

**THE CURRENT RELATIONS
BETWEEN CUBA AND THE UNITED STATES**

Author:

Dr. Esteban Morales

Professor of the University of Havana, Cuba

Visiting Professor of The University of St. Thomas

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

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Introduction

The conflicts between Cuba and the U.S. began more than 200 years ago; but this confrontation never was between the people of the United State and the people of Cuba.

During the last century among American people, and in the U.S. Congress, there was support for the independence of Cuba. Today the majority of the people supported the return of “Elian” to Cuba. Today many businessmen and regular citizens of the United States disagree with the U.S. government policy of the blockade toward Cuba.

But today Cuba is the only blockaded country in the world because of the last actions in the US toward Cuba. In the last years there has been no flexibility in the blockade, but a rather reinforcement of the blockade toward the island.

The intention of the Congress to partially lighten the food and medicine blockade was manipulated for the extreme benefit of the US Congress. There is now a new prohibition in the law, that prohibits the American people to go to Cuba as tourists.

Historically, US government prohibited spending money in Cuba; but now it is prohibited that American citizens travel to Cuba as tourists, an action against the constitutional rights of the American citizen.

The Republican leadership and the representatives of the right wing of the Cuban-American community in Congress, such as Ileana Ross, Lincoln Diaz-Balant and Bob Menendez, considered these actions against Cuba as a victory. This group is the same one that supported the kidnapping of "Elian Gonzalez" here in the United States and manipulated the congressional process of legislation. In Cuba we call it "the mafia" of Miami.

The "mafia" is not a simple. It is a political concept. They are a mafia because of their methods: corruption, bribery, illegal actions. The people of the U.S. had the opportunity to see and verify who these people are. During "The Elian event", in Congress this group violated the democratic rules of the legislative process.

At the same time, the monetary fund of Cuba retained in the United States, can be used for the compensation of terrorist activities, this dangerous precedent was set in the legislative history of the U.S. nation in the present century.

In the middle of these last measures, the issue of the blockade goes back to the worst moment of the confrontation between Cuba and the US. The extreme right of the Congress reinforced the political action of the blockade against Cuba. However, the context is now different because of the changes that happened in 1995, until today. And these changes happened in all of the scenarios of Cuban-US confrontations today.

The scenario in Cuba is:

a) the economic recovery taking place from 1995 to the present.

The GDP in 1999—6.2

GDP in 2000 –7.7

- b) the process of the economic reinsertion of Cuba in international economics continued. Cuba now has more than 368 associations with foreign capital and more than 44 agreements to protect investments, 18 of them after the Helms-Burton bill.
- c) that Cuba has foreign economic relations with more than 3,500 foreign enterprises in the world.
- d) the international trade of Cuba grows year by year to be more diversified and more secure.
- e) all the Latin-American, Caribbean and European countries have economic and trade relations with Cuba.
- f) an increase in its economic relations into the hemisphere. There is a vulnerability when viewing the politics of the US toward Cuba inside the hemisphere.
- g) a growth in political leaders relations with Canada and the Caribbean countries, especially the Anglo-Caribbean.
- h) its increasing of economic relations and trade with China, Japan and other Asiatic countries.
- i) an important advance into the process of the reconstruction of the economic relations of Cuba, with the former Socialist countries in Europe.

- j) that in the world, only the US has no economic relations with Cuba. But at the same time an important group of the traditional markets of the American's products circulate in Cuba, and cheaper than in the US market.

II. Inside the United States Scene:

- a) the debate in Congress about the necessity to eliminate the restrictions with Cuba continue. Though, Cuba is not the main objective.
- b) the growth of solidarity toward Cuba among the people of the United States.
- c) growing interest in trade relations with Cuba. There is also in process the formation of a business lobby concerned about Cuba in the US.
- d) after the "Elian Case" the right wing of the Cuban-American community lost an important quota of power in the American political system.
- e) there is more information about Cuba in the U.S.

III. At the International Level

- a) almost no one supports the blockade.
- b) growth of the economic and diplomatic relations with Cuba in the world—171 countries have diplomatic relations with Cuba today.
- c) Canada in North America, Japan in Asia, England and Spain in Europe, South Africa in Africa, do not support the blockade, and increase their economic relations with Cuba.
- d) a process of coordination under Canadian leadership, with the participation of the Caribbean countries, support the growth of economic and political relations with Cuba. They support the admission of Cuba in the OAS

(Organization of American States) and the participation of the Island in the regional agreement of the Free Trade area for the Americas (FFTA). Canada is the main partner of the United States in this hemisphere, but it has a more intelligent policy toward Cuba, and takes advantage of the US policy toward the island. In the end Canada wants at the same time that U.S. . But Canada, and all the partners of the US in the world are in disagreement with the policy methods of the US toward Cuba.

Repeat: The allies of the US support its objective to bring about liberal democracy in Cuba, but they not support the methods of the US toward Cuba. The United States is alone in the hemisphere and in the world with its policy of a blockade against Cuba.

In the end:

Who is isolated?

The United States is isolated with its blockade policy toward Cuba.

Who is losing economic opportunities in Cuba?

The US is losing opportunities in business relations with Cuba, while its allies are taking advantage in the midst of the situation.

But, in the end (in final analysis) Cuba must go ahead with its economic recovery, and pursue the solutions to of all its challenges that face the country today.

Today this is a key issue in Cuba--with blockade or without the blockade. With the US or without the US.

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