Cuba Essay, Research Paper

Conclusion

Though it’s immediate effect is mostly symbolic, U.S./Cuba policy in 1998 reflects a positive shift in attitudes amongst the leaders of Cuba and the U.S. Many would argue that only the lifting of the embargo completely would serve as redemption for a mislead American foreign policy. And then again, many others would argue that softening the terms of the embargo only further strengthens the Castro regime. The debate is far from over and the solution is very unclear, but there certainly are recognizable indicators that we can allude to and build assumptions.

One, is the growing global marketplace.

This driver acts as a facilitator of reform by inspiring the individuals and leaders of Cuba and the U.S. to seek relationships outside of their immediate borders. The U.S. stands as the lone holdout in the growing number of countries linked to Cuba through trade relationships. We are pressured by the WTO, GATT, OAS, Mercursor, FTA, and a growing number of regional and international trade organizations to allow some form of trade relationship with Cuba. Not that the U.S. is opposed to unilateral actions, but opposed to free trade–not likely. There is a growing populace of businesses within the U.S. that are lobbying for trade with Cuba. They wish to explore Cuba for oil, utilize it’s skilled workforce, and open hotels. Unfortunately, because of domestic issues, the present U.S. administration stands powerless to further change our policy in Cuba. As Presidents have increasingly linked foreign policy with trade on the bi-partisan level, we can expect to see a continuation of this trend.

Second, Time.

The Cold War is over and slowly the wounds are disappearing. No longer does Cuba represent an ideological or military threat to the U.S.. Embargoes are implemented and maintained in countries that fear military attack. With Castro’s dwindling resources and increasingly smaller number of soldiers, it is fair to say that Cuba represents no threat to the U.S.. Another function of time can be witnessed in the population of Miami, were the majority of Cubans are now American born. These American born Cubans have never lived in Cuba, nor have they experienced any facet of the revolution first hand. They have integrated into American society and possess no ill will towards Fidel Castro.

Third, Communication and Travel.

Last year, tourism put $1 billion dollars in the hands of Cuban business owners. Tourists, even American, have been flocking to the picturesque island in record numbers. The second most popular small Latin American country was Costa Rica! These tourists have reported that although Cuba is communist, the people are friendly and hospitable. As this ever-increasing number of tourists travel to Cuba, they take with them ideas and values which they share amongst the Cuban people. This type of relationship building allows the Cuban a view of the world outside of communism. Also, with the rise in popularity of the internet, one can e-mail a Cuban national with the click of a button. For those in Cuba that have access to the internet, information on any subject is there for the taking. Let’s not forget the old fashioned means of communication which is also now available in Cuba–the phone. President Clinton approved a bill in the January that allows for direct phone calls to Cuba.

With all of these drivers of change rapidly shaping our relationship with Cuba, it seems to be only a matter of time before Americans will be allowed to enter Cuba and enjoy it’s beauty again.

John Quincy Adams may have been correct in 1823 when he predicted that Cuba would gravitate naturally towards the U.S.–But, he certainly didn’t know that it would be such a bumpy ride.