppenheimer, *Castro's Final Hour*, Washington, DC: Touchstone, 1992; Leycester Coltman, *The Real Fidel Castro*, New York: New York Free Press, 2003; Eugene Robinson, *Last Dance in Havana--The Final Days of Fidel and the Start of the New Cuban Revolution*, New York: New York Free Press, 2004; and Brian Latell, *After Fidel*, New York: New York Free Press, 2006.

7. Roberta and Albert Wohlstetter, "Studies for a Post-Communist Cuba" D(L)-11060-ISA, Santa Monica: RAND Classics, February 25, 1963; "On Dealing With Castro's Cuba: Part I," D(L) 17906-ISA, Santa Monica: RAND Classics, January 16, 1965.

8. Cuba is the least free country in the Americas followed by Haiti. *Freedom in the Americas Today*, Freedom House, 2006, www.freedomhouse.org. Countries currently on the DOS list of state sponsors of terrorism are Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, Sudan, and Libya. On May 16, the U.S. government announced that Libya would be removed from the list, www.state.gov. On April 26, 2003, Carlos Fuentes wrote in a letter published by Mexico City's *Reforma* newspaper: "As a Mexican, I wish for my country neither the dictates of Washington on foreign policy nor the Cuban example of a suffocating dictatorship."

9. See *Cuba's Repressive Machinery--Human Rights Forty Years After the Revolution*, Human Rights Watch, June 1999; and Rosa Ferre "Repression In Cuba: A Battle Against the People," *Cubanet*, English translation, 2004. On the connection between civil society and exile, see Juan Carlos Espinosa, "Civil Society in Cuba: The Logic of Emergence in Comparative Perspective," *Cuba in Transition*, ASCE, 1999, pp. 346-367; and Holly Ackerman, "Mass Migration, Non-Violent Social Action, and the Cuban Raft Exodus, 1959-1994: An Analysis of Citizen Motivation and International Politics," Ph.D. dissertation, Coral Gables: University of Miami, 1996.

10. Holly Ackerman, "Incentives and Impediments to Cuban National Reconciliation," in Eloise Linger and John Walton Coltman, eds., *Cuban Transitions at the Millennium*, Largo, MD:

International Development Options, 2000; Volker Skierka, *Fidel Castro: A Biography*, Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2004, p. 356 and its footnotes; and Brett Heindl, *From Miami with Love: Transnational Political Activism in the Cuban Exile Community*, Syracuse: The Maxwell School, Syracuse University, Campbell Public Affairs Institute, Sawyer Law and Politics Program, November 19, 2004.

11. Interview with Major Florentino Aspillaga Lombard, Radio Marti, August 7, 1987.

12. CNN, October 20, 1998.

13. Fact Sheet, *Cuba: Espionage*, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, 7/30/2003, www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/22895.htm. The DGI was created in 1961, later to be absorbed by the Ministry of the Interior (MININT). It conducts external intelligence and counterintelligence operations.

14. Wayne S. Smith, "Our Cuba Diplomacy: A Critical Reexamination," May 22, 2003, Washington, DC: Center for International Policy.

15. Bolton stated,

The United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited offensive biological warfare research and development effort. Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to other rogue states . . . With the third largest biotechnology industry in the third world and as a major exporter of related infrastructure, products and expertise, Cuba could have an offensive biological weapons program.

John R. Bolton, "Beyond the Axis of Evil: Additional Threats from Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Heritage Lecture #743*, May 6, 2002, www.heritage.org. According to the Mitrokhin Archive, Lourdes became one of the most important bases for KGB SIGINT stations codenamed TERMIT-P after an April 25, 1975, secret Soviet government decree. Christopher Andrew and Vasili N. Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way, The KGB and the Battle for the Third World*, Cambridge: Basic Books, 2005, p. 92. See also Ratliff's article, "Cuba and China," *Latin Business Chronicle*, January 2006; *China Reform Monitor*, Vol. 4, No. 87, American Foreign Policy Council, Washington, DC: March 3, 2003; and *Lourdes Facility*, Washington, DC: Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org/irp/imint/c80_04.htm.

16. Fact Sheet, *Cuba: Espionage*, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, July 30, 2003, www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/22895.htm.

17. See his famously revealing letter to confidant Celia Sanchez, "A Letter to Celia Sanchez" in Rolando E. Bonachea and Nelson P. Valdes, eds., *Revolutionary Struggle 1947-1958: Volume 1 of The Selected Works of Fidel Castro*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, p. 379.

18. Hans de Salas-del-Valle "Cuba and Iran: a Growing Alliance," *Cuban Affairs*, Vol. 1, Issue 2, April 2006; "Iran and Cuba Zap U.S. Satellites," *The Nation*, September 19, 2003; Kathleen Parker, "Romance Anew between Cuba and Iran," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 13, 2006, p. B5. Castro also is a close ally of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, with whom he signed the October 30, 2000, *Caracas Accord*. Cuba now receives subsidized Venezuelan oil. Chavez was protected by Castro following a failed coup in 1992, and the Cuban intelligence services have now penetrated Venezuela's critical institutions. On Thursday, June 1, 2006, during an OPEC meeting, Chavez called infamous terrorist Carlos, the Jackal, a "good friend" and has written him a letter of solidarity. Carlos's real name is Ilyich Ramirez Sanchez, and he led an attack against a 1975 OPEC meeting in Vienna, Austria, during which 70 persons were seized, including the Venezuelan oil minister, and three persons were killed. At the time, he said that "to get anywhere, you have to walk over the corpses." Carlos was captured by French authorities in 1994 in Sudan and is now serving a life sentence in France. See Aleksander Boyd, "An Overview on the Dynamics of Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro, Terrorism, and Its International Supporters," www.proveo.org.

19. Interview with the late Colonel John D. Macartney, USAF (Ret.), former Commandant of the DIA Defense Intelligence College, October 2001. For the Ana Montes spy case, refer to "United States v. Ana Belen Montes," September 2001, and the affidavit of Stephen A. McCoy, FBI special agent. See www.files.findlaw.com/news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/montes/usmontesaff901.pdf. Curiously, former CIA officer Brian Latell cooperated with Montes in drafting the report but did not disagree with her analysis. Indeed, the analysis by the spy would be correct if Cuba poses a negligible threat.

20. The *Miami Herald*, on September 3, 2001, reported the arrest of two additional alleged Cuban spies, George and Marisol Gari, known in their intelligence-gathering cell as Luis and Margot, who reported to at least two of the five convicted members of the Red Wasp Network. See also www.latinamericanstudies.org/cuban-espionage.htm. In testimony at the Hearing Before the

Subcommittee on Crime of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, July 1999, Castro was charged with giving the order to shoot; see also FBI press release of September 14, 1998.

21. www.latinamericanstudies.org/cuban-espionage-htm.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Alfonso Chardy and Oscar Corral, "Cuban Americans Foresee Rise of a 'Climate of Fear'," *The Miami Herald*, January 15, 2006. See also Lydia Martin, "Spy Culture Takes Toll on Exiles' Psyche," *The Miami Herald*, February 8, 2006, p. 1A.

24. Irving Louis Horowitz, "One Hundred Years of Ambiguity-U.S.-Cuban Relations in the 20th Century," *The National Interest*, Spring 2002, pp. 56-64. Stephen Kinzer's analysis of American involvement in regime change suggests that the United States failed to overthrow the Castro regime in its infancy because it did not timely reframe it as a geostrategic threat. And when it did, it was either too late or unable to justify it on ethical or idealistic reasons. See Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: American's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, New York: Times Books, April 4, 2006.

25. Bruce W. Jentleson and Christopher A. Whytock, "Who 'Won' Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and Its Implications for Theory and Policy," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3, Winter 2005/06, pp. 47-86; Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba and the State Sponsors of Terrorism List," *CRS Report for Congress*, May, 13, 2005.

26. See "Documents Relating to American Foreign Policy: The Missile Crisis," www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/cuba.htm; "People & Events: Operation Mongoose: the Covert Operation to Remove Castro from Power" in *RFK, American Experience*, PBS, 2002; and Tomás Diez Acosta, *October 1962: The Missile Crisis as Seen from Cuba*, New York: Pathfinder Press, 2002. See also Gerald K. Haines, "The Pike Committee Investigations and the CIA," www.cia.gov/csi/studies/winter98-99/art07.html. In 1975, Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho) led the U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, also known as the Church Committee. Representative Otis Pike (D-New York) led parallel Committee Hearings in the House. The hearings exposed U.S. involvement in the assassination and attempted assassination of foreign leaders and led to the establishment of permanent intelligence committees in both chambers to conduct oversight.

27. Daniel Pletka and Michael Rubin, "The Tyranny Doctrine," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 2006: "... announced resumption of full U.S. diplomatic relations with Libya . . . marks an effective end to the Bush Doctrine." See also, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. "Transformational Leadership and U.S. Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August, 2006, Vol. 85, No. 4, pp. 139-148.

28. Karen DeYoung estimated that there were no more than 500 active dissidents. See "For dissidents in Cuba, a lonely crusade," *International Herald Tribune*, July 18, 2000. In 1999, the Cuban National Assembly passed Law 88 popularly known as the "gag law" which was so repressive of political thought that it was not enforced until 4 years later.

29. Cuba Transition Project, "Transition from Communism: Lessons Learned, Challenges Ahead for Cuba," *Conference Proceedings*, ICCAS, Coral Gables: University of Miami, 2005.

30. Mission of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/cuba/c12238.htm.

31. Report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, May 6, 2004, stategov/p/wha/rt/cuba/.

32. "Top Official: U.S. Wants Cuba 'Liberation'," www.newsmax.com/archives.ic/2004/12/4/180552.shtml.

33. "Announcement of Cuba Transition Coordinator Caleb McCarry," Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Treaty Room, Washington, DC, July 28, 2005, www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/50346.htm.

34. Report of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, July 5, 2006.

35. Juan J. Lopez, *Democracy Delayed, The Case of Castro's Cuba*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, p. 66. See also Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, OAS, *Annual Report*, 1998, Chapter IV, "Human Rights Developments in The Region, Cuba."

36. Edward Gonzalez, "After Castro: Alternative Regimes and U.S. Policy," *Cuba in Transition Project*, Coral Gables: University of Miami, 2002.

37. B. E. Aguirre, "The Stability of the Institutions of the Cuban State During the Transition," *Cuba in Transition*, ASCE, 2002, pp. 486-492. See also Richard A. Nuccio, "It's Castro Who Keeps His Country in Isolation," *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1998.

38. For more details on Saramago and other intellectuals, see dc.indymedia.org/newswire/display/66958/index.php. See also William Ratliff, "Why El Jefe Cracked Down," *Hoover Digest*, No. 3, Summer 2003. For a window on the heated dispute among leftists, see Joanne Landy, "James Petras Goes Over the Top on Cuba and the Left," *New Politics*, Vol. 9, No.3 (new series), whole No. 35, Summer 2003; Letter, "Repression in Cuba," *New York: The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 50, No. 19, December 4, 2003. A critic of U.S. involvement with the dissidents is Julia E. Sweig, "American Meddling Keeps Castro in Charge," *Financial Times*, April 30, 2003.

39. June 29, 2006, La Habana, *EFE*. In 1979, Castro made the opening speech in Havana as the Chairman of NAM and denounced both the United States and China. Since then, China and Cuba have developed significant strategic, military, economic, and political ties adverse to the United States. See "Cuba-China Relations," *Cuba Facts*, Issue 21, May 2006, *Cuba in Transition* Project, Coral Gables: University of Miami. On September 2006, Cuba will assume the chair of NAM for the next 3 years. See Non-Aligned Movement Secretariat, "About NAM," www.e-nam.org.my/main.php?pg=h1, accessed August 2006.

40. William Ratliff, "China's Lesson for Cuba's Transition?" *Cuba in Transition* Project, Coral Gables: University of Miami, 2004.

41. Minxin Pei, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006. For a useful review of recent works on China's future, see Andrew J. Nathan, "Present at the Stagnation, Is China's Development Stalled?," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2006, Vol. 85, No. 4, pp. 177-182.

42. Irving Louis Horowitz, "Transition Scenarios for a Post-Castro Cuba: Military Outcomes or Civil Prospects?" *Human Rights Review*, October/December 2004, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 27-34.

43. Juan Carlos Espinoza, "Vanguard of the State: The Cuban Armed Forces in Transition," *Problems of Post-Communism*, November/December, 2001.

44. General Sanchez was a decorated hero of the Revolution very popular within the armed forces, who seemingly favored internal regime reform along the lines of Gorbachev in the USSR. See the Center for Defense Information, www.cdi.org. For more on Ochoa, see Andres Oppenheimer, *Castro's Final Hour*,

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45. Carlos Alberto Montaner, "The Alliance Between Reformists and Democrats: The Key to a Peaceful Transition in Cuba After Castro's Death," *Cuban Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 3, July 2006.

46. Jorge I. Dominguez, "The Secrets of Castro's Staying Power: How Cuban Communism Survives," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 2, Spring 1993, pp. 97-107.

47. Julia Sweig, *Inside the Cuban Revolution*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002, pp. 184-185.

48. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Political Instability as a Source of Growth," *Hoover Essay in Public Policy*, March 2000, p. 4. See also Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs, "Development and Democracy--The Rise of Sustainable Autocracy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 5, September/October 2005, pp. 77-86.

49. Patrice Hill, "Cuba Drills for Oil Off Florida," *The Washington Times*, July 24, 2006. See also Mike Blair, "China Starts Oil Drilling Off Florida," *American Free Press*, Issue 22, May 29, 2006, americanfreepress.net/html/china_starts_oil_drilling.html.

50. Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005.

51. On the Castro clan, see Oliver Stone, "Comandante: An Interview with Castro," www.cbc.ca/passionateyessunday/comandante/timeline.html. The concept of a "winning coalition" is derived from the "selectorate theory" advanced by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow in *The Logic of Political Survival*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003. The theory operates on two fundamental groups, the Winning Coalition and the Selectorate, both drawn from the overall populace in a state. The Winning Coalition is a proportion of the Selectorate sufficient to choose and sustain a leader in office. The Selectorate, a subset of the overall population, is simply put those within the state that have a say in policy outcomes. See also Bruce Bueno De Mesquita, *Hoover Essay on Public Policy*, p. 7. On the ongoing succession see Skierka's interview with Federico Mayor Zaragoza, pp. 373-375. Edward Gonzalez divides the relevant groups into three groupings: Fidelistas hardliners, Raulistas centrists, and Reformers. Although we acknowledge

their presence, the Reformers are a sort of cohesively organized grouping who exist so precariously in the repressive environment that it is practically impossible for them to operate in a meaningful way. Edward Gonzalez, *Cuba: Clearing Perilous Waters?* Santa Monica: Rand Corp., 1996.

52. Daniel P. Erikson, "Charting Castro's Possible Successors," *SAIS Review*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Winter-Spring, 2005, pp. 89-103; and Eusebio Mujal-Leon and Joshua W. Busby, "Much Ado About Something? Regime Change in Cuba," *Cuba in Transition*, Vol. 11, Miami: ASCE, August 2-4, 2001, pp.459-475.

53. Mesquita, "Political Instability," p. 7.

54. During a May 15, 2006, panel speech at the Round Table, a daily program broadcast on radio and television, an angry Castro challenged Forbes to prove the allegation of wealth. He repeated the challenge on May 24.

55. See "La riqueza de Fidel Castro: Mito y Realidad," *The New Cuba*, August 17, 2005; and Maria C. Werlau, "Fidel Castro Inc.: A Global Conglomerate," *Cuba in Transition*, Vol. 15, Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE), Washington, DC, August 4-6, 2005. Major Florentino Aspillaga Lombard, Interview in Radio Marti, Florida, August 7, 1987.

56. Andrew and Mithrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way*, p. 36. See also Sergio Diaz-Briquets and Jorge Perez-Lopez, *Corruption in Cuba: Castro and Beyond*, Austin: University of Texas Press, August 2006.

57. Actually, Castro encouraged Che's foreign interventions in order to be rid of him, too. William Ratliff, "No One Should Be Baffled by Castro's Predictability," *The Miami Herald* online, February 7, 2003. Ratliff was in Cuba during the 2003 dissident crackdown.

58. The acronym ALBA also translates as "dawn" and allows the three countries to trade some products with zero tariffs. The U.S.-backed FTAA failed in 2005, and the United States resorted to bilateral free trade agreements with nine Latin American countries. In addition to ALBA, Cuba and Venezuela have other programs such as Operation MIRACLE that offers free eye surgery to needy Latin Americans. See also Lindsay Fortado, "U.S. Law Firms Set Their Sights on Cuba After Castro," *The National Law Journal*, February 28, 2006.

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61. Anthony DePalma, *The Man Who Invented Fidel: Castro, Cuba, and Herbert L. Matthews of The New York Times*, Cambridge, MA, Perseus Book Group, 2006.

62. On the mythology of Che Guevara and socialism, refer to Alvaro Vargas Llosa, *The Che Guevara Myth and the Future of Liberty*, Oakland, CA: The Independent Institute, 2006; and "The Killing Machine: Che Guevara, from Communist Firebrand to Capitalist Brand," *The New Republic*, August 11, 2005.

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64. Latell began work on the CIA's Cuba desk in 1964. His work focused on becoming a Fidel Castro specialist through "remote leadership assessment." He appears not to have met either Fidel or Raul Castro before or after he became the National Intelligence Officer for Latin America. Lattell, *After Fidel*, p. 205.

65. Manuel Piñeiro, *Che Guevara and the Latin American Revolution*, edited by Luis Suarez, New York: Ocean Press, 2006, p. 287.

66. "Cuba Without Fidel Castro, 'A Simulation'," ICCAS, Coral Gables: University of Miami, February 3, 2006; Jose Basulto's BTTR group plans to seek indictment of Raul as a narcotrafficker and planner of the plane shooting in order to throw a monkey

wrench on the succession, "Exile to Reveal Plan for Post Castro Cuba," *The Washington Post*, May 25, 2005, p. A3.

67. William Ratliff, "Mirroring Taiwan: China and Cuba," *China Brief*, The Jamestown Foundation, January 18, 2006, www.jamestown.org.

68. On the embargo, see Wayne S. Smith, "An Ocean of Mischief. Our Dysfunctional Cuban Embargo," *Orbis*, Vol. 42, Issue 4, Autumn 1998. pp. 533-554. For a different perspective on the embargo, see Susan Kaufman Purcell, "The Cuban Illusion: Keeping the Heat on Castro," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 3, May/June 1996. On Castro, see Wayne S. Smith, "Cuba's Long Reform," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2, March/April 1996. See also Skierka, pp. 373-375.

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71. Ratliff and Fontaine, "A Strategic Flip-Flop," Executive Summary.

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75. Maurice Halperin, *Return to Havana: The Decline of Cuban Society Under Castro*, Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1st ed., 1994.

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78. Regarding the absence of a true rule of law in Cuba, see Edward Gonzalez, "Cuba After Castro: Legacies, Challenges, and Impediments," Appendix A, Santa Monica: Rand Corporation TR-131-RC, May 2004, pp. 46-51. See also Cuban Migration, "Averting a Crisis," The American Immigration Law Foundation, www.aifl.org/ipc/policy_reports_2003_CubanMigration.asp.