



# The Collegiate Conservative

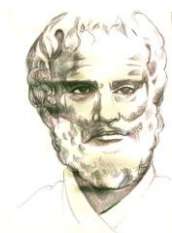


**Volume II**

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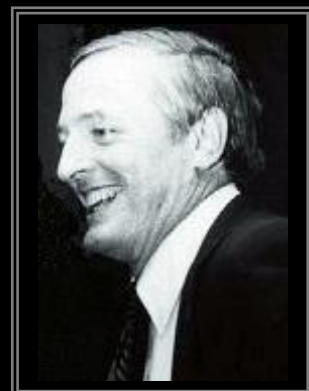
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**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS, Fall/Winter 2010 Edition: Dec 15, 2010**

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## *Letters To The Editor*

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**Provoke!**

**Incite!**

**Inspire!**

**REF: Redistricting could dramatically change WI's 57<sup>th</sup> assembly district**

**BY: Chris Schaefer, Recent Undergrad, Ripon College, WI**

After scrupulously analyzing the November 2, 2010 midterm election results, and reading the myriad of post-election articles penned by the *Appleton Post-Crescent*, I felt compelled to provide a political scientists perspective on the outcome of the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District race. There is little dispute among political scientists that the Republican Party underperformed in 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. The Democratic Party's success in the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, the past two years is not attributed to candidate quality or the "coattail effect," although the latter certainly contributed to Penny Bernard-Schaber's narrow victory in 2008. Rather, it was precipitated by redistricting and the changing dynamics of the city's population. It should be duly noted that Scott Walker, Ron Johnson, Reid Ribble and Chris Hanson were **all** defeated in the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly district.

After the 2000 census, the many Republican-friendly wards on the north side of Appleton were phased out of the fifty-seventh district, in an effort to strengthen the neighboring 56<sup>th</sup> Assembly district, a longtime Republican stronghold. In addition to redistricting, the dynamics of the city have changed in recent years. Many of the affluent residents of the city of Appleton have migrated to Grand Chute or Greenville, where property taxes are drastically lower. These traditionally Republican voters have been replaced by Democrats and those with liberal-leanings. Wards 1, 2, and 3, or the "downtown wards," as the *Post-Crescent* has dubbed them, has witnessed the greatest shift in voting behavior. The downtown wards have shifted in recent years from "Strong Republican," (1970-2004), to "leans Republican," (2004-2006), and most recently, "Democrat favored," in the past two election cycles. The migration of traditionally Republican voters, coupled with the increased political involvement of Lawrence University students has appreciably altered the dynamics of these three wards. What do current trends tell us about the future of the 57<sup>th</sup> district?

With the Republican Party now firmly in control of both houses of the legislature and the governor's mansion, expect drastic changes to be made to the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly district. There is no question that the Republican Party will work assiduously in the next two years to ensure that the fifty-seventh assembly once again becomes a Republican stronghold. This will be accomplished by transferring several of Appleton's northernmost wards from the 56<sup>th</sup> to the 57<sup>th</sup> district. If the Republican Party is successful in its redistricting effort, Penny Bernard-Schaber could be the final Democrat to ever represent the 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. ■

\* \* \* \*

**REF: Talks in Geneva over Iranian Nuclear Program****BY:** Michael Hopfersperger, Undergrad, UW-Madison, WI

On December 6 and 7, 2010, Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States meet with Iran to hold talks over their nuclear program. Before the talks even began things looked dim, a day prior to the Geneva summit Iran announced that it had produced for the first time [uranium yellowcake](#). Yellowcake, as it is known, is a crucial first step in making nuclear fuel for weapons. Ahmadinejad on the first day of the summit came out and said that “there will be no fruitful talks unless sanctions are lifted”, this is the view of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) that meet simultaneously in the [United Arab Emirates](#).

There is a disconnect between what the members of the GCC say and what they do as now Gulf states are boosting the missile defense just 2 days before they called for sanctions to end on Iran. The Western states, China and Russian went into this thinking a good outcome would be to create a dialog and hopefully hold another round of talks. It seems that is all they got as reports from Geneva say the only thing agreed up was to hold “co-operation” based talks; [Iran did use the summit](#) as a forum of “protest against what it claims is a Western plot to disrupt its nuclear efforts...”.

The ability of these Security Council members to meet with Iran is I think important, because the members are talking steps for greater co-operation gives more legitimacy when they continue with sanction. Iran has to come to the realization they cannot just demand things and that they will happen, even having a nuclear weapon is not going to change that. The only thing the Iranian nuclear program is going to get them is continuing sanctions and segregation in the world community. Their Middle Eastern neighbors don't even have the desire for Iran to have nuclear weapons, let alone what Israel thinks of Iran's nuclear program. ■

**REF: Manufacturing is Not Gone it has Changed Color****BY:** Michael Hopfersperger, Undergrad, UW-Madison, WI

With the United Nations climate talks about to begin in Cancun Mexico and reports of a [4 degrees Celsius](#) (minimum) rise in global land temperatures in the [21<sup>st</sup> century](#) if green house gas emission are not reduced. Why is the United States not taking a leading role in the development and production of “green” technologies? It took the United States 3 years from the creation of the Manhattan project to create a nuclear weapon to end World War Two, and eight years to land a man on the moon. But here and now we cannot muster the support to develop and produce technologies that will preserve our planet?

There is great debate in the public sphere that global climate change is not real or human induced, the science behind climate change is what it is and will not be defended or attacked here. Though it is a fact that the production of “green” technology specifically in the sector of renewable/sustainable energy production is a priority for National defense and preservation but seems to be pushed aside.

After WW2 and in the midst of the Cold War the United States made it a priority to educate people in science and mathematics. We need that now, we had one opposing State in the Cold War now we have dozens, the government and the people need to make the education of its people a priority again. There is nothing but growth to be made in this sector, investment from the Government and business in education and innovation will only be made up again in the production and sale of these technologies. Many people say this is not the time to think about adding things to the budget, but now is the perfect time.

There are probably more people looking at and analyzing the national budget than any time in the recent past and more people than ever need jobs than in the recent past. With all these people looking at what to save and what to cut, there is money to be moved and reallocated to what is really needed now and for the future. This is not just a necessity to preserve the land we live on and the water we drink, but the standard of living and leadership in the world the people of the United States have worked for over the last half century and the time for this decision is running out. ■

\* \* \* \*

**REF: North Korea a Real Threat?**

**BY: A Concerned [Anonymous] American College Student**

Dear Editor,

Kim Jong-il has proven himself in the international community to be a rogue actor with little regard for international codified or customary law. It seems obvious that the latest attacks on South Korea are merely a grooming of his son and heir Kim Il-sung. While the actions appear sporadic and, to a degree, psychotic, it is hard to believe that an ‘insane’ regime could have made such unbelievable progress or commanded the amount of attention they have garnered over the past few decades.

Coupled with the attacks was the invitation extended by North Korea to Stanford professor Siegfried Hecker to examine the highly sophisticated uranium enrichment program in place. These seem to be the actions of incredibly skilled tacticians that desperately are trying to hold on to whatever power they can.

The United States government needs to take a stand, and they need to do it now. With the imminent transfer of power, the United States needs to call upon all nations who strive for peace in the international community. Considering the recent international movement to renounce the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons, the unwavering determination to pursue the antithesis of these goals must be addressed. Knowing the inability and unwillingness of the United Nations to implement any functional and substantial policy to deter the actions of the North Korean government, we must rely on individual nations to ensure the safety of humanity is not endangered. ■

## TALKING POINTS

*Each edition of The Collegiate Conservative poses one or two inquiries on topical political issues in Washington or the international arena and begs input from our collegiate contributors. This edition asked readers to address two topics: The Obama Foreign Policy Doctrine and Arizona Immigration Bill 1070.*

### TALKING POINT #1

The emerging crisis over Iran's nuclear ambitions continues to unfold. The news in recent months has lived up to expectations; there have been few surprises, but the clock is ticking. The United States has been leading a coalition of individual states and international bodies like the United Nations, mixing positive inducements and negative penalties as it attempts to change the Iranian regime's behavior. Is there a key to compelling Tehran to halt its nuclear weapons development? Can the United States and the international community achieve this strategic objective?

**REF: Completely Banning the Sale of Iranian Crude**

BY: Graduate Student, Alex M., UW-Madison

The billion dollar question is how to get Iran to stop its nuclear program. Numerous attempts have been made with both incentives and punishments to deal with this problem, but currently none have had success. In looking at this question, the approach that I would pursue is to first and foremost completely ban the sale of Iranian crude. To secure this, China would have to put its own economic considerations aside, given they are heavy investors in the Iranian oil industry. Also, the world must be ready to accept that crude prices will increase given that Iran is responsible for 5% of global production. If this can be achieved, 80% of Iran's exports would be cut off overnight. This would significantly drop the revenue of the state and endanger the services that the government offers and cause civilian unrest and actually pressure Iran. Stopping all Iranian exportation of crude will be incredible hard, given the stakeholders but I believe that it is the only way to get Iran to the table.

In the aftermath of the Republican victory in the midterm elections, it is important for those in elected office to remember their fiscal conservative roots. It is in my opinion, that the approach should be halt on new spending and engage in a full reconsideration of the budget. This approach is aimed at a analyzing where money is spent and setting priorities for future spending. Through this process the U.S. can come to a more balanced budget. Ultimately, the major concern for the future of the U.S. is the amount of the money that will to be spent just paying interest. In the coming years, this payment will outpace spending on the defense of the nation, a fact that cannot be ignored. Therefore, a forward thinking Republican party should seriously tackle the budget issue in their coming terms. ■

**REF: Shock & Awe: Seizing Iran**

BY: Graduate Student, Chris S., George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

The greatest menace to global security and American hegemony in the twenty-first century is a nuclear Iran. In recent years, American lawmakers have opined that diplomacy and the amalgamation of positive inducement and sanctions was the only viable solution for halting the Iranian nuclear program. This approach has been extremely ineffective and has done little to improve the rapport between Iran and the United States. Rather than issuing sanctions and concocting a plentitude of otiose inducements, it would be in the best interest of the world for the United States to employ a hard-power strategy.

This author proposes a two-pronged strategy for halting the expansion of the Iranian nuclear program: shock and awe, as espoused by the Rumsfeld Doctrine, and a siege of Tehran. The first, a shock and awe strategy would entail copious bombing of Iranian military targets, infrastructure and any target deemed by military personnel as inimical. In addition to air strikes and excessive bombing, this strategy requires a military presence in Iran. Ground forces will be needed to protect the civilian population and suppress any violence or rebellion that may come about as a result of the airstrikes. The second prong of this proposal entails seizing Tehran, banishing the ruling regime and supplanting leaders who intend to forge an alliance with the United States and halt the development of nuclear weapons. In order for this strategy to be effective, the United States must assist the government in establishing a functioning and stable democracy. At this stage of the game, hard-power and intimidation are the only viable solutions for bringing an end to the Iranian nuclear program. ■

**REF: The West Must Leverage the Iranian People**

BY: Undergraduate Student, Mike H., UW-Madison, WI

If the last months and years have taught us anything in the West is that there is not a single element that will break Tehran from their nuclear ambitions. Though I do believe in the importance of the international community in such bodies as the U.N., I do feel that single member states actions, such as Russia's attempts to provide the enriched uranium is also extremely important. If for anything there are not American hands in the outreach to Tehran in individual state action, as we all know the slightest American involvement is almost enough to stop the Iranian government from considering an option. Though the most important key could be the Iranian people themselves, as we saw in the summer of 2009 there is a very large political will outside that of the theocracy, the west providing outlets for such discussion to continue is probably the greatest thing we can do to stop the "radicals" that run the government.

I do not believe that any strategic objective can be achieved through the process of diplomacy. Tehran has been fighting this war of words with the U.S. and

the West since 1979 and they seem to be as resolved in their ambitions as at any time before. This causes a problem because we heard of Tehran's ambitions in the full context of the Middle East, and we cannot talk about failing diplomatic processes without bringing up the possibility of Israeli military involvement if/when Tehran develops nuclear capabilities. I believe that if this military option does occur then it will move the population that seems, at least on some level, to be straying from the Ayatollahs back to a strong central government and for strong leaders. Because the process of attacking the nuclear sites will kill Iranians, and no one embraces a people or set of ideals that killed countrymen. ■

**REF: Stopping Iran Means Establishing the State of Palestine**

BY: Graduate Student, Jake E., St. John's University, NY.

Iran has consistently demonstrated its inability to engage in diplomacy based in logic and reason, and, instead, insists on operating based on an extreme ideology that has proven virtually impossible to negotiate with. Perhaps only one realistic incentive exists in order to halt Iran's drive to secure nuclear weapon capability: the establishment of a state of Palestine. Iran has made it abundantly clear that it desires, above all else, to see the end of the Israeli nation. While this prospect will most likely never come to fruition, it is possible that to see the formation of two distinct nations into two independent states, a significant portion of the Iranian drive to eradicate the Jewish state will be set, at least temporarily, aside.

If the Palestinian people are afforded their own rights under their own government, it is more likely that the Iranian government's attitude toward Israel will decrease in volatility. While this development will not serve to completely dissuade the Iranian regime's desires to eliminate Israel, it may serve as a deterrent in the meantime, until further diplomatic action can be taken. ■

**SO LET IT BE WRITTEN.  
SO LET IT BE DONE.**

(Talking Points Continued on Next Page)

**TALKING POINT #2**

**The 2010 national midterm election was poised to affect the national legislative agenda for at least the next two years. What are the most important principles for America's new representatives, Senators, and policymakers to embody as they assume their new posts?**

**REF: Vintage Perspective: Heralding the Values of our Founding**

BY: Graduate Student, Chris S., GWU, Washington, D.C..

In the 2010-2012 legislative session, it should be an utmost priority of lawmakers from both parties to embrace the core principles of the American founding and the Constitution. The first and foremost principle for lawmakers to embrace is civic duty. The American Founding Fathers viewed public service as a noble calling and envious duty, not a career. Upon the conclusion of their service to the nation, these dignified men enthusiastically returned to their businesses, law practices, and farms. Today, statesmen

have been replaced by politicians, who are motivated more by self-promotion and career advancement than service to the nation. Self-aggrandizement has replaced civic duty as the as the primary motivation for entering politics in the twenty-first century. Members of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, if they intend to restore trust to government, should embrace civic duty, and adhere to the will of the people, not special interests or party leaders. The only viable solution for doing away with politics-as-usual- and returning to the era of the statesman is the implementation of term-limits for members of Congress. The implementation of term limits would allow for turnover in government, compel elected officials to work for the good of the people, and afford citizens from all walks of life with the opportunity to serve their country.

In addition to civic duty, policymakers should embrace fiscal prudence, state's rights, natural law, and laissez-faire capitalism, all of which were core tenets of the American founding. Since the ratification of the Constitution in 1791, the aforementioned principles have guided the American republic. In recent years, however, American policymakers have disregarded these principles, and in turn, have fostered an irreparable distrust of government. By embracing civic duty, fiscal prudence, state's rights, natural law and laissez-faire capitalism, policymakers can restore trust, enhance efficiency and ensure that American remains the most powerful nation in the history of the world. ■

**REF: A Resounding Yes for Limited Government**

BY: Graduate Student, Jake E., St. John's University, NY.

The American people spoke loudly and clearly with their ballots this midterm election. It is apparent that the constituencies of the vast majority of states within our nation are deeply dissatisfied with the policies of rampant government spending, the lackluster performance of the economy as well as the heightened unemployment rates felt all across America. Perhaps the two most prominent achievements of President Obama's government were the passing of the stimulus package shortly after election as well as the Health Care bill, known by most Americans as ObamaCare. The stimulus package proved to be an ineffective tool to recreate jobs and spur economic growth we needed, and the outcries of the American people regarding ObamaCare were so deafening that roughly one month after the passing of the legislation, citizens were calling to have it repealed.

The voters have spoken. What we desire is a smaller federal government that is characterized by responsible fiscal policy paired geared towards stimulating the American economy as a whole, focused most importantly on getting people back to work. We desire responsible decision making geared towards fixing these problems in the long-term, rather than immediate, and unsubstantiated, policies implemented by the current Administration. ■

**REF: Working Together A Must**

BY: Undergraduate Student, Mike H., UW-Madison, WI.

The Representatives and Senators should go in knowing the people have not really vote for a far right ideology. The voted in a way to being the government to the middle not the right, the Republican Party cannot do what the Democrats just got done doing. That is to push an extreme party agenda; I believe the people of the United States were/are scared as the economy does not seem to be recovering as fast as promised/thought. With that the incoming power to the House has to recognize that they have promised by their getting elected to get something done, I hope that both Parties recognize that neither has the ability to pass through legislation by itself. Compromise should be the new face of our Congress not partisanship; one election does not ensure a 40 year ownership of any congressional or executive body. ■

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*There is nothing more important to our future than the circulation of insightful and well developed ideas.*

\* \* \* \*

### Year of the Conservative Woman.

Kristin Patras, *The Purdue Review*, Purdue University. Oct 2010  
Published in partnership with *The Purdue Review*



With the future of

our country hanging in the balance, American women are putting their heels on the ground to see to it that their voices are heard on November 2nd. In particular, smart girls from around the country came together on September 30th and October 1st in Washington, D.C. for the annual Smart Girl Summit. Hosted by Smart Girl Politics, a conservative grass roots organization, the summit served to engage, educate, and empower conservative women.

The smart girls (and smart guys) who attended the event had the extraordinary opportunity to mingle with top leaders in the conservative movement. Liz Cheney, political pundit S.E. Cupp, and Congresswoman Michele Bachmann are just a few of the women who spoke throughout the summit. In addition, ACORN whistleblower Anita MonCrief, Washington Times writer Kerry Pickett, and Susan B. Anthony List founder Marjorie Dannenfelser shared their experiences along with a plethora of other exceptional conservatives. American Majority, Faulkner Strategies, and Right Network also presented to attendees.

Throughout the two-day event there were numerous panels that discussed topics ranging from grassroots activism to pro-life women even to feminism. The panel “Using Political Humor to Maximize Effect” was a wildly popular panel—possibly due to the fact that the ever so hunky and hilarious Fox News contributor Steven Crowder was a panelist. Blogger and host of From the Right Radio, Fingers Malloy, joined Crowder and the crowded room of women to discuss the use of humor in the political sphere and of course crack plenty of jokes. The panelists focused mainly on how liberals have mastered comedy and how conservatives need to embrace their funny side. The two pointed to the embarrassing incident in which Vice President Joe Biden told wheelchair bound Senator Chuck Graham to stand up in front of a crowd of people. Oops! They encouraged those in attendance not to be swayed from using predicaments such as the one Biden found himself in for jokes.

Those in attendance also had the opportunity to view the powerful film “Fire from the Heartland.” The film tells the story of conservative women from the perspectives of fifteen of today’s most prominent conservative women including the legendary Phyllis Schlafly. What made the screening even more exciting was that many of the fifteen women featured in the film were at Smart Girl Summit the night of the screening.

If these smart girls weren’t fired up before the summit, they sure are now! The exceptional training and expert panels at Smart Girl Summit only further empowered these women to make their mark on the upcoming election. With the National Organization for Women endorsing a male candidate whose staff referred to his female opponent as a “whore,” New York Times Columnist Maureen Dowd coming out with fists flying at “Republican Mean Girls,” and Joy Behar labeling supermom Congresswoman Michele Bachmann as “anti-children,” the stakes are extremely high. However, it is clear that conservative smart girls like the ones at Smart Girl Summit are rising to the occasion and will be quite a force to be reckoned with in the future. ■

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# The Importance of Presidential Campaigns in Determining Election Outcome: A Scholarly Analysis.



Christopher Schaefer, Ripon College, WI.

March 2010

The political science

community is laden with debate over whether or not campaigns really matter in most presidential elections. Many political scientists contend that external factors and the candidates themselves are the driving force behind presidential elections. Copious evidence however, proves that campaigns do in fact play a paramount role in shaping election outcomes. This thesis seeks to prove that campaigns do really matter in most presidential elections, and that these campaigns are often influenced by a myriad of external factors, such as: the economy, the president's approval or disapproval rating, international crises, etc. Moreover, this thesis also examines what, if anything, the Dukakis campaign (1988) could have done to win the presidential election, and what, if anything, the Clinton campaign (1992), would have to do to lose the election. The results of presidential campaigns are often predetermined by external factors, such as: the state of the economy, the approval/disapproval ratings of the president, international crises, but more importantly, the campaigns themselves are the most important factor in determining the outcome of a presidential election.

Presidential campaigns are the lifeblood of the American political system. Every four years, euphoria engulfs the nation, as citizens prepare to select the nation's chief executive officer. Campaigns, much to the chagrin of many political scientists, are one of the most important factors in presidential elections. Thomas Holbrook, one of the nation's leading presidential elections experts, argues in his seminal tome: *Do Campaigns Matter?*, that campaigns play an important role in shaping public opinion about candidates during elections years, and ultimately play an important role in determining election outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Campaigns matter in

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas Holbrook, *Do Campaigns Matter?* (Sage: Thousand Oaks, 1996), 46.

presidential elections because they allow citizens to get involved in the political process, through volunteering or working on a campaign, and provide them with a greater understanding of the candidates, parties and issues. Campaigns provide a forum for undecided voters to make up their mind as to whom they are going to vote for. Thomas Holbrook notes that one-third of voters decide who they are going to vote for during the campaigns, and the other two-thirds have the mind made up after the party conventions.<sup>2</sup> Simply because two-thirds of Americans tell pollsters that they have decided who they are going to vote for after the conventions, it does not mean that campaigns are irrelevant to them. Some voters change their mind as to whom they are going to vote for once the campaign starts, and they are able to gauge the candidates, and their campaigns. In 1988, Michael Dukakis led Vice President George H.W. Bush 53% to 38% after the Democratic National Convention, but ended up losing to Bush in the general election, 48% to 41%.<sup>3</sup> As the reader can discern from the aforementioned statistics, a significant percent of voters changed their opinion as the election progressed, due mainly to the lethargic, disorganized and banal campaign run by Governor Dukakis. Moreover, these numbers prove that the campaign itself did matter in determining the outcome of the 1988 presidential campaign. George H.W. Bush's campaign was less than stellar, but it focused enough on the economic prosperity of the Reagan years to defeat Dukakis, who ran an even worse campaign. The aforementioned statistics better indicate that campaigns play a paramount role in shaping voter opinion, and in determining the election's final outcome.

The purpose of campaigns is for candidates to sell the voters on themselves and their platforms. Thomas Holbrook, in describing the importance of campaigns in presidential elections, writes, "Although national conditions set the parameters of likely outcomes and contribute more to the eventual outcome, campaigns can provide the votes that swing the outcome one way of the others."<sup>4</sup> Thomas Holbrook's quote indicates that campaigns do in fact play an important role in determining the

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Thomas Holbrook, "National Conditions, and U.S. Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, no. 4, 1994, p. 974. <http://www.jstor.org/stable211729>.

<sup>3</sup> Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich, and David W. Rhode, *Change and Continuity in the 1988 Elections* (Congressional Quarterly, Washington, D.C., 1991), 57. See also: "Dukakis' Lead Widens, According to New Poll." *The New York Times*, July 26, 1988, <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/26/us/dukakis-lead-widens-according-to-new-poll.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Holbrook, *Do Campaigns Matter?*, 158.

final outcome of a presidential election. National conditions may have favored a Republican in the 1988 presidential election, but it was George H.W. Bush's incumbent vice president status, coupled with the electorate's admiration for Ronald Reagan, that allowed him to overcome Dukakis's early lead in the polls, and win the election. Additionally, Bush's negative campaign ads, mainly the infamous "Willy Horton ad" forced voters to view Dukakis as soft on crime, a factor that ultimately cost him the election. Before examining the role that external events play in presidential campaigns, it is important to examine the role that voter mobilization plays in presidential campaigns.

The goal for any presidential campaign is to motivate their base and ensure that they come out to vote on Election Day. In the 2004 presidential election, President George W. Bush implemented one of the most successful get out the vote (GOTV) efforts in history, by micro-targeting voters in Republican districts across the United States. Bush's rhetoric on social issues, national security and the economy allowed him to win the support of his party and a considerable number of independents. Dr. Richard Semiatin, an expert on campaigns and elections, notes that in 2004, the Bush campaign was able to locate Republican voter segments that might be in strong or weak Democratic precincts and encourage them to vote. Moreover, Semiatin argues that lifestyle and micro-targeting enabled the Bush reelection campaign to locate its Republican base and get them to the polls in record numbers on Election Day.<sup>5</sup> As noted, campaigns remain an integral part of presidential elections, and often are the deciding factor in the success or failure of a candidate. The next section examines external factors and their role in shaping presidential elections. This author contends that external factors play an important role in election outcomes, but in no way are the sole factor in determining the final outcome.

External factors, such as the economy, the incumbent's popularity/unpopularity, and an international crisis can affect the outcome of a presidential election. External factors, coupled with personal factors (a candidate's demeanor, past record and attitude on the campaign trail), often play an impact in determining the outcome of the election. Arguably the most important external

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<sup>5</sup> Dr. Richard Semiatin, "Voter Mobilization into the Future." *Campaigns on the Cutting Edge* (Congressional Quarterly: Washington, D.C., 2008), 92.

factor in deciding the outcome of the presidential election is the economy. Since the Second World War, no president or incumbent presidential party has won reelection during an economic downturn.<sup>6</sup> Even though Congress has greater discretion over the economy than president, voters blame economic troubles on the president and his policies. In the 2008 presidential election, the economy was the single most important factor on the minds of the American electorate.<sup>7</sup> Following the Republican National Convention, McCain had taken the lead over Senator Obama in many national polls, but his campaign hit rock bottom on September 14, 2008, the day Lehman Brothers, AIG, and others collapsed. McCain's first major blunder during the campaign came on that day, when he said, "The fundamentals of our economy are strong."<sup>8</sup> Senator McCain's inability to effectively deal with the economy, and articulate his plan for economy recovery, ultimately lead to his demise. Moreover, an economic recession in 1992 was the leading factor in George H.W. Bush's election defeat. Following the Gulf War, George H.W. Bush had a job approval rating of 89%, but as the economic situation worsened, Bush's approval rating sunk to a dismal 29% in the summer of 1992.<sup>9</sup> Bush's 60 point drop in popularity over the course of sixteen months was a direct result of the nation's perilous economic situation. The nation's economic situation plays a paramount role in presidential elections, but it does not predetermine the elections outcome. If the state of the economy predetermined the outcome, John McCain would not have lead Barack Obama in the polls following the G.O.P convention, and into the first week of September. The next section examines several other important external factors that help shape election outcomes.

The outcome of presidential elections is often determined by an international crisis, the popularity/unpopularity of an incumbent president or party, and personal factors during the campaign. While these three elements certainly play a role in the election's outcome, they are not nearly as critical as the state of the economy. A

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<sup>6</sup> Dan Wood, Chris T. Owens, and Brandy M. Durham, "Rhetoric and the Economy." *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 67, no.3, 2005, p. 631. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3449565>.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Richard A. Posner, *A Failure of Capitalism: The Crisis of '08 And the Descent Into Depression* (Harvard University: Cambridge, 2008), pp. 304-307.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. James Caesar, Dr. Andrew Busch, and Dr. John J. Pitney, Jr., *Epic Journey: The 2008 Elections and American Politics* (Rowman and Littlefield: Lanham, 2009), 146.

<sup>9</sup> Lyn Ragsdale, "Studying the Presidency: Why Presidents Need Political Scientists." *The Presidency and the Political System*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., Michael Nelson, ed., (Congressional Quarterly: Washington, D.C., 2010), 50.

large scale international crisis often allows the nation to rally behind the president and his leadership. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Franklin Roosevelt convinced the American public that a war against Japan was a necessity. Roosevelt's resolve after that crisis, coupled with his steady leadership during the Second World War, allowed him to get reelected for an unprecedented four terms. The September 11, 2001 attacks were the most heinous and devastating attacks in American history. President Bush's handling of this attack earned him the highest job approval rating in American history; 91 percent.<sup>10</sup> President Bush made his leadership during 9/11 and the war on terrorism as the focal point of his 2004 reelection campaign. Bush was able to defeat John Kerry in the 2004 election, largely as a result of his decision to focus on terrorism, national security and his leadership. Bush's victory was not predetermined by any means. In fact, most exit polls were indicating that John Kerry was going to win the election. Bush's approval ratings heading into the 2004 election was at 50%, 41% lower than it was immediately following 9/11.<sup>11</sup> An international crisis, as the reader can discern, often plays a role in determining the outcome of a presidential election, but does not always predetermine the winner. Despite his high approval ratings after September 11, 2001, George W. Bush came very close to losing his bid for reelection to Senator John Kerry. The next section examines the effect that presidential approval ratings, and a candidate's demeanor and attitudes during a campaign has on determining the outcome of a presidential election.

The popularity or unpopularity of an incumbent president or party is often a critical factor in shaping the outcome of a presidential election. This section, for the sake of brevity examines both approval/disapproval ratings, and personal factors that often play a role in determining the elections outcome. Presidential approval/disapproval ratings have long been a determinant on the success or failure of the president's party during an election year. For example, when Harry S. Truman left office in 1952, his approval rating was at an all time low; 34%. His low approval rating, coupled with the nation's adoration for General Dwight Eisenhower was a critical factor in the Democratic Party's demise in the 1952 presidential

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<sup>10</sup> Nicol C. Rae, "The Bush Presidency in Historical Context: The Limitations of the Partisan Presidency." *Ambition and Division: Legacies of the Bush Presidency*, Steven E. Schier, ed., (The University of Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh, 2009), pp. 27-28.

<sup>11</sup> Rae, 29.

election.<sup>12</sup> Conversely, in November 1984, President Reagan's approval rating stood at an impeccable 58%.<sup>13</sup> In both of these instances presidential approval ratings played a role in determining the outcome of the presidential election. Approval ratings do not play as seminal a role in shaping voters decisions as the campaigns themselves, or the nation's economic situation, but they do play a role. Political Scientists James W. Ceaser, Andrew Busch, and John Pitney Jr., contend that President Bush's abysmal approval rating (34%), played a role in McCain's demise, but was not as important as the lackluster campaign run by McCain, or the downward spiral of the American economy.<sup>14</sup> Prior to inaugurating an analysis of the Dukakis (1988) campaign, and the Clinton (1992) campaign, the author wants to examine personal factors, and the role they play in shaping election outcomes.

While external factors are hypercritical in determining the success or failure of a presidential campaign, personal factors are also a critical aspect of presidential campaigns. This author sees personal factors such as: the candidate personality, inability to run an effective campaign, and personal demeanor, to name a few, as determinants on the outcome of an election. In 1988, Michael Dukakis ran one of the most disorganized and lethargic campaigns in presidential history. The seminal moment in his campaigns demise came in the second presidential debate, when panelist Bernard Shaw, asked Michael Dukakis whether or not he would support the death penalty if his wife Kitty was raped and murdered. Dukakis said he would not support the death penalty, and his response was very cold and emotionless. Thomas Holbrook argues that Dukakis's reputation as being a cold, emotionless technocrat, and his response to Shaw's question was the final nail in the coffin for his campaign.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, in the 1992 election, President George H.W. Bush looked out of touch with the common voter when he stumbled through a question about how the economy affected him personally. In that same debate, Bush looked at his watch three times when Bill Clinton was speaking. Bush came across as being out of touch

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<sup>12</sup> Lydia Sadd, "The Bush Presidency Closes with 34% Approval, 64% Disapproval: Three Quarters of Republicans Approve of Bush, up slightly from recent months." *Gallup Polling Agency*, January 14, 2009. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/113770/Bush/Presidency-Closes-34-Approval-61Disapproval.aspx>.

<sup>13</sup> Bootie Cosgrove-Mather, "A Look Back At The Polls: Reagan's High Approval Rating Was Matched Only by Clinton and FDR." *CBS News*, June 7, 2004, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/06/07/opinion/polls/main621632.shtml>.

<sup>14</sup> Caesar, Bush, and Pitney, Jr., 165.

<sup>15</sup> Holbrook, *Do Campaigns Matter?*, 105.

with the common voter and uninterested in the job of President of the United States. Bill Clinton, on the other hand, was energetic, affable, a superb orator, and most importantly, did not glance at his watch while his opponent was speaking. A myriad of other examples exist, but these two in particular, prove that personal factors do in fact, play a critical role in determining election outcomes. The next section briefly examines what Michael Dukakis could have done to win the election in 1988, and what Bill Clinton could have done to lose the election in 1992.

In 1988, Michael Dukakis could have won the presidential election had he outlined and articulated his platform, and discussed policy issues. Instead, the main theme of Dukakis's campaign was that he was more competent than George H.W. Bush.<sup>16</sup> In addition, Dukakis's failure to respond to the Bush campaign's visceral attack ads on Dukakis's record as Governor of Massachusetts cost him mightily with voters who were concerned primarily with social issues. Lastly, as aforementioned, Dukakis's often cold, emotionless, and taciturn demeanor was a turnoff for many voters. In 1992, Bill Clinton would have lost the election had he failed to address the nation's economic woes, and failed to outline his agenda for restoring American economic recovery.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, had Clinton not campaigned on a theme of change and American economic recovery, and run a disciplined campaign, it is likely that he would have lost to President Bush. Clinton's willingness to address economic issues allowed him to defeat George H.W. Bush, whose main focus was his foreign policy achievements. Had the United States been engaged in a war during the time of the election, or had an international crisis broken out, George H.W. Bush's chances of winning would have been much greater. His malaise on economic matters, coupled with his lack of interest in domestic policy played a seminal role his defeat. This section has shown why certain candidates lose elections and why others win. In both cases, the campaign itself was the most important element in the candidate's success or failure, not external factors.

As the reader can discern, campaigns do matter in presidential elections. In fact, campaigns, not external or personal factors are the most important factor in presidential elections. Campaigns are the make or break issue in determining

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<sup>16</sup> Abramson, Aldrich, and Rhode, 25-30.

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Paul R. Abramson, Dr. John H. Aldrich, and Dr. David W. Rhode, *Change and Continuity in the 1992 Elections* (Congressional Quarterly: Washington, D.C., 1995), 2.

whether or not a candidate gets elected President of the United States. As the 1988 election proved, post convention bounces mean very little in determining an elections outcome. Rather, it is the type of campaign a candidate runs that affects his success or failure. In 1988, George H.W. Bush was elected president because he ran a much better campaign than his challenger, Governor Michael Dukakis. External factors also play a role in presidential elections, but they do not predetermine a candidate's success or failure, as evidenced by the economy in 2008, and international terrorism in 2004. Despite the copious amounts of evidence proving that elections do matter in presidential campaigns, political scientists will continue to debate their overall impact, for decades to come. So long as Americans remain engaged in the political process, campaigns will remain paramount in determining the outcome of presidential elections. ■

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# The Intellectual [Libertarian] Force Behind Web 2.0

By Kyle Huwa, *The Stanford Review*, Stanford University  
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Peter Thiel, an

undergraduate philosophy major at Stanford, founded *The Stanford Review* newspaper in 1987. Five years later, Thiel graduated from Stanford Law School. In another 10 years he would become the CEO of one of the most successful money transfer websites in the world.

Thiel, along with Max Levchin, Ken Howery, and Luke Nosek, founded PayPal, the e-commerce money transfer company that eventually became eBay's main e-commerce platform. During its short existence as an independent company, PayPal attracted many Stanford Review alumni who served in high-level positions at the new startup. But shortly after going public, Thiel and his co-founders sold PayPal to eBay for \$1.6 billion. While the original PayPal leadership team split up, their entrepreneurial and intellectual spirit lived on and served as the genesis of the Web 2.0 revolution.

Today, the group is known as the "PayPal Mafia." Silicon Valley mainstays like YouTube, Geni.com, LinkedIn, Yelp, and even Facebook can all trace parts of their lineage back to this group. The group's success comes largely from its innovative approach to business, an approach already apparent in the early days of the Stanford Review.

## The Review Days

PayPal mafia member and former Stanford Review editor-in-chief Aman Verjee recounted the intellectual atmosphere of the early Review. After arriving at Stanford, Thiel found a "culturally liberal ethos that he just didn't like and didn't think was correct," Verjee said.

The Review's content of the first few years contained "more of a conservative zeal," according to Verjee. Today, Thiel is called a "contrarian" in the way he invests

money and runs his businesses, and Verjee thinks that same label was evident in the late 80s as well.

Both Thiel and David Sacks, COO of PayPal and editor-in-chief of the Stanford Review, describe their intellectual philosophies in college as “libertarian.”

“[Thiel] characterized the Review as an alternative voice newspaper and so that was, I think, the reason for being contrarian,” Verjee stated. But he also noted the nuances of political thought existent in the Review’s early members, saying, “In general all of those guys, especially Peter, and David Sacks, were more on the libertarian side, and so was I.”

During the 1990s, Sacks, Thiel, and Verjee tried to push the university curriculum to the fore of campus discussion. Verjee, editor-in-chief in late 1994 and early 1995, said he focused on “the rigor with which people were being held accountable to academic standards. There has been...a relaxation of academic standards at Stanford from probably the mid to late 80s into the early 2000s.”

But Verjee does not believe the Review’s efforts to highlight a lack of rigor in the curriculum had much impact. Perhaps more successful was the other curriculum focus that the Review advocated for during this time.

Sacks and Thiel specifically focused on the content of the curriculum. Thiel founded the Review in a time when multiculturalism was nearly the only focus of the undergraduate core curriculum, something of which both Thiel and Sacks disapproved. Thiel commented, “We thought it was important to give the other side of the debate a fair hearing.”

In 1995, they attempted to do so by jointly writing a book called *The Diversity Myth: “Multiculturalism” and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford*. They write of multiculturalism in the introduction: “multiculturalism caused Stanford to resemble less a great university than a Third World Country, with corrupt ideologues and unhappy underlings.”

For Sacks the multiculturalism debate was part of a bigger issue involving excessive political correctness.

Allegations of über-political correctness entered the legal realm in the mid-90s when the libertarian Verjee joined Robert Corry in suing Stanford University over restrictions on student’s free speech. The legal action stemmed from issues

surrounding a speech code that restricted students from insulting each other based on just six different classes.

When Keith Rabois, future executive vice president of Business Development and Policy at PayPal, used an insult that fell under one of the protected classes, he came under threat of university disciplinary actions. While Verjee emphasized that he “didn’t necessarily agree with Keith or his approach or how he pushed the edges of this,” he believed that “in a market place of free ideas you can’t put restrictions on how people express themselves.”

In the county court complaint the plaintiffs argued that the speech code restricted speech that is normally protected by the first amendment and by California educational codes. Verjee, Corry, and the other plaintiffs eventually won the case.

When asked if he thinks the Review found success in pointing out instances of excessive political correctness, Sacks responded, “I think so because we pointed out so many excesses, that I think the university was forced to moderate a little bit... I certainly think it made the outside world much more aware of what was happening at Stanford.”

### **The Review Goes to PayPal**

While not all of the early PayPal team came from the Review, a significant number did. Verjee, Sacks, and early member Joe Lonsdale each have their own slightly nuanced view of PayPal’s success.

Verjee traces the contrarian intellectual thought that existed in the Review into the offices of PayPal. After graduating from Stanford, Verjee worked for a few years at Lehman brothers before receiving his MBA/JD from Harvard University. In 2001, he joined PayPal, right before it went public.

“There was this willingness to challenge the way things were done, to challenge the prevailing wisdom,” Verjee described. “We could have taken an attitude that we would obey all of the laws, as written, and be very conservative, in our interpretation of the laws, and if we had done that...we would have missed out on lots of opportunities.”

By contrasting the hiring strategies of PayPal and other large firms, Verjee pointed to a major difference in philosophy. Many of the employees at PayPal were

people who Peter Thiel already knew. They may not have been industry veterans, but Thiel knew their work ethics and had their loyalty.

Also, according to Verjee, because their product was entering new territory, PayPal had to take risks in how it interpreted laws relating to money transfer. They were bold in choosing how to let people fund their accounts and how to let people transfer money.

But PayPal was not a rogue firm. Naturally, the government was concerned about the implications for money laundering that certainly would be present with PayPal's structure. But the PayPal team explained their concept to the government and worked with them in developing creative new ways to collect information from people and to comply with anti-money laundering laws.

For Verjee, this creative approach was "also something I saw very early on in the Review...a willingness to be challenging, pushing boundaries, but also [to] work with the authorities or with the university as much as you could in order to...come up with a collaborative solution."

On the other hand, for Sacks a prevailing world-view was not necessarily the determining factor in PayPal's success. He called Thiel's "vision that PayPal could be this global monetary system...a very libertarian vision," but noted that "when you're building the product, you know, these high level principles don't really come into play."

"I think that maybe the philosophy plays into the vision," he stated, "but when you actually try to execute the vision in terms of a product, you're just thinking about, 'How do I get this thing to work?'"

Joe Lonsdale, founder of Palantir, former Review editor-in-chief, and early PayPal intern, stated, "The whole company culture...was a little bit contrarian, which I think that is a very healthy thing for a start-up."

He also noted, "There were some sort of radical people in power." For Lonsdale, one of these was David Sacks, who reportedly at one time contemplated giving everyone an IQ test. But Lonsdale qualified, "It was clear that they were extremely competent guys who thought about things differently."

Lonsdale thinks much of the PayPal Mafia's success comes from their "outsider" approach. He explained, "If you look at the history of civilizations, there is this cycle that occurs consistently where the inside becomes institutionalized and

the incentives become misaligned against growth and innovation...and what happens is that the outside is still more dynamic and still growing in a lot of ways, and so the outsiders will come in and create things and build things and fix things.”

Thiel summarized PayPal’s intellectual philosophy as “not accepting the world as it is found,” and having “a confidence that it might be changed.”

### **Fueling and Driving the Web 2.0 Revolution**

After the sale of PayPal, most of the original executives left and started their own ventures. Many of these ventures also found success, and according to Verjee, much of it came from the same intellectual underpinnings that made the Review and PayPal so successful.

“It’s very rare for people to have strong views they’ll stand behind that are largely different than the mainstream,” Lonsdale stated.

Thiel went on to create Clarium Capital, an investment management and hedge fund company, where Lonsdale worked for a while. “I think [Peter Thiel] did a good job with Clarium,” Lonsdale stated, “and he was definitely focusing on global macro [strategy] at a time when it was not popular to focus on global macro.”

“Peter himself has succeeded, when he has embraced the fact that he’s an outsider. And I think he has not done as well when he hasn’t embraced the fact that he is an outsider,” Lonsdale said.

Thiel, who also founded the Founders Fund, holds a 5.2% stake in PayPal, worth an estimated \$1.7 billion. In discussing his recent investments, he recently told the Wall Street Journal, “The angel-VC thing feels very crowded. As an investor we always want to be fundamentally contrarian.”

What he calls the “hard tech space” is the new area that his venture capital firm is mostly looking into. These are companies dealing with things, according to Thiel, like “space, robotics, artificial intelligence, [and] next-gen biotech.”

Both Lonsdale and Thiel are also involved with the Seasteading Institute, whose purpose is “to establish permanent, autonomous ocean communities to enable experimentation and innovation with diverse social, political, and legal systems.” The Institute hopes to provide people with the opportunity to live in high-tech, sea-based communities that allow the citizens to choose their own form of government.

Looking to companies in the Web 2.0 revolution, like LinkedIn or YouTube, Verjee noted that these firms created “a marketplace where a whole bunch of people can come together and interact...in a kind of low-friction kind of way.” Belief in free markets drove much of the design behind social networking.

“[W]hen companies try to restrict the way that people interact, they often end up doing [customers] a disservice and limiting the network,” Verjee continued. “YouTube, Facebook – they thrive on being open marketplaces.”

The PayPal Mafia’s mark on the world will likely expand far beyond just the Web 2.0 revolution. It will be one of a lasting intellectual legacy and new ways of approaching world problems. ■

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# Behind an Extraordinary Person: Dr. Condoleeza Rice

Alex Katz, Tim Ford, *The Stanford Review*, Stanford University  
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When President

George H. W. Bush asked Condoleeza Rice, his director of Soviet Affairs in the National Security Council, to show Stanford University to Mikhail Gorbachev, a thought suddenly flashed across her mind: “Wow, I’m glad I changed my major.”

Today, Rice, a former professor and provost, has returned to Stanford, this time as a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. She sat down with the Review at a conference table in her new office, relaxed and conversational.

Despite her successful ascent through government and international affairs work, Rice didn’t always plan to be a Soviet specialist and adviser to presidents. While official White House photography of the State of the Union address hangs on her walls, she just as prominently displays memorabilia from her hometown of Birmingham, Alabama.

*Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family*, released on October 12, shares the former Secretary of State’s early years and the people who influenced her along the way. While the book covers her first exposure to Soviet studies – which didn’t happen until spring of her junior year of college – it also focuses on her parents, John and Angelena Rice, and an incredible community of teachers and role models in segregated Birmingham, Alabama.

## **Extraordinary, Ordinary People**

What makes an ordinary person extraordinary? According to Rice, “One is the way that they take on their circumstances, and the second is the circumstances themselves,” echoing defenders of the George W. Bush Administration who point to cards dealt from September 11 to the financial crisis. “And in my parents’ case, they were doing everything they did within the context of Jim Crow Alabama, segregated Alabama.”

In fact, Rice was hardly the only one from her neighborhood to succeed, as she rattled off the tip of her tongue the names of university administrators, a prominent academic, and a national journalist, who was the first black woman to earn a national achievement scholarship.

“They produced these incredibly accomplished kids... and you have to think, how did they do that?” Rice said of the adults in her community. “Well, that’s the part that’s extraordinary. They somehow drew on strengths and values and principles that allowed them to have their little girl think, ‘Well, you might not be able to have a hamburger at Woolworth’s lunch counter, but you can be President of the United States if you want to.’”

Rice pointed to the commitment to education that her family and community emphasized. She recalled how nearly every adult in her neighborhood served as teachers in the area. Within this context, Rice also spoke of her paternal grandfather, who she referred to as an incredibly influential figure in her life even though he died shortly prior to her birth. A physical representation of this influence came in the form of Rice’s graduation present after receiving her Ph.D. – a set of five leather bound, gold-embossed books of literature, which had been purchased at the height of the depression – much to Rice’s grandmother’s dismay.

### **Finding Your Passion**

From an early age, Rice’s parents emphasized all kinds of learning, and she began studying piano at age 3. She continued playing into her college years, expecting to become a concert pianist. In fact, Rice attended the Aspen Music Festival and School in the summer of her sophomore year of college. However, at the camp, she was surrounded by music prodigies and recalled realizing, “There were 12-year-olds who could play on sight what I had taken all year to learn. And I thought, ‘Oh, you’re going to teach 13-year-olds how to murder Beethoven or end up playing in a piano bar someplace.’”

In her junior year of college, after nearly two decades behind the piano, Rice decided to change her major. “I used to always tell that story as provost because I know there are a lot of students who come in and they’re going to be an engineer, and suddenly, they’re not going to be an engineer,” she said. “And then there’s that

moment of feeling lost and worthless because you can't figure out what you want to do.”

After attempting English literature and state and local government, Rice took a class on international politics with Professor Josef Korbel, the father of future Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. “He was a terrific Soviet specialist and he was a great storyteller,” she said. “He'd been a great diplomat and he was able to take his experience and all of a sudden this world of Soviet issues opened up to me.”

In recalling how she found her way to international politics, Rice emphasized the “possibility for serendipity to play a little bit of a role in your life.” She also spoke of the many times that students had asked her about how she ended up where she did, asking, “How do I get to do what you do?” Rice said she would reply, “Start as a failed piano major.”

She also advised the pursuit of a passion even if it may seem impractical or unexpected. “Go with it,” she said. “Don't be afraid to do something unconventional.” Rice certainly pursued a unique passion and course of life, which she summed up pithily: “There was no reason that a black girl from Birmingham, Alabama should be a Soviet specialist.” Reflecting on her path, she realized, “If I'd thought about it in those terms, I probably wouldn't have become one.”

### **Back on the Farm**

After her eight long years in the White House, Rice described herself as “ready to leave.” When asked by friends about how long it took her to “decompress,” she recalled responding, “Well, President Obama said ‘I do solemnly swear,’ and I was done.”

Rice has now settled back into her life as an academic with an office in the Hoover Institution, courses with MBA students and undergraduates, and significant written work. The transition back appears to have been smooth and natural. When asked about her decision to return to Stanford, Rice said it was easy. “It had never occurred to me to do anything but come back to Stanford,” she said. “It wasn't as if I'd made a decision. Always assumed I'd come back to Stanford.”

Arriving back at her home of so many years, she quickly felt back in place. “Almost from the day I got back, I felt almost like I'd never left.” That said, Rice did acknowledge changes at a school with which she has been affiliated since 1981. “I

think Stanford has changed for the better,” she said, speaking of a renewed service focus among the student body. “I think there’s a really strong sense [among students] of wanting to do something bigger than yourself.”

Some similarities still remain. Rice spoke of how the first class she taught at Stanford, a seminar on civil military relations, was left off of the class listings. Today, she may no longer be a new assistant professor, but her courses are again absent from some listings. “Little different rationale,” she noted with a chuckle.

### Up Next

More memoir work is to be expected from Rice after the publication of *Extraordinary, Ordinary People*. In another year or so, she will release a second memoir which will chronicle her time in the Bush Administration from 2001 through 2009. When asked about the choice to publish her childhood story first, she said that her later years would be difficult to understand without laying out her origins. In response to the question, “How did I become who I am?”, Rice says she has always responded, “You had to know John and Angelena Rice.”

*Extraordinary, Ordinary People* offers the opportunity to do just that. ■

Read more features by *The Stanford Review* at <http://stanfordreview.org/>

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## Energy Independence And How to Achieve It: Smart Grid. Part I

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Never in the

history of humankind has the world been as connected as it is right now. Everything is moving smarter and faster around the world. Countries that were previously considered minor economies are now emerging as economic world leaders. Countries

such as China, Japan, Germany, and South Korea are quickly investing in new high-tech industries of the future. These countries have many things in common, most notably their investment in their own energy future, an area that the United States has neglected for decades. Since the 1970s, The U.S has seen what an overreliance on foreign countries for energy, most notably countries in the Middle East and those associated with OPEC, can do when those countries tighten their belts and raise prices. In the past 40 years, there have been numerous oil shortages and price hikes that have crippled the economy of the United States. When this has happened in the past, politicians from both parties have said that they will end U.S. dependence on foreign oil and move the U.S. towards energy independence. The problem is that no country, especially the United States, will ever be 100% energy independent. There are too many variables involved and energy materials are scattered across the globe. Despite this, it is still better to produce more home grown energy than to rely on foreign countries for energy. This is where the “Smart Grid” comes into the equation.

The best way to view the U.S. is as one very large system. In this system that we call a country, there is a network of many different parts working together to keep it operational. If there is a change to even one part, there is a change to the entire system. Within the U.S. energy system there are four basic sectors: Industrial, Residential, Commercial and Transportation. These four sectors represent the amount of energy used in their respected areas. The energy breakdown for each sector is as follows: Industrial: 30%, Residential: 22%, Commercial: 19%, Transportation 29%. If one were to add up all of the energy used in the Industrial, Residential, and Commercial sectors the total would be 71%. This is a very large percentage of the total energy used in the U.S. and would be a great place to start cutting waste within the system. Transportation is a large sector as well, and I will cover transportation in a later article.

The first place to look for energy waste is the backbone of the energy transportation system. The current power grid in the United States is old and outdated. Recently, there have been problems with reliability and energy loss as well. For years, scientists, politicians, and other experts in the U.S. have been talking about installing a new “Smart Grid” to improve efficiency and reliability, allow for communication between different systems, and to help prevent energy loss. The problem is that, while the U.S. has been busy talking about a new smart grid,

other countries have been acting. China is ahead of the U.S. in money spent on a new smart grid system and Japan, Spain, South Korea, and Germany are catching up quickly.

The best way to maintain any economic advantage is to have a smart, stable, reliable, and efficient energy transportation system. Once fully implemented, the U.S. "Smart Grid" will be the new backbone for the energy economy of the United States, similar to the interstate highway system. The smart grid will allow all energy related systems from power plants to homes and cars to communicate with each other and efficiently distribute energy. When one section of the country is at its peak energy consumption time, the system will work with other parts of the system to provide energy reliably to that section. The smart grid will truly connect the country; however it will come with some disadvantages. The first drawback is cost: anything new is expensive and the smart grid will cost billions of dollars to build alone, and then homes will have to be outfitted with new energy meters and other items for its use. This leads me to the next drawback and that is that the smart grid will not be built overnight. Construction and full scale development will take years to complete and should be viewed as a long term investment into the energy future of the United States. There are also system security issues which are common for any high tech system that uses computers. The issue will be protection of the smart grid from hackers or terrorists that may want to cripple the country. The good news is that the U.S. has become very good at protecting its computer systems and because the smart grid will be viewed as a critical system for the operation of the country it will also be one of the most protected systems in the country.

There are many advantages with this new technology, most notably the savings. With new energy meters, homes will be able to sell back to the grid and power companies' the energy that is produced. This will help lower the home energy costs and will also help motivate home owners to install new energy producing technologies, such as solar panels and solar shingles. This will help to lower the costs of new green technologies as well, which will stimulate development of new energy technologies. The hope is that companies developing these new energy technologies will be formed in the United States and this will create new jobs and new manufacturing industries.

The smart grid is not a silver bullet for energy independence for the United States, but it is a great place to start to build the infrastructure needed to transport energies created from both renewable and nonrenewable energy sources. The smart grid will improve the efficiency of energy transportation in the United States, which will cut cost and lower energy waste. The cost of the smart grid is a major drawback, but it is a small price to pay when compared to the jobs and money lost if other countries pass the United States economically, simply because the U.S. cannot supply energy to factories, homes, and cars reliably. The big mistake would be not investing now and allowing other countries to pass the United States. If the U.S. cannot create and transport energy efficiently, reliably, and economically, how can we expect to solve the other major problems facing the country?

This is only the beginning of the larger topic of energy independence that I will be writing about throughout the year. I encourage you to go to this newspapers website [purduereview.com](http://purduereview.com) and comment on this article so that we, as future leaders of this nation, can share ideas that may lead to the improvement of this country for our generation and future generations. Without input and conversation, we cannot learn and develop the best ideas to solve the major problems that face this great nation that we call home. ■

## U.S – Cuba Relations: Understanding Yesterday to Make Tomorrow Work

Brian Wenzler, University of Wisconsin – Madison, WI



May 2010

Unique among presidents since John Kennedy, George Bush Jr.'s foreign policy toward Cuba can be described as complete disengagement, taking the outdated and ineffective embargo and policy to its extreme. Following a very slight potential warming of relations at the end of Bill Clinton's presidency, George Bush Jr. intensified the embargo and political strategy of ostracizing and ignoring the Castro regime to a degree never seen before. While a plausible argument for this policy may

have existed in the years shortly following the Cuban Revolution or even until the end of the Cold War, today is an entirely different situation. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the real threat today is the rise of several regimes hostile to the US making inroads with Cuba, and should be countered by normalizing relations and lifting the embargo. Barack Obama has quickly reversed the Bush policy and now has the chance to begin a process that will hopefully result in a much smarter policy that serves the security, economic, and humanitarian interests of the people in both countries.

### **Background**

Cuba and the US enjoyed a close, though not always symbiotic, relationship up until and shortly after Fidel Castro successfully led the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Dwight Eisenhower recognized the revolutionary government after it overthrew the US-friendly Batista regime. Relations deteriorated quickly, however, due to Cuban moves toward agricultural redistribution policies, nationalization of many US-owned industries, and consolidation of trade with the Soviet Union. Several attempts were made to overthrow the Castro regime both before and after the US officially withdrew diplomatic relations in January of 1961.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, John Kennedy first banned all US trade with Cuba followed by a ban on travel and financial transactions for all US citizens, and also froze all Cuban assets in the US. Cuba was expelled from the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1962 and multilateral sanctions were imposed from 1964 to 1975. Jimmy Carter was the first president to demonstrate a softening of the embargo policy, allowing travel restrictions to lapse in 1977 for the first time since they were imposed. Ronald Reagan subsequently tightened the embargo and renewed travel restrictions in 1982. He also created Radio Martí, a federally-funded program that broadcasts anti-regime and pro-democracy messages to Cuba. George Bush Sr. signed the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992, which prohibited foreign-based US company subsidiaries from doing business in Cuba, travel to Cuba by US citizens, and remittances to Cuba, codifying and reinforcing the embargoes of the past 30 years. The bill was passed “to seek a peaceful transition to democracy and a resumption of economic growth in Cuba through the careful application of sanctions directed at the Castro government and support for the Cuban people” (Cuban Democracy Act, 2). It is very significant because it established Congress’ role in

helping to direct foreign policy on Cuba, taking away some of the president's foreign policy power.

In 1996 the Clinton administration passed the Helms-Burton Act after Cuba shot down an unarmed US plane, which killed three Americans. It applied the commercial restrictions of the Cuban Democracy Act to foreign businesses, and received international condemnation from many US allies and trading partners, as it effectively forced them to choose between trade with the US and trade with Cuba. The Act allows foreign firms and individuals to be penalized by the US if they “knowingly (traffick) in property in Cuba confiscated without compensation from a U.S. person.” It is important to note that Title III of the Act allows the president to suspend it for six months should it be determined that it is in the US's national interest (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act). This is another very significant event, as it also prevented the president from lifting the embargo unless Cuba made progress in making democratic reforms and respecting human rights. Only a two-thirds majority of Congress could lift the embargo should the president not be able to.

At the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, President Clinton and Castro shook hands. Then-UN Secretary General Kofi Annan commented that it was a “major symbolic achievement” for “a US president and a Cuban president to shake hands” (Campuzano). Furthermore, although in 2000 Cuba threatened to reject aid from the UN World Food Program if the US contributed, “[a]id from American private organisations and individuals (was) already reaching the island” due in large part to Washington easing its sanctions in 1998 to allow medicines and food to be taken to the island (Cuba to Reject US Aid). This move was pushed by US agricultural interests, which eventually pressured the US Congress and Clinton into passing the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Act in October of 2000, which enacted exceptions for US agricultural and medical exports to Cuba (Trade With Cuba).

During the Bush Jr. administration political rhetoric and actions supporting the embargo and against the Castro regime were stepped up, while at the same time trade was allowed to increase substantially through the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Act. A hard line against the Castro regime was a part of both of Bush's election campaigns. The administration voiced concerns about a biological weapons program in Cuba several times—although Carter challenged these statements on the

grounds of poor evidence—and placed the regime on America’s “Axis of Evil” (Schweimler).

Congress attempted to lift the travel ban several times during Bush’s time in office, but he threatened to veto the measures—despite domestic pressure not to from business and agricultural groups. Bush also placed further restrictions on travel and the amount of remittances that can be sent back to Cuba. These were part of a “major commission against Cuba: the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. (Bush) mandated the Commission ‘to identify ways to hasten the arrival of that day’ when ‘Castro’s regime is no more’” (Brenner, 3). Funds for anti-Castro programs and political groups in the US and Cuba increased, as well. In 2006, Bush announced a task force to more actively pursue violators of the embargo (US tightens Cuba trade sanctions).

Despite the administration’s efforts to promote and expand these outdated policies, relations outside of it arguably continued the warming trend that began at the end of the Clinton administration. Carter visited Cuba in 2002—the first sitting or ex-president to visit the island since the revolution (Schweimler)—and has been active in efforts to relax embargo restrictions and open up relations with the Castro regime. In 2008, thanks to the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Act, the US sold over \$710 million in agricultural food and products to Cuba, remaining Cuba’s largest food supplier for the fifth year in a row (Hanson). Several state-level agricultural secretaries have visited Cuba to negotiate private contracts with Cuba, too, and every administration but Bush Jr.’s placed individuals in the US Interests Section in Havana with connections to Cuban “senior officials—individuals who, in an emergency, could carry a message directly to Fidel Castro” (LeoGrande, 92). The Bush administration’s policies prompted Cuba to reduce the level of contact to a Foreign Ministry clerk.

Obama has initiated significant changes in US policy toward Cuba compared to the Bush administration, while at the same time maintaining the embargo. While stating that he would, like past administrations, maintain the embargo at least until “Cuba makes significant moves such as the holding of democratic elections” (Obama administration and Cuba agree to further dialogue), Obama has eased its restrictions “to reach out to the Cuban people in support of their desire to freely determine their country’s future, promote greater contact between separated family members in the

United States and Cuba, and increase the flow of remittances and information to the Cuban people” (Fact Sheet). These included allowing US telecommunications companies to seek business in Cuba, raising the amount of remittances, and relaxing travel restrictions on US citizens. While other domestic and international issues have taken the administration’s attention at present, Obama has at least allowed for other avenues through which more friendly relations and public support for them can grow.

### **Decision-making**

Not merely a local issue that politicians play to in order to win Cuban-American votes in Florida at the state and national levels, US-Cuban policy “is rooted in geopolitical considerations” and “has once again emerged as a foreign policy concern for US national security managers.” These dual local and national interests are mirrored by the “web of measures” against the Castro regime: “in part laws passed by Congress; in part executive orders made by successive presidents; and in part the application of even older laws passed against other countries in times of war and still on the statute books” (Wilkinson, 2). Many different actors have affected policy, some going back to pre-Revolutionary Cuba. I focus on the Bush Jr. Administration’s policies and compare them to what Obama has done in his comparatively short time in office.

Besides a few agreements between Cuba and other questionable regimes, such as Venezuela and China, little else on the international front affected the Bush policy toward Cuba. Wilkinson claims the Bush policy undermined the globalization project and risked US international credibility as evidenced by the annual UN vote “in which all of the US’s closest allies vote against it” on its embargo except Israel, notably (Wilkinson, 1). Intensified embargo policies and restrictions signify that the vast majority of the actors are domestic, then. It was Congress in 1992 and ‘96 that was moved to pass the Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) and Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (Helms-Burton Act), respectively. The CDA was presented by then-Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), while the Helms-Burton Act was presented by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC), a staunch conservative and anti-communist who had served on the Foreign Relations Committee and Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, and Rep. Dan Burton (R-IN), also a conservative and chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee. During the Bush administration, the focus once again “turned to an old stratagem of containment and isolation to address the achieved problem” (Brenner, 1).

He tightened restrictions in the CDA and Helms-Burton Act that Clinton had relaxed during his presidency.

Part of Bush's campaign in 2000 involved playing to hard-line Cuban American interests in order to win Florida's electoral votes. The terrorist attacks on September 11 obviously diverted any extra attention Cuba may have received to other more pressing national security issues, but by 2003, "right-wing Cuban Americans were feeling betrayed. They had helped deliver Florida's votes to George W. Bush and believed they had gotten too little in return—despite the appointments of anti-Castro activists to key posts in the State Department, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Defense Department, and the National Security Council" (Brenner, 2).

This constituency includes a very small group that can be contained "in a five-letter word: Miami" (Wilkinson, 2). Florida's position as a large swing state empowers a few well-funded and –organized rightwing groups, including the Cuban American Lobby and the Cuban American National Foundation, to disproportionately affect US Cuba policy to support the embargo despite well-respected think tanks and conservative foreign policy veterans, like the Council of Foreign Relations and Henry Kissinger, that advocate opposite policies. The concentration of these groups is due the large number of Cuban American immigrants who fled Cuba over the years and settled in and around Miami.

Importantly, a split occurred among rightwing Cuban Americans in the aftermath of the controversial Elián Gonzales issue in 2000, when the US deported the child and his father to Cuba after they were rescued at sea while trying to sneak into the US. Hard-line members formed the Cuban Liberty Council that backed the Bush administration, while the CANF became more moderate. The split also demonstrates the broader shift in the public's mindset and directly affected the 2008 presidential race (Wilkinson, 6).

To placate the groups, Bush announced the creation in October 2003 of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, co-chaired by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Cuban American Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez. Additional members represented all cabinet-level agencies. This commission's mission was to identify ways to bring about the downfall of the Castro regime and detail a transitional government that would then create a democratic Cuba. The embargo

restrictions that Bush ordered, including reducing travel, remittances, and stricter enforcement of the policies, were enacted in response to the Commission's recommendations. It is believed that in the short term these regulations have hurt the Castro regime, but in the long term they are more harmful than beneficial to American interests (Brenner, Wilkinson). They were implemented by the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), which is in charge of enforcing fines on travel, remittances, and trade.

Hard-line Cuban American advocates and lobbyists, however, were in the minority. Much of the public, while not quite favoring the ending of the embargo, strongly supported normalizing relations with Cuba and lifting the travel ban (Poll; Wilkinson, 6). A recent poll even suggests that the public now favors a lifting of the embargo (LeoGrande, 90). US business leaders also support an end to the embargo on the grounds of developing energy resources and protecting the environment in the Gulf of Mexico. At a 2006 State of the Gulf Summit in Corpus Christi, TX, Port Chairman Ruben Bonilla spoke about the need to do so; the port began exporting food to Cuba in 2003 and was having trouble expanding business because it was difficult to get travel visas from the State Department (Chirinos). Other politicians representing agricultural interests in the West and Midwest would like to see the embargo lifted and have tried, unsuccessfully, to get Congress to do so many times.

Despite their small numbers, it is because of the hard-liners that anti-embargo sentiment did not translate into Congressional legislation. Then-House Majority Leader Tom Delay (R-TX) "scuttled" an initiative in 2003 that would have relaxed the embargo by removing a provision preventing Treasury funds from being used to enforce travel restrictions in an amendment to a policy on Cuba (Brenner, 5). Hard-liners did not have an easy task, however, in expanding restrictions. Democratic resistance arose after a February 2005 Treasury Department ruling that forced Cuba to pay for food shipments before leaving US ports, which caused a drop in exports at the time. Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) prevented the Senate's confirmation of several Treasury Department nominees until the Department backed down from its regulations in July. Baucus represents many farmers that may have been hurt by these extra restrictions. Even after the loss of Tom Delay, however, other Republicans from Florida who led the anti-Cuba group were elected to both the House and Senate rose to lead the anti-Cuba, pro-embargo group.

Appointments to the post of the Cuba Transition Coordinator in the State Department help to illustrate the dedication Bush felt toward the strict policy he continued to put forth in the executive branch throughout his two terms. The officeholder's sole responsibility "is to plan the overthrow of the Cuban government" and was a creation recommended by the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. Secretary Rice appointed Caleb McCarry, who had overseen a USAID democracy promotion program in Guatemala during the 1980s and served as a staff member to the House International Relations Committee, to the post. McCarry's top adviser was Michael Parmly, described as "a seasoned diplomat with significant experience in attempting to create market democracies in post-conflict situations. (Parmly) served as the senior US advisor involved in organizing the 2004 elections in Afghanistan and was Charge d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Sarajevo, tasked with implementing the Dayton Accords" (Brenner, 6); he was also Chief of Mission at the US Interests Section in Havana when in 2006 Bush ordered it to run anti-Castro messages on its electronic billboard, angering the regime. The high-caliber individuals appointed to the top-level positions in the Cuban transitional team were no doubt appointed not only for their expertise, but also for their support of the administration's Cuba policy.

Some controversy arose in 2006 surrounding Radio Martí. The media program received about \$15 million in annual funding from the government in an attempt to reach Cubans living on the island through radio and TV. Cuba jams the signals, broadcast from Miami, but it was thought that it reached part of the population. It was discovered in 2006 that several journalists from Florida were paid by the program, touching off public debates about "honest journalism" (Alterman). Voice of America, a federal external broadcasting service, also runs a TV broadcasting program that tries to reach Cuba. Both Radio and TV Martí are overseen by the Office of Cuba Broadcasting in the Broadcasting Board of Governors, made of seven citizens the president appoints and Senate confirms, as well as the Secretary of State.

While the policy actors were all domestic, some external pressure pushed Bush and Congress to action. Part of the reason such a hard-line against Cuba was revived after Bush came to office was because of the advance of one of America's most prominent foes in the region, Venezuela. Cuba's ability to deploy medical personnel and services throughout the Caribbean makes it a valuable partner for Venezuela and many underdeveloped and poor countries, and Venezuela's oil wealth makes it an

attractive trade partner for Cuba and other Caribbean nations, as well. Daniel Fisk, as Bush's National Security Adviser for the Western Hemisphere, was important in articulating what this means for US interests in the region: "Ultimately the threat is political, Fisk explains, because of 'Cuban and Venezuelan attempts to drive a wedge between the US and its Caribbean partners'" (Brenner, 7). The intimate connection between the US's Western Hemisphere interests, Cuba, and Venezuela were shown when Stephen McFarland, US Deputy Chief of Mission in Venezuela, and Kevin Whittaker, head of the State Department's Cuba desk, simply switched positions in September 2005.

The expansion of embargo policies seems to come to a halt after 2005. This is likely due to the Democrats' retaking of both the House and Senate, stymieing hard-line conservative Republicans' efforts: "since their victory in the midterm elections in 2006, the Democrats have introduced a large number of bills aimed at softening the aspects of the embargo" (Wilkinson, 5). A change of mindset took place with the replacement of several pro-embargo Republicans and the death of Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA), head of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, who was replaced by Howard Berman (D-CA), "of the opposite stripe." There was also much uncertainty concerning how much longer the Castro regime would last at the time, due to the failing health of Fidel Castro and the temporary appointment of his brother, Raúl, which may have led some to believe the fall of the regime was near and required no more effort on the US's part.

Since Obama lifted restrictions in April, travel and exports are both increasing. Undersecretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Stuart Levey, appointed by Bush in 2004, currently leads the OFAC under Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner. Within the executive branch, the Treasury Department's and Levey's role as an enforcer of the embargo has shrunk, while its role as the authorizer of US citizens' travel and remittances has expanded; it has less to enforce as it does not face the same pressure from the Obama administration as it did from Bush to pursue violators, and has higher volumes to oversee. Because the Department of Commerce is in charge of extensively licensing exports of US goods and technology to Cuba as an embargoed country through its Bureau of Industry and Security, its role in policy implementation continued to expand as it has since 2001 when Cuba began importing food.

The Obama administration has reversed the course of the Bush Cuban policy. During his campaign Obama stated the US has “been engaged in a failed policy with Cuba for the last 50 years...And we need to change it” (LeoGrande). By “expressing willingness to talk to Castro without preconditions” (Wilkinson, 7), Obama has opened the door to political reconciliation with the regime.

He has also used the “licensing power” that two of President Clinton’s Cuba advisers, James Dobbins and Richard Nuccio, interpreted the Helms-Burton Act to give the president, codifying “a process by which there was an embargo to which exceptions could be granted on a case-by-case basis” (Wilkinson, 5). While only a two-thirds majority in Congress can repeal the Act (and thus, the embargo), the president still has wide “regulatory powers” concerning its specifics. For example, Title III of the Act is a built-in tool the president can use to waive restrictions. Furthermore, unless Congress actively attempts to prevent the president from adjusting embargo regulations, the president can do so without any legislative hassles. This is what Obama did in April 2009 when he eased economic and travel restrictions for US citizens and telecommunications firms (Burns). Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN), head of the Foreign Relations Committee, has argued, however, that this does not go far enough to promote US interests in Latin America.

During both her presidential campaign her confirmation hearings, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton also affirmed her support for relaxing the embargo and eventually normalizing relations with Cuba. Thomas Shannon, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, has been asked to conduct a Cuba policy review before any other significant changes are made (Hanson). It is unlikely that any action will come from the executive branch, either in the form of executive orders or approving legislation passed by Congress, before this report is finished. And as a more symbolic gesture against the communist regime than an effective policy, the embargo is also unlikely to change while the president and Congress face intense domestic pressure to create jobs and jump-start the economy. As Cuba’s largest food supplier, however, US business and manufacturing interests would benefit from an end to the embargo as they would have a new export and cheap labor market.

### **Policy Changes**

It is quite possible that the changes Obama has made thus far have been all that can be done within the executive branch, for now. It is also very possible that not

much else needs to be done. While Obama does have licensing powers, as President Clinton's advisers stated, they can only go so far in relaxing the embargo. Some, like Sen. Lugar, don't believe this is enough to bring about the downfall of the Castro regime. Others, such as William LeoGrande, believe that the ball is in Cuba's court when it comes to reciprocating Obama's move toward engagement to move the process along. Still others, such as Stephen Wilkinson and Philip Brenner, see Obama's move as enough to cause the embargo to unravel itself. Described as a "leaking ship...that would capsize were it not for the efforts of its supporters...Any president so-minded could use their powers to hasten the sinking" (Wilkinson, 5). Brenner cites several observers who predict "that the draconian rules may ultimately contribute to the embargo's unraveling" (4). Slight adjustments made by President Clinton "allowed for a considerable increase in numbers of US travelers to Cuba," and the similar changes Obama made in April are likely to do be doing the same. Furthermore, the large amount of food Cuba imports from the US will continue to find support among business interests in the US for policies normalizing diplomatic and, eventually, economic relations. But whoever is correct, it does not appear that any more economic restrictions will be lifted in the immediate future.

The Cuban Democracy Act Congress passed in 1992 states the president cannot repeal the embargo unless Cuba demonstrates that it is making democratic reforms and has improved its human rights record. Thus, Cuba must meet these conditions (something that does not appear to be in the regime's immediate plans) or Congress must overturn the Act with a two-thirds majority. Without popular support from the public, however, this will probably not happen. Polls mentioned above show that this may or may not be the case, but the direction public opinion is going towards is clear: lifting the embargo. Public support does not always translate into legislative action, though, so for the time being Obama must focus on diplomatic relations if he wants to make more progress than Congress would working things out.

Since the Republicans lost Congress in 2006, several bills began to circulate around both houses that would lift aspects of the embargo. None of them were far enough along to be brought to a vote while Bush was in office, so Obama will now be the president who deals with them. Once the domestic economy begins to recover, Congress' attention will likely return to these bills, especially if Venezuela, Iran, and China—countries that present a threat to the US unlikely to disappear in the short-

run—continue to make inroads with Castro. Wilkinson pointed to the loss of several key Congresspeople recently to suggest that Congress will be able to take more decisive action on the issue because “procedural delays that have dogged such legislation may be removed” (5). This will probably remain true even if Republicans retake either or both of the houses in 2010 midterm elections, as the shift in public opinion and split between Cuban American lobbying groups make it likely that the power of the hard-liners to strengthen or even maintain the economic and political embargoes will be further reduced. Given the interests—political, economic, and national security—that compete for their own version of legislation, quick Congressional action is unlikely unless a more serious threat to national interests is perceived.

The green light Obama gave telecommunications companies to seek business in Cuba, and other embargo relaxations, contribute to Obama’s policy to engage both Cuban leadership and its people. If and when these firms are allowed by Cuba to conduct business in the country, the increased access to communication will help “engage the Cuban people by encouraging interaction between US and Cuban societies at all levels.” Radio and TV Martí may play important roles, but this depends on how the Obama administration would like its actions to be perceived, and what the Cuban government allows. There is much animosity, both in Cuba and internationally, toward what many view as illegal and subversive actions by these programs in the past. But much depends on the Cuban regime, now led by Raúl Castro since Fidel fell ill in 2006 and appointed him president. While Obama signaled during his campaign that he would be open to talking with Raúl without preconditions, “the cooperation of the Cuban government is essential to complement even the best of American intentions” (LeoGrande, 88).

Obama can also roll back any other travel restrictions on his own, by executive order, just as Bush tightened them during his time in office. This would create “people-to-people exchanges” that would expose “Cubans to the values and practices of a democratic society” (LeoGrande, 91.) None of the foreign policy powers of appointing ambassadors or opening embassies are restricted by Congressional acts, either. Working through the US Interests Section in Havana is necessary to reestablish trustworthy lines of communication between the Havana and Washington, so that a smooth normalization can unfold. Obama appointed Jonathan Farrar, who has

extensive experience in both Latin America and human rights from serving on the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as the top diplomat there.

Encouragingly, there has been much evidence since the succession of Raúl that Cuba is undergoing a promising political transformation. The country is "evolving from a centrally planned economy controlled by a single Leninist party to a mixed, market-oriented economy and an increasingly plural civil society... Raúl acknowledged the inadequacy of the state-sector incomes...and has promised action" (LeoGrande, 87). However, the process will be nothing if not slow: "[g]iven the range of issues dividing the two countries...there is a long process that would precede resumption of diplomatic relations" (Hanson) and a full restoration of diplomatic relations is not likely in the near future. There is little doubt the process that Obama began in April will not be an easy one, thanks to the resistance of the remaining hard-liners in Congress, led by a group of Florida Representatives including brothers Lincoln and Mario Diaz-Balart, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. March 2009 saw heated debates on provisions easing travel and trade restrictions that were part of a larger appropriations bill.

There are two main dangers in the normalization of relations. One is moving too far, too fast and losing the support of the American public. As noted before, a majority of the public supports normalizing diplomatic relations, but it is unclear whether they prefer to maintain the embargo until political change is realized on the island and the regime improves its human rights record. Should Obama seem too eager to open trade, he risks a backlash coalition led by the few hard-liners left in Congress and legitimizing the current regime. Another risk is that Raúl will seek to copy China in reforming economic policies while maintaining a one-party political system (Hanson). Should this be the case, the Obama policy of engagement in a broader international context may be damaged, and would prove no more effective at promoting democracy and human rights than the embargo policy. Many believe that Cuba's proximity to the US, both geographically and economically, make this an unlikely outcome.

Applying constant pressure on Cuba through embargoes and political shunting has a 50-year record of being an inadequate and incorrect policy. As long as the Obama administration continues its policy of political engagement, as well as loosely

enforcing embargo restrictions, pressure can be effectively applied from both foreign policy front and a domestic front. Dialogue between Havana and Washington has the potential to bring about a normalization of diplomatic relations now that Obama has signaled that the US's hand is extended and Raúl has admitted the island's Leninist system doesn't work and has allowed a greater degree of political dissent. Despite the slight measures taken, they are "highly significant as it (means) the high-water mark of the policy (has) finally been reached" Wilkinson, 10). Even if the end product is not stellar, the progress Obama made in such a short time reflects the legitimacy of engagement and cannot be easily overlooked. Whatever the outcome, there is much consensus on the belief that the Castro regime is nearing its end; the Obama administration may be able to just sit back and guide a transition that will inevitably happen, or it could hasten its end by implementing the other policies mentioned above.

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