# 1AC

## 1AC – Cuba Exchanges

### 1AC – Plan Text

#### The United States federal government should substantially increase its academic exchanges with Cuba.

### 1AC – Marine Science Adv

#### ADVANTAGE ONE – MARINE SCIENCE – Global coral reef erosion is happening now.

Paul **Robinson**, 3-19-20**13**, a news, blog and encyclopedia editor at The Earth Times, “Reef Destruction is Ecological,” http://www.earthtimes.org/pollution/reef-destruction-ecological/2297/

One of those reefs in the Red or the South China Sea to die for. Unfortunately, it's the reef that's dying; Coral Reef; Credit: © Coral Reef Those pretty fish and panoramic colours of soft and hard coral that we see on one of those rare undisturbed reefs are down to a complex ecology similar to tropical forest ecosystems. But the predators and consumers, the producer algae and the tiny invertebrates mean nothing compared to the microorganisms that run the whole show. Catalina Reyes of CoECRS. (Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies) and the University of Queensland has published her work alongside 4 colleagues, on the bacteria, fungi and algae that live in this most complex marine ecosystem. The shift in this ecosystem recently has been due to our overproduction. The CO2 we made over the last century or two has made the sea into a kind of cola. That acid has effects that Catalina's research clearly identifies in the micro-world of corals. She links it all up, "So fish, turtles, sharks, lobsters and other reef organisms may lose their homes, threatening coral reef biodiversity and the livelihoods of tens of millions of people." Calcium carbonate is the basis of all reefs, for molluscs and others, as well as the hard corals. Erosion of the reef by many different agents is normal, but nowadays it seems excessive, destroying the reefs worldwide at a really alarming rate. The fine balance of attrition, storm damage, predation and growth has been changed. Instead of slow growth, deterioration is now the norm. Less carbonate is available because the acid removes it, just as it does in your school laboratory. Micro-boring organisms also remove the coral skeleton as usual, so you end up with no reef! Computer simulation by the researchers compared current increases in carbon dioxide levels and their effects on reefs with those lesser increases which we hope to achieve by cutting emissions. Catalina found a 35% rate of erosion in the second example. The horrific effect of "doing nothing about emissions" was a doubling of the erosion (= 100%.) Micro-boring organisms became much more active in acidic conditions, so it seemed likely that higher temperatures and pH (acidity) caused their increased activity to destroy more coral. Most common of all was a tiny alga, photosynthesising even in the low light conditions as it penetrated deep into the corals' hearts. Global Change Biology publish this paper, "Ocean acidification and warming scenarios increase microbioerosion of coral skeletons," by Catalina Reyes-Nivia, Guillermo Diaz-Pulido, David Kline, Ove-Hoegh-Guldbeg and Sophie Dove.

#### That collapses marine biodiversity.

Anup **Shah**, 3-03-20**13**, degree in computer science, writer of the website Global Issues and has written articles for other publications, and multiple radio interviews, “Coral Reefs: Ecosystems of Environmental and Human Value,” http://www.globalissues.org/article/173/coral-reefs

Coral reefs cover an area of over 280,000 km2 and support thousands of species in what many describe as the “rainforests of the seas”. Coral reefs benefit the environment and people in numerous ways. For example, they •Protect shores from the impact of waves and from storms; •Provide benefits to humans in the form of food and medicine; •Provide economic benefits to local communities from tourism. The World Meteorological Organization says that tropical coral reefs yield more than US$ 30 billion annually in global goods and services , such as coastline protection, tourism and food. The US agency NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) puts the economic value even higher and says that coral reefs provide economic services — jobs, food and tourism — estimated to be worth as much as $375 billion each year. In the past few years, however, global threats to coral reefs have been increasing and in the context of the wider environment, the value of coral reefs may be even greater: Ecologically speaking the value of coral reefs is even greater [than these estimates] because they are integral to the well being of the oceans as we know them. … picture [reefs] as the undersea equivalent of rainforest trees. Tropical waters are naturally low in nutrients because the warm water limits nutrients essential for life from welling up from the deep, which is why they are sometimes called a “marine desert”. Through the photosynthesis carried out by their algae, coral serve as a vital input of food into the tropical/sub-tropical marine food-chain, and assist in recycling the nutrients too. The reefs provide home and shelter to over 25% of fish in the ocean and up to two million marine species. They are also a nursery for the juvenile forms of many marine creatures. I could go on, but the similarity with the rainforest should now be clear. Eliminate the undersea “trees”, which mass coral bleaching is in the process of doing, and you’ll eliminate everything that depends on it for survival.

#### Cuban reef protection is key to prevent global reef destruction.

Ishaira Nieto-**Rosas**, 3-02-20**12**, writer of Cuban Transitions, researcher of coral symbiosis @ Vassar, “Cuba’s Coral Reef System an Anomaly in World Trends,” http://pages.vassar.edu/cubantransitions/cubas-coral-reef-system-an-anomaly-in-world-trends/

Coral reefs are fragile, slow growing but complex communities containing great biodiversity and serve as a source of food and habitat for marine life. Corals are able to thrive in nutrient poor water along the equator because they, the animal, hold a symbiotic relationship with photosynthetic algae (yes, a plant lives inside an animal!!). The coral exchange some of their waste products for the basic building blocks of nutrients. In many areas agricultural runoff, overfishing, siltation, the occasional oil spill, but perhaps most dangerous, rising sea temperatures threaten that crucial symbiotic relationship. A rise of just 2°C can make corals go from this: to this: in a phenomenon known as coral bleaching. Bleached corals are more susceptible to infections and are also very easily destroyed by passing storms. The destruction of the reefs has cascading consequences for the rest of the ecosystem. In the last several decades there has been a slow but steady increase in sea water temperatures leading to the destruction of many reef systems. In 2002, for example, nearly 60% of the Great Barrier Reef suffered bleaching. The same pattern can be seen in the Pacific, the Florida Keys and in and around the Caribbean. Characteristically of Cuba, Cuban corals seem to be an anomaly, stuck in a time warp that amazes coral biologist around the world. Species of fish and corals that were largely thought to be on the verge of extinction are thriving in Cuba’s reef system. Despite having to endure the same impact of rising sea temperatures, Cuban corals are healthy because they have been spared from the environmental impacts of overdevelopment, runoff from chemical fertilizers, marine tourism and overfishing that afflict so many other reef systems globally. In our study of Cuba’s conservation policies one common theme that has emerged is whether the idea of conservation developed accidentally, a product of a US embargo, or whether the revolution seriously considered environmental and ecological issues something to be addressed. Certainly one must acknowledge the efforts of the revolution, in 1997 the Cuban government banned fishing over a 386-square-mile section of the area around Los Jardines de la Reina, creating the largest marine reserve in the Caribbean, but would the possible influx of American capital change the approach of the Cuban government? If the embargo was lifted, would Cuban corals suffer the same fate of the corals in the Florida Keys? Certainly scientist would hope that the Cuban government would continue its conservation policies and sustainability practices if the embargo was lifted because as American scientist David Guggenheim states, in Cuba “we’ve got another chance to look at these reefs the way they used to be” and better understand the interactions that make Cuban corals super corals as compared to the rest of the world. As a student who conducts her own research of coral symbiosis right here at Vassar, I can only hope that Cuban corals hold the key to saving the rest of the corals.

#### US-Cuba cooperative reef research provides a key model for creation of international policy.

Dr. David E. **Guggenheim**, 7-13-20**08**, is a marine scientist, conservation policy specialist, submarine pilot and ocean explorer. He is president of 1planet1ocean, a project of The Ocean Foundation where he is a Senior Fellow and director of its Cuba Marine Research and Conservation Program. He is currently leading a major project to elevate collaboration in marine science and conservation among Cuba, Mexico and the U.S. to a new level and leading the first-ever comprehensive research and conservation program in Cuba’s Gulf of Mexico region, a joint effort with the University of Havana. Also known as the “Ocean Doctor” and host of the ExpeditionCasts podcast series, Dr. Guggenheim is currently engaged in a special “expedition” to all fifty U.S. states visiting schools and bringing special programs about ocean exploration and conservation to young students. So far he has traveled more than 35,000 miles, visited 13 states, made 39 speeches and reached more than 10,000 students in schools ranging from the northernmost community in North America, Barrow, Alaska, to Macksville, Kansas, close to the geographic center of the lower 48 states, to the southern tip of Florida. In 2007 he served as a scientific advisor to Greenpeace for its expedition to map deepwater corals in the Bering Sea where he piloted the first-ever manned submersible dives into the Bering Sea’s largest underwater canyons. Guggenheim played a lead role in building the recently-formed Gulf of Mexico Alliance, a partnership among the U.S. Gulf states and 13 federal agencies and Mexico. Guggenheim is also working to introduce cutting-edge technologies for sustainable aquaculture practices to the Americas to reduce pressure on overfished wild fish stocks. Guggenheim previously served as Vice President at The Ocean Conservancy, President and CEO of The Conservancy of Southwest Florida, co-chair of the Everglades Coalition and president of the Friends of Channel Islands National Park. Guggenheim holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Public Policy from George Mason University in Virginia, a Master’s in Aquatic and Population Biology from University of California, Santa Barbara, and a Master’s in Regional Science and Bachelor’s in Environmental Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. “Can Cuba’s Mysteries Help Save the World’s Coral Reefs?” http://oceandoctor.org/cuba-mysteries-save-coral-reefs/

It is often said that those 90 miles of open water south of the Florida Keys — the Straits of Florida — separate Cuba and the USA. Like a hand-drawn blue borderline, the Straits are often invoked as a symbol of the 50-year-old Cold War that has frozen our two countries so tantalizingly close, yet so tragically far apart. But to the sea turtles, sharks, lobster, whales and other sea life, those same 90 miles of blue unite our countries with racing blue currents, unseen underwater pathways, and a web of colorful life that defies the perceptions of so many of the Gulf of Mexico, who know it only as a hot, muddy cauldron that spawns hurricanes and oil platforms. Cuba, Mexico and the U.S. share the Gulf of Mexico and have a responsibility to work together to understand and protect it. Thankfully, despite debilitating restrictions, which are ever-changing in the cool winds of Cold War politics, we have worked for a solid eight years now with our Cuban colleagues, advancing our understanding of the Gulf of Mexico and providing research opportunities for Cuba’s next generation of marine scientists — nearly 20 have based their Masters and Ph.D. research on our joint projects. Cuba’s next generation of marine scientists participate in & learn from the project Cuba’s northwest coast– the verdant Pinar del Rio province, home to Cuba’s legendary cigars — is the least-developed coastal region of Cuba. But as Cuba’s tourism trade continues to develop and as Cuba’s fledgling offshore oil development expands into the Gulf, we hope that the insights from our joint research help to guide the hand of such development so that some of Cuba’s most precious assets, its coral reefs, will be spared the all too common fate I’ve seen elsewhere in the Caribbean. And there is much at stake. As we dove during the second expedition, it was as if we had been transported decades backward in time, to the healthy, vibrant, towering reefs I remember from my mid-teens. The reefs I have seen in the Archepelago de Los Colorados, the barrier reef that runs along Cuba’s northwest coast, are the healthiest I have seen in my life. For that reason, and because of its unique history and geography, Cuba may hold important clues for coral reefs elsewhere in the Caribbean and perhaps around the world. Good friend and colleague, Dr. Gaspar Gonzalez-Sanson, titular professor at University of Havana, CIM, and co-principal investigator of Proyecto Costa Noroccidental, recently pointed to a number of possible reasons for the health of Cuba’s reefs when we spoke when I was recently in Havana: Cuba’s tourism industry did not begin until 1993, necessitated by the demise of the Soviet Union and its aid to the island. Though tourism has proceeded at a rapid pace, it is highly localized at specific resort areas on the coasts. The healthiest reefs also happen to be far from shore, such as Los Colorados to the north and Jardines de la Reina to the south, perhaps beyond the reach of harmful concentrations of coastal pollution. Cuba does have a commercial fishing fleet, but fishermen principally use hook and line, so unlike nets and trawls which result in catching just about everything, fishing in Cuba is highly selective. In contrast, more than 80 percent of what’s caught in U.S. Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawls is not shrimp — it’s small finfish and other creatures collectively known as “bycatch” that represent the unforgivable waste of this fishing practice. Cuba is now phasing out all bottom trawling on its continental shelf. Cuban commercial fishing vessel in the Gulf of Mexico In the early days of the revolution, President Fidel Castro declared, “Not one drop of water to the sea,” a call to action to dam rivers and streams in order to divert water for use in agriculture and population centers. Reducing fresh water input upset the delicate balance of fresh and salt water in Cuba’s estuaries, resulting in the disappearance of populations intolerant to the saltier waters, such as the white shrimp. In another way, however, this policy may have inadvertently served to help reefs by reducing the transport of fertilizers and pesticides to the reefs. Use of fertilizers and pesticides has dropped dramatically since the withdrawal of the Soviet Union. Given that nutrient pollution is a key factor in the growth of coral-smothering algae, this may also be an important factor. Sunset on Cuba’s Gulf of Mexico In countless ways, the island of Cuba is unique. And when it comes to coral reefs, Cuba is again, unique. Here an island of thriving corals flourishes amid a world of corals dying and disappearing. In this mysterious corner of the Gulf of Mexico where time seems to have stopped, I find hope. Hope that the rich ecosystems of this beautiful island will endure. And I find hope that Cuba’s coral reefs might share some of their tantalizing secrets, secrets that can offer clues to protecting and restoring coral reefs elsewhere, including a special place I still remember in the Florida Keys, just 90 miles to the north.

#### However, US-Cuba cooperative coral reef research is low now.

Nick **Miroff**, 12-08-20**09**, correspondent for the Washington Post, National Public Radio, “Scientists Work To Protect Cuba's Unspoiled Reefs,” http://www.scpr.org/news/2009/12/08/8828/scientists-work-to-protect-cubas-unspoiled-reefs/

When Christopher Columbus arrived in Cuba, he named the island's south-central coastal area Los Jardines de la Reina, or The Queen's Gardens. Five centuries later, the extensive and pristine coral reefs are still here. Rare cooperation between U.S. and Cuban research scientists is seeking to save them. Cuba has some the most extensive coral reefs in the hemisphere, but political strains between Washington and Havana largely have kept American scientists away.

#### That prevents Cuban reef protection and research – Cuba can’t solve alone.

Pedro M. **Alcolado et al**1, Rodolfo Claro-Madruga2 and Reynaldo Estrada3, 8-05-20**02**, from the Instituto de Oceanología, Ave. 1ra, No. 18406, Reparto Flores, Playa, Ciudad de La Habana1, also from the Instituto de Oceanología, Ave. 1ra, No. 18406, Reparto Flores, Playa, Ciudad de La Habana2, Centro Nacional de Áreas Protegidas, Calle 18ª, No. 4114, Playa, Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba3, “Status and Prospective of Coral Reef Management in Cuba,” http://www.denix.osd.mil/nr/crid/Coral\_Reef\_Iniative\_Database/Cuba\_files/Alcolado%20et%20al.,%202000.pdf

STATUS AND PROSPECTIVE OF CORAL REEF MANAGEMENT IN CUBA Diving tourism in Cuba, in spite of its high potential, is still poorly developed and thus has apparently had limited impact on coral reefs. Up to the present, existing regulations on protection of coral reefs from tourist visitation are not yet fully enforced. More than 35 diving centres are implemented and proposed, with more than 400 diving sites. Measures are being tailored and applied by the relevant institution to minimise additional damage. For that reason, mechanical damage and extraction of stony corals and other organisms are degrading reef in some sites where tourists engage in diving and boating actiities. Two examples of this situation are the once beautiful scenic reefs of Rincón de Guanabo, Puerto Escondido (north-east of Havana Province) and the one at Km 14 of Varadero (east of Matanzas Bay). Anchoring on coral outcrops has been and continues to be a practice in fishery and nautical activities. At present, mooring buoys are used at some reef dive sites of Cuba. There are other reef diving sites, near human settlements where mooring buoy deployment were stopped because buoys were frequently stolen. There is an increasing awareness about the need of deploying more mooring buoys and the number of diving sites with such buoys is increasing. Trash, illegal coral collection, illegal and authorised spear-gun fishing, and entangling of fishing lines are factors that impact coral reefs near human settlements. In spite of the efforts made by the Centre of Information, Management and Education (CIGEA of CITMA), the National Aquarium, the Institute of Oceanology, the Coastal Ecosystem Research Centre, the Provincial Units of Environment of CITMA, the National Centre of Protected Areas (CITMA), the National Enterprise for the Protection of Flora and Fauna, and the ONG “Sibarimar”, among others, the lack of enough public awareness about coravl reef issues is still a real threat. 5. CURRENT AND POTENTIAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS An increase of 0.2 – 0.29 cm/year of sea level rise around Cuba has been estimated (Hernández et al. 1998). This can involve an increase in coastal erosion rates and consequently more sedimentation stress on coral reefs. An average temperature rise of 0.13ºC per decade in the south west of Cuba (at Cayo Largo) was estimated in Alcolado et al. (1999). Repeated coral bleaching events in Cuba have been associated to several ENSOs by C. Carrodeguas et al. (In press) and us. For that reason, an increase in frequency and intensity of seawater warming associated to ENSO has to be a matter of great concern for local scale coral reef survival. 6. CURRENT MPAS AND MONITORING AND CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT CAPACITY Design and implementation of MPAs in Cuba only recently became to be approached deeply and integrally. Before 1998 virtually all protected coral reef were those that were incidentally included in Terrestrial Protected Areas (e.g. Punta Francés, María la Gorda, etc.). Only 4 reef areas have a significant but yet insufficient level of management. Now those reefs are becoming an important component in the management plans of those protected areas, and 20 properly Protected Areas with marine component are being planed and proposed for approval. The Ministry of Fishery Industry has declared 9 “no-take” areas. Most of them include extensive coral reef habitats and virtually function as MPAs. They can serve as a starting point for incorporating them in the National System of Protected Areas as Fauna Refuges, National Parks and Ecological Reserves. Cuba has the necessary professional capability and the institutional capacity for the research, monitoring and management of its coral reef areas. However, Cuba’s present economic difficulties seriously limit the financial resources available to implement and enforce conservation actions, and coral reef research and monitoring are still very fragmentary. The research project General Assessment of the Ecological Status of Cuban Coral Reefs and Monitoring of the Cuban Regional CARICOMP Station, which finishes at the end of 2000, has been being conducted by the Institute of Oceanology (IDO) with many constraints. It is aimed at the assessment of the status of coral reefs throughout Cuba and at identifying the natural and anthropogenic stressors involved, as well as at giving relevant management recommendations to the Environmental Agency and other institutions. It is also engaged in the monitoring of the coral reef station of the Cuban CARICOMP site in Cayo Coco (northern Cuba). The CARICOMP project will be continued by the Coastal Ecosystem Research Centre (CIEC, that also belongs to the Environment Agency of CITMA) located at Cayo Coco, north of Cuba.

#### Marine biodiversity collapse causes extinction – reefs are key.

**Craig**, 20**03**, Associate Professor of Law, Indiana U School Law, McGeorge Law Review, 34 McGeorge L. Rev. 155 Lexis

Biodiversity and ecosystem function arguments for conserving marine ecosystems also exist, just as they do for terrestrial ecosystems, but these arguments have thus far rarely been raised in political debates. For example, besides significant tourism values - the most economically valuable ecosystem service coral reefs provide, worldwide - coral reefs protect against storms and dampen other environmental fluctuations, services worth more than ten times the reefs' value for food production. n856 Waste treatment is another significant, non-extractive ecosystem function that intact coral reef ecosystems provide. n857 More generally, "ocean ecosystems play a major role in the global geochemical cycling of all the elements that represent the basic building blocks of living organisms, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, and sulfur, as well as other less abundant but necessary elements." n858 In a very real and direct sense, therefore, human degradation of marine ecosystems impairs the planet's ability to support life. Maintaining biodiversity is often critical to maintaining the functions of marine ecosystems. Current evidence shows that, in general, an ecosystem's ability to keep functioning in the face of disturbance is strongly dependent on its biodiversity, "indicating that more diverse ecosystems are more stable." n859 Coral reef ecosystems are particularly dependent on their biodiversity.  [\*265]   Most ecologists agree that the complexity of interactions and degree of interrelatedness among component species is higher on coral reefs than in any other marine environment. This implies that the ecosystem functioning that produces the most highly valued components is also complex and that many otherwise insignificant species have strong effects on sustaining the rest of the reef system. n860 Thus, maintaining and restoring the biodiversity of marine ecosystems is critical to maintaining and restoring the ecosystem services that they provide. Non-use biodiversity values for marine ecosystems have been calculated in the wake of marine disasters, like the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. n861 Similar calculations could derive preservation values for marine wilderness. However, economic value, or economic value equivalents, should not be "the sole or even primary justification for conservation of ocean ecosystems. Ethical arguments also have considerable force and merit." n862 At the forefront of such arguments should be a recognition of how little we know about the sea - and about the actual effect of human activities on marine ecosystems. The United States has traditionally failed to protect marine ecosystems because it was difficult to detect anthropogenic harm to the oceans, but we now know that such harm is occurring - even though we are not completely sure about causation or about how to fix every problem. Ecosystems like the NWHI coral reef ecosystem should inspire lawmakers and policymakers to admit that most of the time we really do not know what we are doing to the sea and hence should be preserving marine wilderness whenever we can - especially when the United States has within its territory relatively pristine marine ecosystems that may be unique in the world. We may not know much about the sea, but we do know this much: if we kill the ocean we kill ourselves, and we will take most of the biosphere with us.

#### Oceans are necessary for all aspects of life.

Ted **Danson** 6-1-0**2** [Journalist for Earth Team, http://www.earthteam.net/updates/2002/june1.html]

Oceans generate much of the world's oxygen, provide 95 percent of the living space for the earth's animals and plants, and feed billions of people around the world. We need healthy oceans to survive.

#### Collapse of Coral reefs triggers a global extinction event – adaptation research is key – brink is now.

Ben Block, 12-12-2008, staff writer with the Worldwatch Institute, “Coral Reef Loss Suggests Global Extinction Event,” <http://www.enn.com/wildlife/article/38850>

Coral Reef Loss Suggests Global Extinction Event Coral Photo courtesy Great Barrier Reef MPA A quarter of all marine fish species reside in coral reefs and 500 million people depend on these “underwater rainforests” for their livelihood. The world is on the brink of a massive extinction event, according to the United Nations. Rapid releases of greenhouse gas emissions are changing habitats at a rate faster than many of the world's species can tolerate. "Indeed the world is currently facing a sixth wave of extinctions, mainly as a result of human impacts," said Achim Steiner, executive director of the U.N. Environment Programme in a statement. A study earlier this year in the Proceedings of the National Academies of Science said the current extinction period, known as the Holocene extinction event, may be the greatest event in the Earth's history and the first due to human actions. Unlike previous events, however, extinctions are happening over the course of decades rather than centuries. Recent studies suggest that a quarter of the world's species may go extinct by 2050. The UN warning accompanies an increasingly frequent round of sobering news about ecosystem failures. The latest global coral reef assessment estimates that 19 percent of the world's coral reefs are dead. Their major threats include warming sea-surface temperatures and expanding seawater acidification. Zooxanthellae, the tiny organisms that give coral reefs their vibrant colors, are emigrating from their hosts in massive numbers as oceans heat up, killing themselves and the coral they leave behind - a process known as coral bleaching. The report, released by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network Wednesday at the international climate change negotiations in Poznań, Poland, predicts that many of the remaining reefs may disappear within the next 40 years if current emission trends continue. "If nothing is done to substantially cut emissions, we could effectively lose coral reefs as we know them, with major coral extinctions," said Clive Wilkinson, the network's coordinator, in a press release. Overfishing, pollution, and invasive species continue to be risks as well, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The IUCN declared in October that 38 percent of the 44,838 species it studied across the world are threatened with extinction. Its Red List of Threatened Species considers 22 percent of the world's mammals, 31 percent of amphibians, and 14 percent of birds threatened or extinct. Steiner's warnings of mass extinction came last week as the U.N. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals added 21 migratory species to its protection list. Migratory species are among the most at-risk to climate change, according to a UNEP report released last year [PDF]. To its list of protected animals, which include the cheetah and Egyptian vulture, the convention added six dolphin species. Nearly one-quarter of the world's dolphin species are threatened with extinction, mostly due to habitat loss and live capture, according to IUCN. The demise of coral reefs, however, affects the entire ocean ecosystem - a quarter of all marine fish species reside in the reefs, according to The Nature Conservancy. In addition, IUCN estimates that 500 million people depend on coral reefs for their livelihoods. The coral reef assessment found that 45 percent of the world's reefs are healthy - providing hope that some species may be able to endure the changes expected from global warming. Marine biologists are now attempting to understand how certain coral reef species can survive warmer, more acidic ocean waters when others are less fortunate.

#### The Caribbean is a hotspot for marine biodiversity – current isolated management strategies fail.

Miloslavich and Klein, 2004 (Universidad Simo ́n Bol ́ıvar, Departamento de Estudios Ambientales and INTECMAR, Cara- cas, Venezuela, “Linking marine biodiversity research and conservation in the Caribbean,” Caribbean Marine Biodiversity Workshop in Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, 15-17 June, 2004, <http://cbm.usb.ve/CoMLCaribbean/pdf/I-01_introduction.pdf>;)

The Caribbean Region extends over about 2,754,000 Km2 in which 36 to 40 politically independent countries and territories can be found, each with specific sovereignty claims and marine conservation management strategies. As such, research and conservation issues require integration and regional collaboration. The Caribbean is considered a unique biogeographic region with endemic species and is among the top five world hotspots for marine and terrestrial biodiversity [1]. Its complex geological history starting 130 millions of years ago and the involving emergence of the Isthmus of Panama in the Pliocene (around 3.0 to 2.8 Ma) had major effects on marine biodiversity. The isolation of the tropical American ocean into two different realms produced isolation and environmen-tal change which resulted in increased evolutionary divergence and radiation of species living today in extensive coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, deep-shelf ecosystems and partially isolated deep basins and trenches [2].

#### Hotspot collapse causes extinction.

Sternlof, 2000, 2k (Kurt Sternlof, Executive Director, Earth System Initiative at MIT, “Tropical Habitat Loss Threatens Mass Extinction Akin To Fall Of The Dinosaurs,” Columbia University News, March 1, 2000, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/pr/00/03/extinction.html>;)

The relationship between habitat loss and extinction is nonlinear. Initial destruction of a habitat squeezes most tenant species into shrinking remnants of their original territory, driving to extinction only those whose highly restricted ranges are entirely consumed. Eventually though, as the remaining habitat shrinks to a small fraction of its former size, the rate of extinction accelerates rapidly and peaks before dwindling off as the final surviving species succumb. Moreover, by focusing our immediate conservation efforts on the hotspot areas at greatest risk, we can achieve an enormous improvement in the extinction outlook very quickly, even though broad scale conservation will still be necessary to preserve long-term biodiversity, Pimm said.

#### The problem is US policy – multiple barriers prevent US-Cuba scientific exchange.

Rex **Dalton**, 7-22-20**09**, writer for Nature International Weekly Journal of Science, San Diego-based journalist who has worked for the San Diego Union-Tribune and the journal Nature, “Scientists strive to boost US–Cuban collaboration,” http://www.nature.com/news/2009/090722/full/460447a.html

A drive to increase scientific exchange between the United States and Cuba is off to a slow start. In the past four months, Cuban officials have cancelled two planned trips of top US scientific leaders to the island nation. Citing other visitors and events that took up their time, the officials have turned down requests for scientists to enter the country organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the New America Foundation non-governmental organization, both based in Washington DC. In April, the administration of US President Barack Obama said it would work to improve relationships between the two countries, including promoting the "freer flow of information". The organizers, who have had the trips in the works since before Obama took office, remain hopeful that a delegation might visit Cuba this autumn, says Lawrence Wilkerson, who was chief of staff to former Secretary of State Colin Powell and is working on a New America initiative aimed at Cuba. The delegation is expected to address topics such as tapping Cuba's strengths in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and studies involving hurricane research, food production and salt-resistant crops. "Of course we would like more scientific exchange," says Miguel Abad Salazar, a researcher at the BIOECO conservation facility near Santiago in eastern Cuba. “Of course we would like more scientific exchange.” Travel restrictions remain a major stumbling block for US–Cuban collaboration. For instance, US scientists seeking to travel to Cuba can't use federal funds without special government permission. And any US scientist travelling to Cuba must get a license from the treasury department to spend US dollars there, even if funds come from the private foundations that typically pay for such trips. It has also been nearly impossible for Cuban scientists to come to the United States; one immediate barrier is the US$150 non-refundable fee for a visa application.

#### Scientific exchange is the key internal link into marine science cooperation – solves coral reefs.

Edward W. **Lempinen**, 3-1-20**12**, Public Information Officer TWAS, the academy of sciences for the developing world, senior writer, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), National Association of Science Writers (US), Northern California Science Writers Association, University of Illinois Springfield M.A., public affairs reporting, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, B.A., journalism, political science, economics, “Oceans, Weather, Health—U.S. Researchers Explore Potential Collaboration with Cuban Colleagues,” http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2012/0501cuba.shtml

At the same time, the U.S. embargo of Cuba makes it impossible for Cuban scientists to come to the United States for even a week-long course in how to use a computer climate model. “Scientists from both countries want to work together,” Robock said. “We’ll do the best we can... but there are significant limitations.” “From the scientific standpoint,” Turekian added, “this is about the ability to go to a place to make measurements so that we can better understand hurricanes and other conditions that affect the Caribbean and the southeastern United States. To do that, we need relationships and protocols so that Americans and the Cubans together can benefit from measurements in Cuba.” Marine Science Coral reefs in much of the Caribbean have sustained significant damage from human activity—over-fishing, climate change, oil spills, and other pollution. But off of Cuba’s coasts, says marine scientist Nancy Knowlton, the reefs have been less exposed to development, and they’re in better health. Knowlton is the Sant Chair for Marine Science at Smithsonian Institution and senior scientist emeritus at Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. She’s worked in fields of marine biodiversity and ecology; coral reefs are her specialty. Save for a cruise that stopped in Guantanamo, she’d never been to Cuba, but on her visit in December, she was deeply impressed with opportunities for research in the Cuban reefs and by the marine science already underway there. “There are amazing habitats, much less impacted by people than most places in Caribbean, in terms of over-fishing and that sort of thing,” she said. “And there’s a large community of marine biologists there, many with shared interest in biodiversity and conservation.” For Knowlton, the Cuban reefs are like “a window in time,” allowing researchers a view of what healthy reefs looked like in an era past. “They give you a baseline as to what a healthy fish community should look like,” she explained. And that gives greater insight into other Caribbean reefs where damage is more pronounced. “So there are a lot of things to learn from Cuban marine scientists,” she said. “And there are a lot of reasons for Cubans to come here, or for Cubans to come and work at the Smithsonian. There’s a huge potential for interchange because there are so many shared interests.” Small Steps, Significant Potential Those shared interests appear to extend across many fields. Carney, whose parents were born in Cuba, met in December with Cuban counterparts who study and help shape government science and technology policy. “From my own perspective in talking to their scientists, I was struck by some of the similarities between our communities,” Carney said. The Cubans “face challenges in policy decisions regarding research priorities, and how to balance between basic research and applied research. They provide universal health care, and so life science research is a bit more targeted, a bit more applied. But looking forward, you want to balance the applied portion with the basic research.

#### Removing restrictions on scientific exchange solves reef protection and marine biodiversity – any delay kills solvency.

**Environmental Defense Fund**, 10-22-20**09**, leading national nonprofit organization, has linked science, economics, law and innovative private-sector partnerships to create breakthrough solutions to the most serious environmental problems, “United States Scientists Visit Cuba to Discuss Overfishing, Coral Reefs, Ocean Energy and Ocean Issues,” http://www.edf.org/news/united-states-scientists-visit-cuba-discuss-overfishing-coral-reefs-ocean-energy-and-ocean-issu

Environmental Defense Fund will send a team of experts to Havana, Cuba, on Sunday to discuss ways to eliminate overfishing, protect coral reefs, conserve coastal areas, and tap potential ocean energy – a signal that greater environmental cooperation may be on the horizon. EDF scientists and policy experts and Cuban scientists and environmental officials will have a series of meetings about how the United States and Cuba can work together to protect ocean waters and marine resources shared by the two countries. The meetings come on the heels of a September visit to the United States by Cuban environmental officials. "The United States and Cuba share many ecological resources, but the countries have different ways of managing them," said Daniel , a senior attorney at EDF and director of its Cuba Program. "Fishing, coastal development, and offshore oil and gas exploration in Cuba can have impacts in the United States, and vice-versa. The sooner we work together to manage shared resources and find solutions common problems, the sooner we'll see benefits for the people, the environment and the economy in both countries." EDF has asked the Obama administration to ease policies that limit scientific exchanges between U.S. and Cuban scientists and conservation professionals. Last month the U.S. State Department issued visas for four Cuban environmental officials to attend scientific meetings hosted by EDF in Washington, DC, and Sarasota, Florida--the first such meetings held in the U.S. in several years. "These precedent-setting meetings are a hopeful sign that greater environmental cooperation is on the horizon," said Dr. Doug Rader, chief ocean scientist for EDF. "An important first step toward managing our shared marine resources is to share good science and good ideas. We have a lot to learn from each other." Rader added that expanded scientific and management cooperation can help address the growing threats to coral reefs, ocean fish populations, habitats for migratory birds, marine mammals and turtles, and biodiversity. Just 90 miles from the tip of Florida, Cuba shares a large amount of ocean territory with the United States. Because of the prevailing currents and Cuba's proximity, preserving its marine resources is critically important to the economies of coastal communities in both countries.

### 1AC – Hemispheric Energy Adv

#### ADVANTAGE TWO – HEMISPHERIC ENERGY – engagement with Latin America is low now – puts US energy security at risk.

Dr. Nancy E. Brune, 7-26-2010, works on energy security and national security issues at Sandia National Laboratories, a Truman National Security Fellow, as well as a member of Women in International Security and the Pacific Council on International Policy, “Latin America: A Blind Spot in US Energy Security Policy,” <http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=250:south-of-the-border-americas-key-to-energy-security&catid=108:energysecuritycontent&Itemid=365>

For more than a decade, America’s relationship with Latin America could most accurately be described as unfocused engagement, driven by reactions to events or crises at best and benign neglect at worst. Apart from intermittent efforts to secure free trade agreements (NAFTA and CAFTA), combat drugs (Plan Mérida and Plan Colombia), and weigh in—often too late and too sheepishly—to political events (Honduran Presidential crisis or President Hugo Chavez’s saber rattling), the US has failed to engage the nations of resource-wealthy Latin America in any strategic manner. This lack of attention to our closest neighbors—and some of our strongest allies—is quite alarming given US dependence on Latin America to provide our energy. Currently, more than one-fourth of imported oil comes from Latin America (and almost 50% from the Western Hemisphere). In 2009, the top sources of US imported crude oil (and their percentages) were Canada (21%), Mexico (11%), Venezuela and Saudi Arabia (9% each), Nigeria (7%), Russia (5%), Iraq, Algeria and Angola (4% each), Brazil (3%), Colombia and Ecuador (roughly 2% total). As is widely known, America imports more than 65-70 percent of its energy needs, which means that we are vulnerable to disruptions in the supply chain and to price volatility, which are affected by domestic political and economic conditions in oil-exporting countries upon whom we depend. In 2007, speaking at the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said, ”[W]e are eager to expand our cooperation on energy with more [Latin American] countries […]. Our goal should be nothing less than to usher in a new era of inter-American security in energy.” In June 2009, President Obama pledged to engage with Latin America on issues of energy, security and trade, and attended the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Trinidad & Tobago. But very little has happened in the last fifteen months. The Administration’s blind spot to the importance of Latin America in our energy security matrix is revealed by the disappointing fact that, during Secretary of State Clinton’s visit to Ecuador in June 2010, her almost 4,500 word policy address on ‘Opportunity in the Americas’ contained no mention of energy—not a single word. While our government takes for granted the oil wealth of Latin America, several domestic factors in the resource-rich countries in the region threaten US energy security. Mexico, which replaced Saudi Arabia as our 2nd largest supplier in 2008, is by no means a stable supplier of fuel. Years of inadequate investment in the national oil company Petróleos de Mexico (Pemex) have resulted in falling production rates; production output of crude oil fell 17.5 percent during the period 2004-2008. Although the Mexican government approved a broad set of oil sector reforms in 2008, including the establishment of a new regulatory body (the National Commission on Hydrocarbons—CNH), actual implementation of the reforms—viewed by many as ‘timid’—is behind schedule, thus having no impact on reversing the downward trend in production output.

#### Specifically – other countries are forming energy relationships with Latin America now – inaction disrupts US energy supply lines.

Dr. Nancy E. Brune, 7-26-2010, works on energy security and national security issues at Sandia National Laboratories, a Truman National Security Fellow, as well as a member of Women in International Security and the Pacific Council on International Policy, “Latin America: A Blind Spot in US Energy Security Policy,” <http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=250:south-of-the-border-americas-key-to-energy-security&catid=108:energysecuritycontent&Itemid=365>

Domestic political and economic turmoil—violence, falling production and nationalization—in Latin America are not the only factors increasing the risk to America’s long term energy security. Sadly, while US engagement with Latin America has reflected muddled, short-term unilateral objectives, other countries—like China, Iran and Russia—recognize the strategic importance of Latin America and are building broad relationships in very systematic, aggressive ways. These new alliances between our Latin American neighbors and several countries that are frequently hostile to American interests may also disrupt our stable and secure access to energy resources. Russia is widely recognized as using its vast natural resources as a political weapon and holding countries hostage by manipulating access, control and distribution of the energy resources. Russia has also been quite active in building strategic relationships with several resource-wealthy countries to enhance its own long term energy security. When Russia’s reach was limited to Eastern Europe, it was easy for the US to stay on the sidelines of Western Europe’s diplomatic and political battles with Russia. Now the situation is not as ambiguous. In September 2009, Russia and Venezuela announced several cooperative agreements on energy, defense and trade, including a commitment to supply Venezuela with almost $4 billion in weapons. PDVSA signed two agreements with a consortium of energy giants in Russia. While production and investment are years away, a Russia-Venezuela joint venture has the potential to disrupt our supply lines. As is well known, China’s grand strategy has been shaped by its desire to secure surety of energy supplies to fuel its continued industrialization. In 2008, China spent $100 billion in Latin America, most of this on hydrocarbons, energy and mining. China has had a growing presence in Venezuela since 2003 after helping PVDSA recover from a prolonged labor strike. The China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) has been operating Venezuelan oil fields in the Zulia and Anzoategui provinces for years. Reciprocally, PVDSA has maintained a representative office in China since 2005. In April 2010, China announced a $900 million heavy crude production project with Venezuela. To sweeten the pot, the China Development Bank signed a financing agreement to loan Venezuela $20 billion. Just prior to that, in neighboring Brazil, a country that sits on vast pre-salt oil reserves, China’s Sinopec and the China Development Bank signed a strategic development pact with Petrobras, Brazil’s state-owned oil company, whereby China agreed to provide financing to the tune of $10 billion in Petrobras over the next five years. Leaving no corner unturned, China also has operations in Ecuador. In 2006, Andres Petroleum, a consortium of Chinese oil companies, purchased the Ecuadorian assets of the Canadian firm, EnCana for $1.42 billion. In return, CNPC gets oil and control over the controversial Oleoducto de Crudos Pesados (OCP) pipeline. Iran has also been cozying up to Venezuela and Brazil, as well as a number of Andean countries. In 2007, Venezuela and Iran signed three petroleum cooperation agreements which involved bilateral investment in Iranian gas and Venezuelan oil fields and Venezuelan gasoline exports to Iran. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad traveled to Brazil and met with President Lula last November. Lula then traveled to Iran in May 2010 during which time the two countries discussed future trade in Brazilian ethanol. It was also reported that Brazilian energy firms—including Petrobras—were exploring possible deals to provide training and technology to modernize the Iranian energy sector. To support its strategic positioning in the region, Tehran has set up branches of its Export Development Bank in Brasilia as well as Caracas. Bolivia and Ecuador also enjoy cozy relations with Iran. Even India, whose appetite for hydrocarbons is almost as voracious as China’s, recognizes the strategic importance of Latin America. For example, hydrocarbons dominate trade relations between India and Mexico: oil accounts for 90 percent of Mexico’s exports to India. The Indian government recently proposed establishing a sovereign wealth fund for the sole purpose of purchasing hydrocarbon reserves around the world. India’s state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has exploration and production stakes in projects in Brazil and Colombia and is exploring opportunities in Venezuela. In 2006, ONGC Videsh Ltd. (the overseas investment arm of ONGC) joined with the Chinese firm Sinopec to acquire a 50 percent stake (for a combined $850 million) in the Colombian oil firm Omimex de Colombia.

#### Academic exchanges with Cuba lead to alternative energy cooperation.

Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, 9-3-2010, Professor at UNO, Past Director, Intelligence Community Scholars Program at University of Nebraska at Omaha, Senior Research Associate at University of Georgia, freelancer at Santa Barbara Independent, Education @ The University of Georgia, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Fisher Graduate School of International Business, “Evaluating the Prospects for U.S.-Cuban Energy Policy Cooperation,” <http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/press/books/2010/cubasenergyfuture/cubasenergyfuture_chapter.pdf>

In a special section on U.S.-Cuban relations, Rethinking U.S.-Latin American Relations makes two other recommendations: “Promote knowledge and reconciliation by permitting the federal funding of cultural, academic, and sports exchanges; and encourage enhanced official contact and cooperation between U.S. and Cuban diplomats and governments.”11 The authors go on to articulate a set of steps or best practices that would serve to foster such a partnership and, more important, provide a set of measures open and flexible enough to account for the complexity and specificity of issues that surround energy development. In closing with a special section on Cuba, the report puts the spotlight on the centrality of the island nation and the effective management and potential leadership that it may offer in the effort to deal with these issues. While expanding the ambit of U.S. geostrategic interests in the region, it is critical that the discussion include the role Cuban energy development will have on the assessment and pursuit of those interests. Cuba faces daunting policy challenges in the twenty-first century. Chief among them is the task of providing reliable sources of energy for economic development and revitalization in the post–cold war milieu.

#### That’s key to Latin American alternative energy development – only engagement with Cuba removes negative perceptions of the US in the region and provides the technological expertise to diversify.

Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, 9-3-2010, Professor at UNO, Past Director, Intelligence Community Scholars Program at University of Nebraska at Omaha, Senior Research Associate at University of Georgia, freelancer at Santa Barbara Independent, Education @ The University of Georgia, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Fisher Graduate School of International Business, “Evaluating the Prospects for U.S.-Cuban Energy Policy Cooperation,” http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/press/books/2010/cubasenergyfuture/cubasenergyfuture\_chapter.pdf

At present Cuba possesses an estimated 4.6 million barrels of oil and 9.3 TFC (total final consumption) of natural gas in North Cuba Basin. This is approximately half of the estimated 10.4 billion barrels of recoverable crude oil in the Alaska Natural Wildlife Reserve. If viewed in strictly instrumental terms—namely, increasing the pool of potential imports to the U.S. market by accessing Cuban oil and ethanol holdings—Cuba’s oil represents little in the way of absolute material gain to the U.S. energy supply. But the possibility of energy cooperation between the United States and Cuba offers signiﬁcant relative gains connected to the potential for developing production-sharing agreements, promoting the transfer of state-of-the art technology and foreign direct investment, and increasing opportunities for the development of joint-venture partnerships, and scientific-technical exchanges. The relative gains from increased commercial and technical cooperation obviously increases Cuba’s domestic energy capacity, but it also possesses the potential of enhancing the United States’ energy security by deepening its links in the region. The future vitality of energy security requires access to energy export markets but also the diffusion and dispersion of technology, innovation, research and development of enhanced productive capacities, alternative energy technologies, and the effective management of resources across the region. The economist Jeremy Rifkin argues that “distributive energy markets,” marked by highly collaborative efforts to integrate diverse energy resources based in various proportions everywhere, will come to replace the prevailing model of the highly concentrated, conventional energy elites—coal, oil, natural gas, uranium—which are now found in limited geographical regions and are ﬁnite.5 The development of Cuba as an energy partner will not solve America’s energy problems. But the potential for improving energy relations and deepening collaborative modalities with other regional partners is enhanced by pursuing energy cooperation with Cuba for two principal reasons. 1. Cuba’s increasing leadership role in the Caribbean region and Central America might be used by the United States to promote collectively beneﬁcial efforts to develop a broad range of alternative energy technologies in the Americas. A Cuba-America partnership might also serve as a conﬁdence builder in assuaging the misgivings on the part of regional partners regarding American domination. 2. Cuba’s significant human capital resources in the scientific and technological arena have been grossly underused. Cuba possesses the highest ratio of engineers and Ph.D.s to the general population of any country in Latin America, and this can been viewed as a key asset in the challenge of maintaining energy infrastructure across the region. Both Mexico and Venezuela face significant costs in maintaining their sizable energy production, refining, and storage capabilities. The integrity of these two national energy systems is of paramount interest to U.S. energy security concerns because of the potential harm to the economy that would occur if either state were unable to deliver its exports to the American market.

#### Engaging Cuba opens the door for hemispheric cooperation on alternative energy development – strengthens US energy links in the region.

Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado, 9-3-2010, Professor at UNO, Past Director, Intelligence Community Scholars Program at University of Nebraska at Omaha, Senior Research Associate at University of Georgia, freelancer at Santa Barbara Independent, Education @ The University of Georgia, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Fisher Graduate School of International Business, “Evaluating the Prospects for U.S.-Cuban Energy Policy Cooperation,” <http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/press/books/2010/cubasenergyfuture/cubasenergyfuture_chapter.pdf>

Because of recent developments in Cuba and the growing investments being made there made by regional partners, in particular Venezuela and Brazil, the importance of Cuba’s energy development objectives becomes decidedly more pronounced, in terms of both Cuba’s national development priorities and the United States’ energy and geostrategic priorities.9 One of the recommendations made in Rethinking U.S.-Latin American Relations is especially relevant: developing sustainable energy resources. The report recommends that the United States, in partnership with other governments in the hemisphere, establish a “Renewable Energy Laboratory of the Americas” that would promote hemispheric cooperation on developing solar, wind, and cellulosic-biomass technologies; intensify hemispheric cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and promote regulatory regimes that are open to private energy investment and trade in energy technology and services.10 In a special section on U.S.-Cuban relations, Rethinking U.S.-Latin American Relations makes two other recommendations: “Promote knowledge and reconciliation by permitting the federal funding of cultural, academic, and sports exchanges; and encourage enhanced official contact and cooperation between U.S. and Cuban diplomats and governments.”11 The authors go on to articulate a set of steps or best practices that would serve to foster such a partnership and, more important, provide a set of measures open and flexible enough to account for the complexity and specificity of issues that surround energy development. In closing with a special section on Cuba, the report puts the spotlight on the centrality of the island nation and the effective management and potential leadership that it may offer in the effort to deal with these issues. While expanding the ambit of U.S. geostrategic interests in the region, it is critical that the discussion include the role Cuban energy development will have on the assessment and pursuit of those interests. Cuba faces daunting policy challenges in the twenty-first century. Chief among them is the task of providing reliable sources of energy for economic development and revitalization in the post–cold war milieu.

#### Hemispheric energy engagement solidifies US regional ties – secures American access to energy

Eric Farnsworth, 4-11-13, Vice president of the Council of the Americas and Americas Society, “ENERGY SECURITY OPPORTUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN,” <http://www.as-coa.org/articles/energy-security-opportunities-latin-america-and-caribbean>

Mr. Chairman, if I may give you the bottom line first: energy security for the United States is of fundamental strategic importance. It underlies our ability to function as a modern society, and ensuring energy security has long been a critical component of U.S. foreign policy globally on a bipartisan basis. It is within this context that we firmly believe the nations of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada must be considered, leading to a new and abiding appreciation at the most senior levels of government of the strategic importance of the Western Hemisphere to the United States. The region cannot be an afterthought or taken for granted. Already, just over half of U.S. energy imports come from the Western Hemisphere, meeting approximately one quarter of our daily energy needs. Canada, Mexico, and Venezuela are three of our top suppliers worldwide. We receive more than twice as much energy from Canada, our top supplier, as from Saudi Arabia, our second largest supplier. Colombia, Ecuador, and Brazil also contribute significant amounts. Even when political relations are troubled with certain countries, for example Venezuela and Ecuador, the United States continues to engage in energy trade on a commercial basis. At the same time, a dramatic expansion of new energy resources across the hemisphere made possible by new technologies including ultra-deep water drilling offshore and biofuel production and fracking onshore has created the possibility of a new, highly favorable paradigm for hemispheric energy. Herein lies the primary opportunity for regional partnership, if we are nimble enough, collectively, to grasp it: working together as a hemisphere to increase energy security for all parties in a manner that lowers costs through increased production and greater efficiencies, encourages sustainable economic growth, development, and job creation, and supports a clean energy matrix with appropriate environmental protections. In fact, energy partnership was one of the key initiatives at the 1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami, at the insistence of Venezuela, and was one of the deliverables coming out of the 2009 Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago. Changing sector dynamics make the vision truly compelling, to the extent that regional political challenges can be minimized or overcome. At the same time, the United States is not the only nation that sees the potential for cooperation in Latin American, Caribbean, and Canadian energy. China, which is now the world’s top energy consumer, is a relatively recent but very active participant in the development of regional energy resources, as are other nations such as India and Russia, a trend that we expect will continue and also accelerate into the indefinite future. This is a region that is now in play and in my view, the United States must do a better job making the case for regional partnership because alternatives for the region exist today which simply did not exist a decade ago. A strategic approach to the hemisphere with energy at the core should be at the top of our agenda. Developing Effective Regional Energy Markets Is Vital to U.S. Interests Any discussion of hemispheric energy must take as its point of departure the dramatic changes in the industry, particularly on the production side, that have occurred in just the past few years. These changes have broad implications for shifting patterns of energy trade and regional development. By now the story of exploding U.S. production and the potential for energy self-sufficiency is well known. The United States is now the world’s largest producer of natural gas and could become the world’s largest oil producer by 2020. Estimates suggest that the United States could actually be a net exporter of energy by 2035, a remarkable historical shift. At the same time, the region’s energy demands are increasing as economic growth has produced a new middle class with higher expectations for an improved quality of life. No longer can the hemisphere be easily if simplistically divided into consumers (the United States) and producers (everyone else). This is a game changer. Old patterns no longer hold and the Western Hemisphere must be seen in a new light. Still, energy markets are global, and the more energy available overall, the better for everyone because that reduces the cost and therefore increases competitiveness. At the same time, greater production by any one country changes its terms of trade, increases investment, stimulates technology transfer, and builds management expertise. When pursued with a broader vision, increased energy production can also contribute to sustainable, environmentally-sound economic development. It is on this basis that partnerships can be pursued with willing partners. The reality is that the Western Hemisphere is rich in natural energy resources. Latin America already boasts the world’s cleanest energy matrix, due in large measure to a reliance on hydropower and the purposeful development of biofuels. Developing clean, renewable energy resources is a regional priority, and meaningful additional projects in wind and solar are underway. Nonetheless, traditional fuels will remain critical to meet both regional and global energy needs for the foreseeable future, and here, too, Latin America and the Caribbean boast significant resources. The region is energy rich. Unfortunately, politics including populist governance and regional rivalries between states, and a sub-optimal investment climate in a number of nations—specifically including a weak and malleable rule of law—has led to sectorial underdevelopment and unnecessary inefficiencies. Of course, there is nothing more politically fraught in some Latin American and Caribbean countries than national energy policies. These matters strike at the very core of nationalist sensitivities in ways that North American observers cannot easily appreciate. These are sovereign nations with long histories and memories, and the natural resources sector is often ground zero in the national and local discourse, a short-hand, highly symbolic political proxy in nations which lack strong democratic institutions that would normally be expected to channel and address the challenge of competing political interests. These issues go a long way to predicting which nations will be more and which will be less receptive to meaningful energy partnership with the United States.

#### Now is the time – renewed US energy linkages with Latin America are key to energy security – alternative energy’s key.

Dr. Nancy E. Brune, 7-26-2010, works on energy security and national security issues at Sandia National Laboratories, a Truman National Security Fellow, as well as a member of Women in International Security and the Pacific Council on International Policy, “Latin America: A Blind Spot in US Energy Security Policy,” <http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=250:south-of-the-border-americas-key-to-energy-security&catid=108:energysecuritycontent&Itemid=365>

In many ways, the fate of Latin America and the US are strongly linked. This is no less true with our energy security interests. At this time, the US needs to move past the rhetoric and take concrete measures to direct resources, capabilities and even some creativity into building a stronger, strategic relationship with our neighbors in Latin America in order to address our long term security needs. How do we do this? First, the United States should commit sufficient financial, human and technological resources to making the Energy Climate Partnerships of the Americas (ECPA), formed in April 2009 at the Fifth Summit of the Americas, a viable, strong enterprise. The ECPA supports initiatives that focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, cleaner fossil fuels, critical infrastructure and energy poverty alleviation. However, regional experts note that there has been little progress. While energy security can be strengthened by making progress in these areas, the US needs to broaden the scope of the ECPA to explicitly discuss issues of energy security (including physical security of energy infrastructure), market-enhancing regulatory frameworks, as well as energy integration—one of the region’s greatest challenges—which affects price stability and supply networks. Latin America has frequently launched regional entities with the objective of improving energy integration and collaboration. Among these are the Regional Electrical Integration Commission (1964), the Latin American Reciprocal State Oil Assistance Association (1965), the Latin American Energy Organization (1973), and Initiative for Regional Infrastructure South American integration (2000). As recently as 2007, the South American Energy Council was established. However, the overwhelming consensus is that energy integration and coordination among Latin American nations remains limited and that these institutions have been ineffective, largely because they could not overcome the challenges associated with asymmetrical regulatory frameworks, policy coordination and implementation of rules and procedures. In their recent piece in Foreign Affairs, David G. Victor and Linda Yueh conclude that (global) energy governance requires “a mechanism for coordinating hard-nosed initiatives focused on delivering energy security and environmental protection." The US, a country with strong institutions and regulatory bodies, must take a leadership role to ensure that ECPA avoid the fate of previous regional energy initiatives by articulating clear mechanisms for making decisions and resolving conflicts, establishing performance metrics, coordinating policies across countries, and monitoring and evaluating outcomes. In other words, the US, as author of the ECPA initiative, has the added responsibility of guaranteeing its success. The energy security of the US and of our Latin American partners cannot afford another failed effort to manage the region’s energy problems. If successful, the ECPA could serve as a model of regional, and possibly global, energy governance, replacing the international and national institutions that are “struggling to remain relevant.” Second, the US must leverage the opportunity presented by the creation of the ECPA to strengthen and expand strategic, bilateral energy arrangements with our resource-wealthy neighbors, just as China, Iran, Russia and India are doing. America should not view ECPA as a substitute for bilateral arrangements, but as a long-overdue occasion to jump start relations and create bold, new partnerships. To this end, the US should remove the $.58 tariff on imported Brazilian ethanol, a policy measure which has paralyzed efforts to move forward on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on biofuels, signed by Brazil and the US in 2007, in which the two countries expressed an intention to cooperate in research and the production and export of ethanol, with the goal of developing a global biofuels’ market. The current landscape is ripe for technological partnerships which should provide the cornerstone of strategic, bilateral energy partnerships. According to EIA’s World Energy Outlook of 2007, Latin America needs to invest approximately $1.3 trillion in overall investment in its energy sector by 2030. Moreover, the potential for renewable energy production “has remained unexplored due to engineering difficulties, environmental concerns and lack of investment.” America’s technological expertise—wielded by our private sector companies, research institutions and unique configuration of national laboratories—could assist and support strategic partnerships between the US and our Latin American neighbors. These sorts of strategic collaborations could enable the Western Hemisphere to become the global behemoth in renewable energy and biofuels, an area in which we are quickly losing ground to China. America stands at a crossroads. On the one hand, we can continue our muddled, reactive engagement with Latin America. Or, we can forge a bold new vision of collaborative engagement to strengthen our energy security and manage the region’s energy problems. Our global counterparts recognize that the countries south of the border are critical to their energy security interests. Will America?

#### Independently, US-Cuba energy cooperation is key to US energy security.

Juan A. B. Belt, 5-06-2009, Director of the Office of Infrastructure and Engineering at the U.S. Agency for International Development, “The Electric Power Sector in Cuba: Potential Ways to Increase Efficiency and Sustainability,” <http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO407.pdf>

Investments in alternative energy Energy security has vaulted to the top of both the U.S. and Cuban political agendas amid concerns about supply interruptions and rising prices, sparking a renewed search for viable alternative fuels. For the USG, an important element of an effective energy strategy from both cost and environmental perspectives lies in forging technological and open trading relationships in the Western Hemisphere. For the GOC, upgrading the island’s decaying energy infrastructure and promoting alternative energy sources are national security priorities referred to as the ‘‘energy revolution.’’ GOC officials indicated to staff that they are particularly interested in wind power, while other renewable energy projects are receiving support from the United Nations Development Program, which maintains an office in Havana and finances, among other projects, household solar photovoltaics and hydro power for use in rural areas. In addition, the GOC is encouraging foreign investment to develop its oil fields, with probable hydrocarbon reserves of five billion barrels, according to estimates by the United States Geological Survey—significant for Cuban energy consumption and comparable to the oil reserves of Ecuador. In staff’s meetings, GOC officials particularly welcomed U.S. participation in renewable energy development. If restrictions were lifted, U.S. technology could help ensure environmentally-sustainable development of Cuba’s energy sector. Most importantly, cooperation in this area would be consistent with long-term U.S. interests in energy security and efficiency in the region.

#### US energy insecurity causes global conflict and instability – alternative energy provides a key cushion.

Nader Elhefnawy, Ph.D in Literature from the University of Miami, as well as a B.A. in International Relations from Florida International University, and has published widely on both literature and international affairs, 03-05-2006, “US: Army War College on energy security” <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2006-03-05/us-army-war-college-energy-security>

Toward a Long-Range Energy Security Policy Events in recent decades have produced a broader definition of security.1 The entry of phrases like “environmental security,” “resource conflict,” and “energy security” into the lexicon of security experts provides examples of this changing dialogue, but these concepts remain on the margins of the discussion for the most part. Where US energy policy is concerned, the debate generally has been limited to arguments that the United States must preserve its access to the oil reserves of the Middle East and Central Asia, and a vague sense that domestic energy supplies would be highly desirable. Cornucopian optimists continue to insist that oil will remain abundant and cheap for the foreseeable future, and indeed more concern is expressed over the unsavory character of governments in major oil-producing states than over the finite nature of the resources themselves. The vagaries of oil politics (and the ecological problems raised by carbon emissions) are indeed serious problems, and they are not entirely separable from the questions this article means to raise, but the focus here will be on the problem of fossil fuel scarcity at the global level. This article seeks to provide an overview of the situation, including the prospects for an economy based on renewable energy, the security problems likely to result from tightening oil supplies, and a possible basis for making the transition to alternatives widely acknowledged as inevitable in the long run. The Outlook for Energy At the time of this writing, the price of oil has hit $70 per barrel and is projected to rise even higher in the near term. While not a record when the figure is adjusted for inflation, this was still commonly taken as a sign that the era of “cheap energy” may be coming to an end. Other numbers bear this out. Annual worldwide oil consumption is roughly 29 billion barrels a year, and estimated to be rising at two percent annually.2 While there is widespread disagreement over their actual size, the world’s total “proven” reserves of oil come to roughly one trillion barrels. A linear projection has oil supplies running out around 2030 after a long period of rising prices and tightening supplies, likely to begin after production peaks, generally expected to be sometime between 2010 and 2020—maybe just five years away. The consequences of a shortfall in oil supplies on the scale of such predictions are as obvious as they are terrifying. A prolonged economic contraction and possibly a desperate scramble for resources that might bring major powers to blows are not out of the question, especially when the cost of other problems likely to place more pressure on the energy base (climate change, water shortages, population growth, etc.) are taken into account.3 In the absolute worst case, modernity might simply grind to a halt, a catastrophe that James Howard Kunstler describes in his recent book on the subject, The Long Emergency. Of course, linear projections have their limitations, and any number of developments could throw them off—unanticipated changes in the character of economic productivity, or an economic slowdown, for instance. Actual oil reserves are likely larger than the proven figure, which would delay the crunch for some years. Rising energy needs will mean higher prices and shorter supplies, which will stretch out the supply by encouraging conservation.4 They also will produce increased efforts to supplement oil with more plentiful coal, “heavy oil,” and natural gas. The degree to which these alternatives can pick up the slack, however, is a subject of intense disagreement, as all these resources will mean higher energy prices.5 Moreover, they do not eliminate the problem of the finite amount of these resources, with natural gas reserves particularly unlikely to last all that much longer than oil. In short, the oil age may end within a generation given the present economic picture, with potentially dire consequences. The prospects of alternatives to fossil fuels are therefore the key issue, such as the expanded use of nuclear energy or, ideally, renewable energy sources. Many observers predict that it will be decades at the very least before these inherently more difficult energy sources can be exploited on a sufficiently large scale to meet the needs of advanced societies. The use of renewables has expanded rapidly in recent years, but these energy sources still supply only a small part of overall consumption, even in leaders like Denmark, where wind energy provides 10 to 15 percent of that country’s electricity. If anything, given the scope of the problem and the length of time for which it has been around, the pace of actual progress has been frustratingly glacial. While the pace may be accelerating, a gap between desired levels of energy output and those actually attainable through these means is conceivable. Nonetheless, the doomsday scenario posited by Kunstler and others is not a necessary outcome. The problem is not that substitutes do not exist, but that they are, in the view of many analysts, too expensive or too unwieldy to support desired levels of economic productivity and living standards. There is little doubt that there would be some significant transition costs, as there are in every major economic change. Observers hostile to these technologies, however, routinely play on popular fears that any change in the status quo will force Americans to give up their cars, or kill economic growth. Their exaggerations aside, such arguments conveniently neglect the fact that the exhaustion of oil resources in an unprepared world will be incalculably more devastating than any plausible adaptation, and that the earlier the transition begins, the easier it will be to spread the costs over time. More important, such analyses tend to suffer from three major deficiencies that exaggerate the difficulties involved with alternatives. The first is that calculating the costs and benefits of oil against other energy sources is far more complicated than studies pointing to the cost-ineffectiveness of renewables admit. Many costs of fossil fuel use are easily externalized, distorting the picture. The cost of pollution, military expenditures aimed at securing oil sources, and other kinds of subsidies mask the actual price of “cheap” oil—as do the very low gasoline taxes Americans enjoy.6 Certain savings from the distributed energy production that renewables might allow, while potentially substantial, are not easily or automatically factored into such calculations.7 Moreover, solar, wind, and other sources will become relatively less expensive as oil prices rise. And it also should be noted that many experts regard wind power as already competitive with fossil fuels in some geographically favorable areas. The tendency to underestimate the gains that alternatives may bring is reinforced by a broader tendency to stress costs more than benefits, not only on the part of oil industry boosters, but generally due to the changing nature of political debate.8 The potential for a rapid changeover also tends to be underestimated, observers forgetting that comparably large transformations have happened before in a relatively short period of time. Oil became cheaper than coal only in the mid-1950s, a mere 50 years ago. As a result, coal went from generating 100 percent of Europe’s thermal electricity to less than half by 1973, oil picking up much of the slack even as overall energy production grew substantially.9 The second problem with such predictions is their built-in assumption that the relevant technologies will be static. Future improvements cannot be taken for granted, but are a near-certainty nonetheless, given the prolonged drop in the price of solar- and wind-generated energy since the 1970s, and the prospects for both continued research and development and mass production. The already low price of wind power can drop further still, given the potential of innovations like flying wind generators. Capable of exploiting the jet stream and returning the electricity to the ground through a tether, a few clusters of six hundred each could meet the entire energy needs of an industrial nation like Canada.10 There are even strong indications that electricity produced by photovoltaic solar cells will, assuming sufficient effort, become competitive in price with even subsidized, deceptively cheap oil and gas in a matter of years rather than decades. This may be due to new, low-cost materials; designs which use a greater part of the electromagnetic spectrum; more efficient use of their surface area; easily installed, self-assembling liquid solar cell coatings; and architectural structures maximizing output.11 Several of these developments could be flashes in the pan, something to which energy production has sadly been prone; for half a century fusion power has been “30 years away.” Nevertheless, given the long-term trend of improvement and the number of directions from which the problem is being attacked, some approaches will likely pay off. A third problem is the tendency to view the matter as a choice between the outright replacement of fossil fuels or nothing at all. The reality, however, is that partial solutions can provide a cushion until a more complete transition can be brought about. This being the case, it matters little if renewable energy production will at first be undergirded by more traditional supplies. Solar cells and wind turbines will be made in factories powered by oil-burning plants. To state this as proof that alternatives to oil are unrealistic is nonsense. The energy base of the future will have to be created using the energy base existing now, just as the oil-based economy was built using previously existing sources. Of greater concern, many schemes for a hydrogen economy involve the extraction of hydrogen from natural gas or other fossil fuels, with power supplied by traditional electricity sources like oil, coal, and nuclear generators. Hydrogen, however, also can be extracted directly from water through photoelectrochemical processes or electrolysis, which could be powered by cheap wind and solar energy.12 The problem, then, is less the “technical ingenuity” needed to produce these technologies than the “social ingenuity” which will implement the technologies on a national and global basis.13 Renewable energy technology can potentially do the job; what is really at issue is whether or not good use will be made of that potential. Nonetheless, the political problem posed by the demise of the fossil fuel era is not limited to the challenge of constructing a new energy base. Security Concerns Even without taking into account related problems like the greenhouse effect, the security problems posed by the exhaustion of supplies of easily accessible, cheap oil and gas are highly varied and daunting. The likely result would be the exacerbation of familiar problems like resource conflict, weapons proliferation, and state failure. However, other problems are more novel, not least of all the potential for changes in the international balance of power based not only on which countries control the lion’s share of the world’s fossil fuel supplies, but which are most dependent on those supplies. New Resource Wars The most obvious concern is a reinvigoration of resource conflict. As the oil deposits believed to lie under a disputed piece of ground or sea floor become more valuable economically, governments might be more prepared to fight for them. Since the War on Terrorism began in 2001, China, seeing itself in a more vulnerable strategic position, has been more willing to negotiate its claims over the South China Sea.14 However, the issue has yet to be resolved, and an oil-hungry China can yet take a harder line, especially if this becomes more profitable. China also has behaved provocatively elsewhere, sending naval vessels into Japanese claims around the Senkaku Islands.15 Similar conflicts remain unresolved in other regions, including sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.16 Moreover, even states unlikely to go to war over territory would face greater prospects of involvement in an armed conflict, and find a powerful incentive to develop and deploy long-range power-projection capabilities. Resource wars also can be a cause of internal conflicts or unrest. The war in the Indonesian region of Aceh is partly driven by the government’s determination to hold onto an oil-rich region, and the resentment of the inhabitants has been partly a response to the damage oil production has done to local communities. Oil also was at stake in the fight over East Timor, which on the first day of its independence concluded a deal with Australia regarding its oil-rich offshore claims. The problem may in fact be exacerbated by certain solutions to the world’s energy problems. To give one example, the development of new technologies which permit cost-effective drilling for oil in deeper waters could create new flash-points. Cheaper deep-water drilling, for instance, would make the oil under the South China Sea a more valuable prize.17 As certain kinds of alternative energy technologies are developed, the value of certain resources is also likely to become more strategically important (like platinum for hydrogen fuel cells), with similar results. As the situation stands, two-thirds of what were the high seas in 1958 have been “territorialized” to some degree. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea extended territorial waters from three to 12 miles, recognized 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones and 350-mile continental shelf claims, and permitted the enclosure of the internal waters of archipelagic states like Japan.18 At the same time, the mineral wealth of these regions has remained largely unexploited. While the ambitious ocean mining schemes of 30 or 40 years ago amounted to little, rising energy costs and improved technology could give them a future—and make the right to profit from them a new cause of conflict. Increased Disorder Resource conflict, however, is likely to be confined within particular regions. The economic effects of an oil shortage would be global. With less energy at their disposal, societies and governments everywhere will have more difficulty coping with problems likely to be of a more severe character—burgeoning populations, climate change, and shortages of such critical resources as water and arable land. The problem of the salinated and damaged farmland on which a third of the world’s crops is presently grown is a case in point. Aside from expensive repair, costly methods like drip-irrigation will be needed to keep such lands arable, necessitating more, not less energy.19 Another likely ramification of such an energy shock is a new wave of debt crises and state failures. As in the 1970s, those most vulnerable would be developing nations short on hard currency and dependent on oil imports, which might see their development progress strangled by a spike in prices. If the prospect of 2050s America resembling a Mad Max movie is far-fetched and extreme, it is not so for less fortunate regions where such regressions have already happened, as in Somalia.20 Lacking appropriate or adequate capital, institutions, and technical knowledge, their situations will much more readily degenerate to the point of collapse.21 And, as events in recent years have demonstrated, advanced nations will not easily insulate themselves from these problems, given the refuge for criminal activity and terrorism such areas will provide, as well as the waves of refugees they may generate. It may even be possible for practitioners of a radical ideology to seize power in a major state. Even without that happening, we could see an inward turn on the part of major powers seeking to establish self-contained economic empires, as happened during the Great Depression.

#### Energy shocks spark US lash-out and national outrage – causes global wars.

King 2008 (Neil, Wall Street Journal analyst regarded as being in the “economic mainstream,” whose involvement as an analyst has enhanced greatly the credibility of peak oil concerns, “Peak Oil: A Survey of Security Concerns,” Center for a New American Security Working Paper, September 08, <http://se1.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=ISN&fileid=7D4B6FDF-1951-EBEC-FA16-8A86D1F74087&lng=en>)

In the United States, the prospect of diminished oil supplies and skyrocketing prices raises fears of recession, ebbing international status, and a transformation of the American way of life. In the big developing countries of Asia—above all China— the same prospect evokes images of mass unrest and the denial of potential superpower status. No country has been more determined than China over the last decade to assure that its rapid rise isn’t tripped up by a lack of energy. In Angola, Nigeria, Sudan, Iran, and across Central Asia, the Chinese government and Chinese state companies are going to extraordinary lengths to build infrastructure, create alliances, and sew up oil contracts. The ultimate aim is to lock in a number of long-term exclusive arrangements with suppliers in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia that would give China the assurance it seeks that no supply disruption will derail its economic ambitions. China’s quest to build a major deep-sea naval force, analysts say, is driven in part by its desire to protect critical sea lanes like the Strait of Malacca, through which all Asia-bound Middle East oil must pass. The Defense Department, in its more recent report on the “Military Power of the People’s Republic of China,” said that beyond Beijing’s usual fixation on Taiwan, an “analysis of China’s military acquisitions and strategic thinking suggests Beijing is also developing capabilities for use in other contingencies, such as conflict over resources.”5 The Bush administration has also cast an increasingly wary eye on Russia’s myriad efforts to tighten its energy grip over Europe, particularly when it comes to Europe’s increasing dependence on imported natural gas. Beyond its own abundant supply routes to Europe from its own territory, Russia’s Gazprom is now busy working to lock down supply arrangements from the Caspian, Iran, and North Africa. The recent fighting in Georgia has highlighted Western Europe’s vulnerabilities on the energy front. A key energy conduit, Georgia is home to the only oil pipeline outside of Russian control that can move the oil riches of the Caspian region to markets in the West. In the first week of its August war with Georgia, Russia dropped bombs within feet of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and took down a railroad bridge that carried Kazak crude to the Georgian port of Poti. At the same time, many of the recent fulminations in Congress over Saudi Arabia’s alleged unwillingness to boost its output illustrate that a strong sense of resource entitlement continues to live on within the U.S. political establishment. While Rep. Ros-Lehtinen demands heatedly that the Saudis pump more oil to help commuters in Miami, she also opposes calls to open Florida’s Gulf coast to oil exploration. Many commentators in the United States and abroad have begun to wrestle with the question of whether soaring oil prices and market volatility could spark an outright oil war between major powers—possibly ignited not by China or Russia, but by the United States. In a particularly pointed speech on the topic in May, James Russell of the Naval Postgraduate School in California addressed what he called the increasing militarization of international energy security. “Energy security is now deemed so central to ‘national security’ that threats to the former are liable to be reflexively interpreted as threats to the latter,” he told a gathering at the James A. Baker Institute for Public Policy at Houston’s Rice University.6 The possibility that a large-scale war could break out over access to dwindling energy resources, he wrote, “is one of the most alarming prospects facing the current world system.”7 Mr. Russell figures among a growing pool of analysts who worry in particular about the psychological readiness of the United States to deal rationally with a sustained oil shock. Particularly troubling is the increasing perception within Congress that the financial side of the oil markets no longer functions rationally. It has either been taken over by speculators or is being manipulated, on the supply side, by producers who are holding back on pumping more oil in order to drive up the price. A breakdown in trust for the oil markets, these analysts fear, could spur calls for government action—even military intervention. “The perceptive chasm in the United States between new [oil] market realities and their impact on the global distribution of power will one day close,” Mr. Russell said. “And when it does, look out.”

#### Those conflicts go nuclear.

Islam Yasin Qasem 2007, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Politics and Social Sciences at the University of Pompeu Fabra (UPF) in Barcelona, MA in International Affairs from Columbia, July 9, 2007, “The Coming Warfare of Oil Shortage,” online: <http://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_islam_ya_070709_the_coming_warfare_o.htm>

Recognizing the strategic value of oil for their national interests, superpowers will not hesitate to unleash their economic and military power to ensure secure access to oil resources, triggering worldwide tension, if not armed conflict. And while superpowers like the United States maintain superior conventional military power, in addition to their nuclear power, some weaker states are already nuclearly armed, others are seeking nuclear weapons. In an anarchic world with many nuclear-weapon states feeling insecure, and a global economy in downward spiral, **the chances of using nuclear weapons** in pursues of national interests **are** high.

#### Obama lifted restrictions on academic exchange this year – that non-uniques their offense but doesn’t solve the aff.

Douglas Fehlen1 and Arturo López-Levy2, 1-03-2013, Communications Specialist, Writer, Editor, and Content Developer with expertise in Print, Digital, and New Media1, Ph.D. candidate and research associate at the University of Denver’s Josef Korbel School of International Studies2, “Scholar Advocates for Increased Academic Partnership Between #U.S. and #Cuba,” <http://cubamas.wordpress.com/2013/01/03/scholar-advocates-for-increased-academic-partnership-between-u-s-and-cuba/>

In January, President Obama lifted restrictions on academic travel to Cuba, making it easier for students to partake in educational exchanges with the island country. To get an expert’s perspective on that decision, Education-Portal.com spoke with Arturo López-Levy, Ph.D. candidate and research associate at the University of Denver’s Josef Korbel School of International Studies. López-Levy is a passionate advocate for increasing shared educational opportunities between the U.S. and Cuba. By Douglas Fehlen Education-Portal.com: In a ForeignPolicy.com article, you praised President Obama’s January decision to ease restrictions on academic travel to Cuba. Why do you support this policy change? For decades, the United States has maintained no formal diplomatic relations with Cuba, enforcing severe travel and trade restrictions against the country all the while. Arturo López-Levy, Ph.D. candidate and research associate at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, is a longtime critic of American policy toward the Caribbean nation. The University of Denver scholar believes that recent changes in American policy – including relaxed regulations on educational, cultural and religious travel – have the potential to transform the relationship between the two countries. Arturo López-Levy: Education exchanges will foster rational conversations between Cuban and American societies. This by itself is a very positive advance in the two countries’ relationship, a political area in which passion, offenses and political retribution have been the norm. There are important differences between the political systems of Cuba and the U.S. Furthermore, there are important disagreements between Cuban and American narratives about the history of the two countries and their relations. Most Cubans, for instance, would never talk about the 1898 Hispanic-Cuban-American War or the 1962 Missile Crisis without mentioning the central role of their compatriots. But the two societies, and even the two governments, are not destined to be enemies. Cuban nationalism and a U.S.-led world order are not necessarily incompatible. The optimal way to manage differences and destroy negative stereotypes between these two countries is through a free flow of travelers and ideas across national boundaries. In fact, as the Helsinki process proved in Europe, this is not only the most effective way but also the most democratic. President Obama’s decision occurred at a strategic moment in Cuban history, just after the power transition from Fidel to Raul Castro and in the middle of important processes of economic reform and political liberalization. Cubans on the island and the Diaspora are talking about national reconciliation and dialogue. A discussion of ways in which the U.S. and Cuba might cooperate in almost every area is long overdue. EP: What types of education exchanges are now permissible between the U.S. and Cuba? Are you aware of additional programs in the works? ALL: It’s important not to have excessive optimism about the Cuban government’s attitude toward academic exchanges with the U.S. Those exchanges need goodwill and authorization from both governments. By allowing scholars, professors and students (graduate and undergraduate) to participate and even sponsor academic events, trips and workshops in Cuba, the White House dismantled the restrictions imposed by George W. Bush in 2004 – a counterproductive policy and an affront to American traditional liberties. The fact that some Cuban government regulations conflict with international human rights to travel and limit the scope of educational exchanges does not excuse Washington’s own controls. Hence, President Obama’s January decision allowing accredited educational and cultural institutions to sponsor travel to Cuba for academic, cultural and educational exchanges goes in the right direction. History proves that migratory and travel relations are intertwined with the general atmosphere of the political links between the two countries. Currently, the Cuban government violates the right to travel and the associated right to education of scholars and students when it demands from them exit visas to leave the island. Cuban government officials have presented these controls as emergency measures against a hostile U.S. policy. Following this logic, the Cuban government would probably lift many of these restrictions as part of the current reform, particularly if it enjoys a friendly international environment. A total dismantling of the travel controls is today unthinkable. In Washington, the House Foreign Relations Committee is chaired by Cuban American Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a fierce opponent to any relaxation of the embargo. In Havana, Raul Castro is not interested in clashes with the U.S., but he is not a misunderstood democrat either. Furthermore, there is a combination of Cuban paranoia with an openly declared goal of the U.S. government to use every single channel (religious, academic, cultural, educational, etc.) to promote a regime change in the island. EP: What benefits do you predict increased academic exchange will have for Cuba’s university community? What do U.S. institutions and students stand to gain from it? ALL: Because the new openness toward the outside world has gathered momentum in the last years, it’s predictable that Cuban universities would try to foster academic exchanges with overseas institutions. In the case of the U.S., Cuba has been disconnected from the American market but not from its academic community. Most American educational exchanges with Cuba are concentrated in some universities and centers, particularly in Havana, and in some cases reach the same people. American and Cuban institutions should make an effort to diversify the participants in terms of regions, race and gender. It’s important to reach out not only to official institutions but also to an emerging sector of non-state actors such as bloggers, independent researchers, language professors and artists. Cubans have the highest level of education and school attendance in Latin America, with widely disseminated language skills. Among other things, American academic exchanges with Cuba can assist the education of a new generation of businesspeople, managers, economists and accountants urgently needed for economic reform. There are already American students in Cuba, particularly in the Latin American School of Medicine. An expansion of these exchanges will enable American students, teachers and scholars of all levels to take advantage of the growing educational market in Cuba. Study in Cuba is today a fairly inexpensive alternative for many Caribbean, Latin American and some minority students from the U.S. This could be easily expanded if the Cuban government allows joint ventures in education with foreign institutions. President Obama’s decision to allow short-term non-credit related educational visits would enhance the ability of ordinary Americans to learn about Cuban culture and life and see firsthand the counterproductive character of the U.S. embargo against the island. EP: Do you feel current regulations go far enough to foster multinational academic partnerships, or would you like to see greater cooperation between the two countries? Are there measures you would propose to increase collaboration? ALL: The policy changes of January 2011 are just the beginning of an urgently needed reversal of Washington’s policy of isolation against Cuba. All travel controls, outside obvious national security areas, are a relic of the Cold War and an infringement of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is as valid for Cuba as it is for the U.S. Different from the Helsinki process in Europe, when the U.S. built bridges for a flow of people and ideas across countries, Washington has insisted on adding its own walls to those erected by Cuban communists. The meager results of such policies are logical consequences of their irrationality and double standards. The Helms-Burton Act dictates unacceptable conditions to Cuban sovereignty and even disrespects Cuban civil society by not asking the informed consent of all Cuban partners for the programs of USAID. The U.S. cannot encourage a democratic environment for academic exchanges if it says it seeks respect for human rights in Cuba but then curtails the rights of its own citizens to travel to Cuba and implements policies that violate international law. Since the end of the Cold War, the inclusion in the State Department list of terrorist countries has served as the legal and political underpinning for most travel controls against Cuba. The blacklisting of Cuba by the State Department is not the result of serious national security analysis but a simple subordination of American national interests to South Florida electoral politics. That said, American regulations that treat traveling to Cuba and the participation of Cubans in academic events in the U.S. are enforced with maximal zealotry. In 2004, three years after the September 11th tragedy, a scandal broke when it was found that 21 officials at the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Treasury Department were assigned to monitor transactions with Cuba, while only three were searching the assets of Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein combined. The American academic community should become active in this debate, assess whether Cuba represents a real threat for the U.S. and bring the experiences of the Helsinki process to the discussion of the bilateral relations between Cuba and the U.S. The Obama Administration should seek a wide-ranging dialogue with Havana to set the relations between the two societies on a course towards normal educational relations. Congress must eliminate all restrictions to the use of government or private funds for academic exchanges between Cuba and the U.S. All international institutions, such as those of the Inter-American Consortium of Universities, must be released from any limitation to invite Cubans to participate or benefit from their academic and educational events or fellowships.

# 2AC

## Topicality

### 2AC – AT: Economic Contacts

#### Counter-interpretation – economic engagement includes state backed knowledge sharing, trade and long term investment

Delury 12 (John, senior fellow of the Center on U.S.-China Relations and an Assistant Professor of International Studies at Yonsei University, taught Chinese history and politics at Columbia, Brown, and Peking University, and received a PhD in Chinese history at Yale, “Triple-Pronged Engagement: China's Approach to North Korea,” American Foreign Policy Interests. Mar/Apr2012, Vol. 34 Issue 2, p69-73. 5p, Ebsco)

Economic engagement includes state-backed assistance, market-based provincial trade, and long term strategic investment. Assistance includes technical assistance, knowledge sharing and human capacity building—in effect, educating North Korean counterparts on the China model of market transition and authoritarian capitalism. What is hoped is that trade will stimulate growth in bordering Jilin and Liaoning provinces. Long-term investment is aimed at North Korean mineral resources and, perhaps, an East Sea port (at Rason).

## Nietzsche

### 2AC – AT: Nietzsche

#### Framework – we should weigh the aff against the alternative – constant changes in the political sphere means only plan focused debate can allow for active engagement with Latin America

Thomas E. Keller et al, James K. Whittaker and Tracey K. Burke, Spring/Summer 2001 (Thomas E. Keller is assistant professor, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, James K. Whittaker is professor, and Tracey K. Burke is a doctoral student, School of Social Work, University of Washington, Council on Social Work Education, “Student Debates in Policy Courses: Promoting Policy Practice Skills and Knowledge through Active Learning,” jstor >:)

The authors believe that involving students in substantive debates challenges them to learn and grow in the fashion described by Dewey and Kolb. Participation in a debate stimulates clarification and critical evaluation of the evidence, logic, and values underlying one's own policy position. In addition, to debate effectively students must understand and accurately evaluate the opposing perspective. The ensuing tension between two distinct but legitimate views is designed to yield a reevaluation and reconstruc tion of knowledge and beliefs pertaining to the issue. Debates and Active Learning Dewey theorized that learning and re flective thinking are based on active engagement with a specific problem or issue (Baker, 1955; Dewey, 1939). This prin ciple underlies contemporary and widely held notions that students learn more effectively by actively analyzing, discuss ing, and applying content in meaningful ways rather than passively absorbing in formation through a lecture (Bean, 1996; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Lewis & Williams, 1994; Meyers & Jones, 1993). Experien tial education immerses students in an experience so that they may learn by doing. Experiential learning, in the form of the practicum placement, is a key ele ment in social work education. However, few social work students enroll in politi cal or policy oriented practica. In a sur vey of 161 CSWE-accredited programs (131 BSW, 30 MSW), Wolk and colleagues (1996) found that less than half offered practice in government relations (BSW=20%, MSW=47%) and even fewer had placements in policy advocacy/de velopment (BSW=15%, MSW=33%). Moreover, programs typically reported only one or two students participating in these types of placements, with the larg est representation at a single school be ing 9 out of 250 MSW students (Wolk et al., 1996). Because few students receive policy-related field education, introducing students to policy relevant skills and experiences via active learning exercises in the classroom assumes greater importance. Bonwell and Eison (1991) describe the general characteristics of active learn ing in the classroom: • Students are involved in more than listening. • Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' skills. • Students are involved in higher-order think ing (analysis, synthesis, evaluation). • Students are engaged in activities. • Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes and val ues. (p. 2) Experiential learning in the classroom may involve case studies, role plays, debates, simulations, or other activities that allow students to make connections among theory, knowledge, and experience (Lewis & Williams, 1994). These active learning strategies encourage stu dents to think on their feet, to question their own values and responses to situa tions, and to consider new ways of think ing in contexts which they may experience more intensely and, consequently, may remember longer (Meyers&Jones, 1993). Educational Effectiveness of Debates Since its origins in classical times, aca demic debate has been recognized as one of the best methods of learning and applying the attributes of critical think ing (Freeley, 1996). Recent empirical studies of students participating in com petitive interschool forensics societies illustrate the link between debating and proficiency in critical thinking. Colbert (1987) found that students involved in intercollegiate debating for one year showed a larger pretest to posttest gain on a critical thinking test than a nondebating control group. Likewise, Shinn (1995) discovered that, after sta tistically controlling for intelligence, high school students who engaged in two years of competitive debating exhibited higher levels of critical thinking than a compari son group of nondebaters. Debates have been recommended as a strategy to engage students in active learn ing in the classroom (Bean, 1996; Bonwell &Eison, 1991; Schroeder&Ebert, 1983). The use of in-class debates has been re ported in subjects as diverse as sociology and dentistry (Huryn, 1986; Scannapieco, 1997). Nevertheless, a search of the lit erature revealed no reference to student debates within social work education, despite evidence that debates have been assigned in some social work courses (Zlotnik, Rome,& DePanfilis, 1998). Fur thermore, the authors discovered only two studies, both by Combs and Bourne (1989, 1994), which provide empirical evidence of the value of debates in a classroom context. In their initial report, Combs and Bourne (1989) presented findings on the use of debates in two upper level business courses with a com bined enrollment of 59 students. Nearly 80% of the students (n=47) believed the debates provided them with a better un derstanding of both sides of the issues than a standard lecture format would have. Likewise, 66% (n=39) felt they had learned more than if the course material had been presented in a lecture. Another important finding was that students' con fidence in their public speaking skills increased following the debates. In gen eral, there was satisfaction with the de bates. At the beginning of the course only 57% of the students (n=35) looked forward to the upcoming debates, but by the end of the course 85% (n=50) stated that they enjoyed the debates, and 71% (n=42) wished debates were used in other courses. Combs and Bourne (1994) ex tended their initial study to cover a five year period with a combined sample of over 500 students. The results were even stronger in favor of using debates, per haps reflecting improvement in the in structors' application of the debate format over time.

#### Extinction requires rereading Nietzsche – he couldn’t have anticipated modern threats

Winchester ‘94

(James Winchester, Professor of Philosophy, Georgia State University, 1994, “Nietzsche’s Aesthetic Turn.”)

As uninformed as it is to assume that there is an easy connec­tion between his thought and National Socialism/ it is neither diffi­cult nor misguided to consider his lack of social concern. Nietzsche saw one danger in our century, but failed to see a second. His critique of herd mentality reads like a prophetic warning against the dicta­torships that have plagued and continue to haunt the twentieth cen­tury. But the context of our world has changed in ways that Nietzsche never imagined. We now have, as never before, the ability to destroy the planet. The threat of the destruction of *a* society is not new. From the beginnings of Western literature in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* the Western mind has contemplated the destruction that, for example, warfare has wrought. Although the Trojan war destroyed almost everyone involved, both the victors and the van­quished, it did not destroy the entire world. In the twentieth century, what has changed is the scale of destruction. If a few countries destroy the ozone layer, the whole world perishes, or if two countries fight a nuclear or biological war, the whole planet is threatened. This is something new in the history of the world. The interconnectedness of the entire world has grown dramatically. We live, as never before, in a global community where our actions effect ever-larger numbers of the world's population. The earth's limits have become more apparent. Our survival depends on working together to solve problems like global pollution. Granted mass movements have instituted reigns of terror, but our survival as a planet is becoming ever-more predicated on community efforts of the sort that Nietzsche's thought seems to denigrate if not preclude. / I do not criticize Nietzsche for failing to predict the rise of problems requiring communal efforts such as the disintegration of the ozone layer, acid rain, and the destruction of South American rain forests. Noting his lack of foresight and his occasional extrem­ism, I propose, in a Nietzschean spirit, to reconsider his particular tastes, without abandoning his aesthetic turn. Statements like "com­mon good is a self-contradiction" are extreme, even for Nietzsche. He was not always so radical. Yet there is little room in Nietzsche's egoism for the kind of cooperation and sense of community that is today so important for our survival. I am suggesting that the time for Nietzsche's radical individualism is past. There are compelling prag­matic and aesthetic reasons why we should now be more open to the positive possibilities of living in a community. There is nothing new about society's need to work together. What has changed is the level of interconnectedness that the technological age has pressed upon us.

#### Cause for Joy. You can’t just order someone to be happy – it requires a reason.

Victor Frankl, Holocaust survivor; M.D., PH.D.; Visiting Professor, Harvard University; received over 29 honorary doctorate degrees, 2K, “Man’s Search for Meaning.”

Let us first ask ourselves what should be understood by "a tragic optimism." In brief it means that one is, and remains, optimistic in spite of the "tragic triad," as it is called in logotherapy, a triad which consists of those aspects of human existence which may be circumscribed by: (1) pain; (2) guilt; and (3) death. This chapter, in fact, raises the question. How is it possible to say yes to life in spite of all that? How, to pose the question differently, can life retain its potential meaning in spite of its tragic aspects? After all, "saying yes to life in spite of everything," to use the phrase in which the title of a German book of mine is couched, presupposes that life is potentially meaningful under any conditions, even those which are most miserable. And this in turn presupposes the human capacity to creatively turn life's negative aspects into something positive or constructive. In other words, what matters is to make the best of any given situation. "The best," however, is that which in Latin is called optimum—hence the reason I speak of a tragic optimism, that is, an optimism in the face of tragedy and in view of the human potential which at its best always allows for: (1) turning suffering into a human achievement and accomplishment; (2) deriving from guilt the opportunity to change oneself for the better; and (3) deriving from life's transitoriness an incentive to take responsible action. / It must be kept in mind, however, that optimism is not anything to be commanded or ordered. One cannot even force oneself to be optimistic indiscriminately, against all odds, against all hope. And what is true for hope is also true for the other two components of the triad inasmuch as faith and love cannot be commanded or ordered either. / To the European, it is a characteristic of the American culture that, again and again, one is commanded and ordered to "be happy." But happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue. One must have a reason to "be happy." Once the reason is found, however, one becomes happy automatically. *As we see, a human being is not one in pursuit of happiness but rather in search of a reason to become happy*, last but not least, through actualizing the potential meaning inherent and dormant in a given situation.

#### Ontology of Freedom. Seeking to better the world is the best reason – it articulates a fresh way of being.

Todd May, Ph.D.; Professor of Philosophy @ Clemson University, 2005, Philosophy and Social Criticism 31 (5-6)

This moment when you are seeking to change the world, whether by making a suggestion in a meeting or singing at a rally or marching in silence or asking for a signature on a petition, is not a moment in which you don’t exist. It’s not a moment of yours that you sacrifice for others so that it no longer belongs to you. It remains a moment of your life, sedimenting in you to make you what you will become, emerging out of a past that is yours as well. What will you make of it, this moment? How will you be with others, those others around you who also do not cease to exist when they begin to organize or to protest or to resist? The illusion is to think that this has nothing to do with you. You’ve made a decision to participate in world-changing. Will that be all there is to it? Will it seem to you a simple sacrifice, for this small period of time, of who you are for the sake of others? Are you, for this moment, a political ascetic? Asceticism like that is dangerous. Freedom lies not in our distance from the world but in the historically fragile and contingent ways we are folded into it, just as we ourselves are folds of it. If we take Merleau-Ponty’s Being not as a rigid foundation or a truth behind appearances but as the historical folding and refolding of a univocity, then our freedom lies in the possibility of other foldings. Merleau-Ponty is not insensitive to this point. His elusive concept of the invisible seems to gesture in this direction. Of painting, he writes: the proper essence of the visible is to have a layer of invisibility in the strict sense, which it makes present as a certain absence . . . There is that which reaches the eye directly, the frontal properties of the visible; but there is also that which reaches it from below . . . and that which reaches it from above . . . where it no longer participates in the heaviness of origins but in free accomplishments.9 Elsewhere, in The Visible and the Invisible, he says: if . . . the surface of the visible, is doubled up over its whole extension with an invisible reserve; and if, finally, in our flesh as the flesh of things, the actual, empirical, ontic visible, by a sort of folding back, invagination, or padding, exhibits a visibility, a possibility that is not the shadow of the actual but its principle . . . an interior horizon and an exterior horizon between which the actual visible is a partitioning and which, nonetheless, open indefinitely only upon other visibles . . .10 hat are we to make of these references? We can, to be sure, see the hand of Heidegger in them. But we may also, and for present purposes more relevantly, see an intersection with Foucault’s work on freedom. There is an ontology of freedom at work here, one that situates freedom not in the private reserve of an individual but in the unfinished character of any historical situation. There is more to our historical juncture, as there is to a painting, than appears to us on the surface of its visibility. The trick is to recognize this, and to take advantage of it, not only with our thoughts but with our lives. And that is why, in the end, there can be no such thing as a sad revolutionary. To seek to change the world is to offer a new form of life-celebration. It is to articulate a fresh way of being, which is at once a way of seeing, thinking, acting, and being acted upon. It is to fold Being once again upon itself, this time at a new point, to see what that might yield. There is, as Foucault often reminds us, no guarantee that this fold will not itself turn out to contain the intolerable. In a complex world with which we are inescapably entwined, a world we cannot view from above or outside, there is no certainty about the results of our experiments. Our politics are constructed from the same vulnerability that is the stuff of our art and our daily practices. But to refuse to experiment is to resign oneself to the intolerable; it is to abandon both the struggle to change the world and the opportunity to celebrate living within it. And *to seek* one aspect without the other – *life-celebration without world-changing*, world-changing without life-celebration – *is to refuse to acknowledge the chiasm of body and world that is the wellspring of both.* If we are to celebrate our lives, if we are to change our world, then perhaps the best place to begin to think is our bodies, which are the openings to celebration and to change, and perhaps the point at which the war within us that I spoke of earlier can be both waged and resolved. That is the fragile beauty that, in their different ways, both Merleau-Ponty and Foucault have placed before us. The question before us is whether, in our lives and in our politics, we can be worthy of it.

## Conditions

### 2AC – AT: Helms-Burton Conditions CP

#### Should implies an expectation or a recommendation, not a definitive course of action

American Heritage, 9

“Should” on [dictionary.com](http://dictionary.com) http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/should

Used to express probability or expectation: They should arrive at noon.

#### Cuba rejects strings attached policy – unilateral action is key

Brookings 2009, Thinktank based in Washington DC, “CUBA: A New policy of

Critical and Constructive Engagement,” <http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2009/4/cuba/0413_cuba.pdf>

Although it will take Cuban cooperation to achieve a real improvement in relations, we should avoid the mistake of predicating our initiatives on the actions of the Cuban government. The United States must evaluate and act in its own interests. We must not tie our every action to those of the Cuban government, because doing so would allow Cuban officials to set U.S. policy, preventing the United States from serving its own interests. The majority of Cuban Americans now agree with the American public that our half-century-old policy toward Cuba has failed. For the first time since Florida international University (FiU) began polling Cuban American residents in 1991, a December 2008 poll found that a majority of Cuban American voters favor ending current restrictions on travel and remittances to Cuba, and support a bilateral dialogue and normal diplomatic relations with the Cuban regime by substantial margins. The United States is isolated in its approach to Cuba. in the 2008 United Nations General Assembly, 185 countries voted against the U.S. embargo and only two, israel and palau, supported the U.S. position. Although the international community is opposed to the embargo, it remains concerned about Cuba’s poor human rights record. At the February 2009 Geneva Human rights Council, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico asked Cuba to respect the rights of political opponents and give an "effective guarantee’’ of freedom of expression and the right to travel. The European Union has long maintained a policy of critical and constructive engagement in its Common position yet continues to engage the Cuban government in an effort to obtain the release of political prisoners and ensure greater freedoms for civil society, including access to the internet. if the United States were to align its policies with these governments—with the addition of Canada, it would enhance our united ability to forcefully make shared concerns known to the Cuban government. The prospect of significant revenues from oil, natural gas, and sugarcane ethanol in the next five s could further integrate Cuba into global and regional markets. While in the short term Cuba will continue to be heavily dependent on Venezuela for subsidized fuel, in five years offshore oil reserves, developed with Brazil, Spain, Norway, and Malaysia, combined with the potential for ethanol production with Brazil, may increase net annual financial flows to Cuba by $3.8 billion (at $50 per barrel of oil and $2.00 gallon of ethanol). if democratic countries increase their economic stakes in Cuba, they will simultaneously enhance their political influence with its current and future leaders. To be relevant to Cuba, the Obama administration will need to shape its policies now. The April 17, 2009 Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago provides president Obama with an opportunity to enhance U.S. credibility and leadership in the region by signaling a new direction in U.S.-Cuba policy. Rather than continuing to demand preconditions for engaging the Cuban government in the multilateral arena, the president should encourage the Organization of American States and international financial institutions to support Cuba’s integration into their organizations as long as it meets their membership criteria of human rights, democracy, and financial transparency. if Cuba’s leaders know that Cuba can become a full member upon meeting standard requirements, they could have an incentive to carry out difficult reforms that ultimately benefit the Cuban people. The United States successfully engaged the Soviet Union and China from 1973 onward. With those governments the policy objective was to further U.S. interests by reducing bilateral tension, expanding areas of cooperation, fostering cultural contacts, and enmeshing the Soviet and Chinese economies in international linkages that created incentives for improved relations with the West. We continued to voice our commitment to democracy and human rights, and enhanced that argument by pressing the Soviet Union to live up to international obligations. By working with the region and the international community, we can do much the same in Cuba. But as the cases of the Soviet Union and China demonstrated, this approach can only be effective if we are prepared to engage bilaterally and multilaterally. A New U.S. policy Of Critical And Constructive Engagement The advisory group of the Brookings project on “U.S. policy toward a Cuba in Transition” came to the unanimous conclusion that president Barack Obama should commit to a long-term process of critical and constructive engagement at all levels, including with the Cuban government. We believe that only through engagement can the president put into place a strategic vision that would permit the United States to protect its interests and advance the desire we share with the hemisphere to help the Cuban people become agents for peaceful change from within the island. A decision by the president to engage the Cuban government would not reflect acceptance of its human rights abuses or approval of its conduct. instead, it would prove a realistic evaluation and recognition of the extent to which the Cuban government controls Cuba— essential to the implementation of a new policy that would permit us to work with the region, enhance our influence with the Cuban government, and seek to help Cuba’s citizens expand the political space they need to influence their future. Engagement should serve to enhance personal contacts between Cuban and U.S. citizens and permanent residents, diminish Cuba’s attraction as a rallying point for anti-American sentiment, and burnish our standing in the region and the wider international community. if we engage, the Cuban government will no longer be able to use the U.S. threat as a credible excuse for human rights abuses and restrictions on free speech, assembly, travel, and economic opportunity. This in turn would encourage the international community to hold the Cuban government to the same standards of democracy, rights and freedoms that it expects from other governments around the world. The Cuban hierarchy will not undertake openings or respond to pressure from the international community or the United States if it considers that doing so would jeopardize its continued existence. The key to a new dynamic in our relationship is to embark on a course of a series of strategic actions that aim to establish a bilateral relationship and put the United States on the playing field—to counter our hitherto self-imposed role of critical observer. Our priority should be to serve U.S. interests and values in the confidence that if we do so wisely and effectively, Cubans in the long run will gain as well. The Way Forward it should be understood that engagement—while having as a goal evolution to a peaceful and democratic Cuba—does not promise an overnight metamorphosis. rather, it is a process, a pathway with various detours and obstacles, that over time arrives at its destination. The roadmap for critical and constructive engagement is a long-term strategic vision made up of baskets of short-, medium-, and long-term initiatives; all are within the authority of the Executive Branch to enact. Each of the initiatives we suggest would advance one or more of the objectives listed in the box below. duct and timing of foreign policy remains the prerogative of the president. in order to create a new dynamic in our bilateral relationship, we prefer that all the initiatives in the short-term basket be carried out this year. We acknowledge that it is likely that prior to moving on to the medium- and long-term baskets, the president and his advisers will assess the impact of the new policy on the United States, Cuba, and the international community. Based on their assessment, they will determine how quickly to proceed with the medium- and longterm baskets of initiatives. if the Cuban response is not encouraging, they might carry out only a few of the suggested initiatives or lengthen the time frame. However, it is important that they continue to move toward a full normalization of relations, because doing so would most effectively create conditions for a democratic evolution in Cuba. Equally important to the process is garnering the support of Cuban Americans and Congressional leaders. Given the strong sentiments and expectations that Cuba engenders, it would be preferable for the Executive Branch to proceed discreetly. The president might first announce the principles he hopes to achieve in Cuba through a policy of engagement that promotes human rights, the wellbeing of the Cuban people, and the growth of civil society. To carry out the president’s vision, the Secretary of the Treasury will then have the responsibility to write and publish the changes to the Cuban Assets Control regulations by licensing activities designed to achieve these ends. The Secretary of State can quietly accomplish many diplomatic initiatives on a reciprocal basis without any need to publicize them. This quiet diplomacy might be complemented by a refusal to engage in what some refer to as megaphone diplomacy, in which our governments trade insults across the Straits of Florida, and which only contributes to making the United States appear to be a bully. The president’s leadership in carrying out a new Cuba policy is essential because by law and practice it is his responsibility to determine the overall conduct of U.S. foreign policy. in the case of Cuba, he has ample executive authority to put in place a policy of engagement. if he wishes, he can expand bilateral diplomatic relations, remove Cuba from the list of terrorist countries, and rescind the current policy that grants immediate legal residency to Cubans who enter the United States without visas. Should bilateral relations improve, he could choose to negotiate the unresolved expropriated property claims of U.S. citizens and review the status of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. Despite the myth that Congress must legislate to change U.S. policy toward Cuba, history has shown that presidents routinely take actions to strengthen or loosen the embargo as they see fit. Thus, like his predecessors, president Obama can change regulations in order to modify the Cuban embargo without the need for an act of Congress. He will, however, ultimately require Congress to legislate in order to remove the embargo and lift all restrictions on travel. The Helms-Burton Act (H-B) of 1996 defines conditions Cuba must meet for the United States to end the embargo. The Act codified embargo regulations, including the provision that states that all transactions are prohibited except as specifically authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury. Accordingly, the Secretary of the Treasury may use his licensing authorities to extend, revise, or modify the same regulations. president Clinton did so by instructing Treasury to issue licenses for various categories of travel, regulations that were subsequently codified by the Trade Sanctions reform and Export Enhancement Act (TSrA) of 2000. in view of the fact that, unlike Helms-Burton, the TSrA did not provide the Secretary of the Treasury with the authority to modify its content, legislation is required to remove or expand travel beyond the provisions of the TSrA. Nevertheless, the president can significantly expand travel to Cuba by reinstating provisions authorized by law but rescinded under the Bush administration, and interpreting more broadly all categories of travel codified in the TSrA. The Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) of 1992 also legislated certain prohibitions, most notably on U.S. foreign subsidiary trade with Cuba, which, too, can only be revoked by an act of Congress. in sum, the president does not have the authority to end the embargo or lift the travel ban, but can effectively dismantle the current commercial embargo by using his licensing authority to permit U.S. exports of certain goods and services, two-way trade in a wide variety of goods and services, and/or allow broad categories of travel to Cuba. The Engagement roadmap Short-Term Initiatives During the campaign, president Barack Obama made clear that the Cuban government must release all political prisoners if the United States is to move toward normal relations. The initiatives in this first basket would permit greater interaction between the two governments and their citizens, thereby setting the stage for improved understanding and bilateral relations and the potential for enhanced U.S. influence on the island. The more open travel and remittance measures put in place by the Clinton administration in 1998 and continued by the Bush administration until 2003 contributed to creating the conditions that brought about a more open political atmosphere. During the period now known as the “Cuban Spring,” Oswaldo payá, leader of the Varela project, worked with Cuba’s human rights activists to collect 11,000 signatures on a petition that requested a referendum on the Cuban constitution. Former president Jimmy Carter gave a speech at the University of Havana in Spanish in which he asked Fidel Castro—who was sitting in the front row—to permit the vote; the speech was broadcast live throughout the island. Martha Beatriz roque, an important dissident leader, held a national assembly to advocate reforms to the Cuban government. religious groups, with help from their American counterparts, provided equipment, food, and medicines to sister organizations that bolstered outreach to their communities. Students from colleges throughout the United States studying in Cuba were engaged in a lively discussion with students, academics, and people across the island. The presence of licensed American and Cuban American visitors provided moral support, advice, and assistance to diverse civil society institutions, allowing them to expand and more effectively assist their membership. And, interventions by U.S. government and private sector personalities with high-level Cuban officials resulted in reducing repression against dissidents, human rights activists, independent journalists, and librarians. This more fluid and open atmosphere was essential to the growth of civil society and to the freedoms and creation of spaces in which human rights activists and dissidents could operate. president Obama should replicate these conditions through unilateral and unconditional actions that promote enhanced human contact by generously licensing all categories of travel permitted in the TSrA. He should, first, follow his campaign promise to grant Cuban Americans unrestricted rights to family travel and to send remittances to the island, since Cuban American connections to family are our best tool for helping to foster the beginnings of grass-roots democracy on the island. Further, the president should expand travel for all American citizens and permanent residents by instructing the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) to license people-to-people travel for educational, cultural, and humanitarian purposes. Cuban citizens should also be permitted to travel to the United States for a variety of purposes —including family, academic and cultural visits—in order to enhance their understanding of our open and democratic society. The Secretary of State should instruct the Department of State and the United States interests Section (USiNT) in Havana to use standard criteria applied around the world for awarding non-immigrant visas to Cubans. This more tolerant approach would strengthen the bonds of family and culture, while helping the Cuban people improve their lives and grow the social organizations necessary for a democratic civil society. Diplomatic travel and interaction must be reciprocally expanded so that our diplomats in Havana have the knowledge, access, and expertise needed to predict, evaluate, and deal with any eventuality in Cuba. This requires permitting comparable opportunities to Cuban diplomats posted in Washington. There is little the United States has to fear by allowing Cuban diplomats to see for themselves the realities of American life. To reduce illegal migration, enhance our security, and conserve our fisheries, the State Department should resume migration talks at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level and begin a dialogue between the respective heads of the interests Sections on other issues of mutual concern, including the environment, health, and counter-narcotics. The devastation caused by hurricanes that struck Cuba in 2008 generated considerable concern among Cubans in the United States and among the broader American public. Unfortunately, disagreements and distrust between our governments prevented the United States from assisting with relief efforts. in order to avoid a recurrence of this impasse, the Department of State should seek an understanding or agreement with the Cuban government that would permit U.S. assistance to Cuba for natural disasters. Measures are now in place to ensure that public resources that provide support to the Cuban people are well used by USAiD grantees. However, large contracts concluded in the final months of the Bush administration with non-profit organizations and private companies that are said to promote or manage a transition in Cuba may not reflect the current administration’s objectives. A review should be conducted to determine whether these contracts should be continued, modified, or canceled. Additionally, although OFAC has always had the authority to license the importation of lifesaving medicines developed in Cuba for testing by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), it has made the process cumbersome and lengthy. The sad conclusion is that OFAC has been more concerned with the financial benefits that might accrue to Cuba than with the potential of these medicines to treat children with brain tumors and adults with lung cancer or meningitis. To reduce bureaucratic hurdles and permit the speedy entry of life-saving medications into the United States, OFAC regulations should be modified or reinterpreted so that the only barrier to the entry of Cuban manufactured medicines is that they meet FDA standards—the same criteria that apply to all medical imports. The president should also seek to promote the free flow of ideas and information, including the creation of music, films, and other works of art as embodied in representative Howard Berman’s 1988 Free Trade in ideas Act. Despite the prohibition against the U.S. government restricting the importation of all informational materials, successive administrations have narrowly interpreted the Berman Act in order to prohibit Americans from creating music, films, and other artistic works with Cubans. These prohibitions were not intended by the statutes and should be removed. The aforementioned initiatives are non-controversial and widely supported by the American public. More controversial—although still enjoying widespread public support—would be licensing the sale and donation of all communications equipment, including radios, televisions, and computers. The CDA recognized the importance of expanding access to ideas, knowledge, and information by authorizing the licensing of telecommunications goods and services. U.S. government financing of books and radios that are distributed to Cubans throughout the island demonstrates a belief that breaking down the barriers to the flow of information is critical to promoting change in Cuba. The president should therefore instruct the Department of Commerce and OFAC to internally change their respective licensing policies with regard to Cuba from a “presumption of denial” to a “presumption of approval” with respect to items deemed to be in the U.S. national interest for Cuba to receive, including laptops, cell phones and other telecommunications equipment, computer peripherals, internet connection equipment, as well as access to satellite and broadband communications networks. The following initiatives that would provide assistance for civil society and for activities that help the Cuban people become agents for change would require, in some cases, a formal understanding with the Cuban government, and, in others, at least a willingness to permit the activity. We believe that if these activities were permitted by the United States and the Cuban governments, they would help to prepare the Cuban people for assuming a greater role in their governance. The U.S. government should act to enhance the flow of resources to the Cuban people. it should license U.S. non-governmental organizations and private individuals to transfer funds to individuals and civil society organizations in Cuba that work to foster a more open society. The United States should also encourage the creation of multilateral funds that promote the same objective. Such assistance should not be subject to an ideological test but rather be available to Cuban civic entities in the form of microcredit for small businesses and for salaries of persons engaged by civil society to provide community services, among others. Although the U.S. government currently manages an assistance program for Cuba, it is limited by sanctions regulations and is narrowly focused. Much of the assistance—amounting principally to in-kind goods—is difficult to deliver due to the opposition of the Cuban government either to the type of assistance or to the groups or individuals receiving it. in order to better serve the needs of civil society in Cuba, the U.S. government should seek to obtain the approval of the Cuban government for an assistance program that would provide financial and in-kind assistance for activities that advance human rights and the rule of law, encourage microenterprise, and promote educational, and professional exchanges. The issue of whether Cuba should be classified by the U.S. government as a terrorist state has many supporters and detractors. However, the reasons listed for Cuba’s inclusion on the list appear to be insufficient, thus leading to charges that the list is a political tool for appeasing domestic constituencies. in order to ensure that this important vehicle in U.S. policy is used appropriately, a review of the evidence should be conducted. if Cuba is legitimately found to be a terrorist state based on the evidence over the last five years, it should remain on the list; if not, it should be removed. Finally, it is in our interest to see Cuba reintegrated into the Organization of American States (OAS) if it meets membership standards of democracy, human rights, and transparency. To this end, and in order to provide incentives for reform, the United Sates should not object to the OAS Secretary General discussing with Cuba the requirements for reinstatement as a full member. in addition, the United States should not object to Cuba’s participation in OAS specialized and technical agencies. Term Initiatives The second basket of initiatives is distinct from the first because it moves beyond enhancing the ability of Cubans to take a more proactive and informed part in their society and government. The initiatives in the second basket seek to build a foundation for reconciliation by beginning a process of resolving long-standing differences. A number of these initiatives could serve as incentives or rewards for improved human rights, the release of political prisoners, and greater freedom of assembly, speech and rights for opposition groups and labor unions. initiatives that fall within this category include allowing Cuba access to normal commercial instruments for the purchase of goods from the United States. None of the initiatives, however, should be publicly or privately tied to specific Cuban actions. As the Cuban government is on record as rejecting any type of carrot-and-stick tactic, it would be counterproductive to do so. rather, the United States should decide the actions that it wishes to take and when to carry them out. Doing so will give the president maximum flexibility in determining how and when to engage.

#### Carrot and stick approach fails – Castro hates the approach

Marc Lacey, 12-31-09, New York Times Reporter, “In Cuba, Hopeful Tenor Toward Obama Is Ebbing,” <http://www.mccaffreyassociates.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/NY_Times_Cuba_Article-123109.pdf>

“As things appear now, there will be no big change in the relationship in the near future,” said Ricardo Alarcón, the president of Cuba’s National Assembly. He dismissed the Obama administration’s recent steps, like loosening restrictions on Cuban Americans’ traveling or sending money to the island and allowing American telecommunications companies to do business there, as “minor changes.” The two countries have postponed the talks they restarted at the beginning of the Obama administration to discuss migration, postal delivery and other issues, blaming each other for the delays. In the absence of talks, Mr. Obama’s carrot-and-stick approach of relaxing some Bush-era policies while continuing to denounce the Castro government on human rights has failed to engage — and perhaps has enraged — the Cuban leadership. While Raúl Castro repeated the offer to meet with Mr. Obama in a fiery speech recently, he also blasted the Obama administration for “undercover subversion” against Cuba and warned that his nation was ready for any American invasion. In one of his recent written commentaries in the state press, Fidel Castro, who has not appeared in public in nearly three years, wrote that Mr. Obama’s “friendly smile and African-American face” masked his sinister intentions to control Latin America.

#### Anti-americanism DA is non-unique

USAT 06/19/13 (USA Today, "The United States and Cuba have agreed to resume talks in immigration issues next month.", http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/06/19/cuba-immigration-talks/2439915/ )

HAVANA (AP) — The United States and Cuba have agreed to resume bilateral talks on migration issues next month, a State Department official said Wednesday, the latest evidence of a thaw in chilly relations between the Cold War enemies. Havana and Washington just wrapped up a round of separate negotiations aimed at restarting direct mail service, which has been suspended since 1963. Both sets of talks have been on hold in recent years in a dispute over the fate of U.S. government subcontractor Alan Gross, who is serving a 15-year jail sentence in Havana after he was caught bringing communications equipment onto the island illegally. The migration talks will be held in Washington on July 17. The State Department official, who was not authorized to discuss the matter publically, spoke on condition of anonymity. "Representatives from the Department of State are scheduled to meet with representatives of the Cuban government to discuss migration issues," the official said, adding that the talks were "consistent with our interest in promoting greater freedoms and respect for human rights in Cuba." Word of the jump-started talks sparked an angry reaction from Cuban-American Republican Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida, who blasted the Obama administration for what she saw as a policy of appeasement. "First we get news that the Obama State Department is speaking with a top Castro regime diplomat. Then comes the announcement that the administration is restarting talks with the dictatorship regarding direct mail between both countries," Ros-Lehtinen said. "Now we hear that migration talks will be restarted. It's concession after concession from the Obama administration." Since taking office, Obama has relaxed travel and remittance rules for Cuban Americans and made it far easier for others to visit the island for cultural, educational and religious reasons. But Obama has continued to criticize the government of President Raul Castro for repression of basic civil and human rights, and his senior aides have offered little praise for a series of economic and social reforms the Cuban leader has instituted in recent years. A nascent effort at rapprochement between Washington and Havana has stalled since Gross's arrest, and the resumption of the two sets of bilateral talks is sure to raise speculation that there could be movement on his case. Gross was working on a USAID democracy building program at the time of his arrest in December 2009. Washington has said repeatedly that no major improvement in relations can occur until he is released. His family has complained that he has lost a lot of weight in jail and suffers from various ailments. Cuba reportedly has agreed to allow a U.S. doctor to visit him in detention, and has also granted him conjugal visits and made him available to high-level American delegations. Cuba, for its part, is demanding the release of four of its intelligence agents serving long sentences in the United States. A fifth agent, Rene Gonzalez, returned home to Havana earlier this year after completing his sentence and agreeing to renounce his U.S. citizenship.

## Politics

### 2AC – AT: Syria Politics DA

#### Won’t pass-both GOP and democrats reject strikes

Korte and Singer 13 (Gregory and Paul-writers for USA TODAY; 09/02/13; “The six key players in Congress' Syria debate”; <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/09/02/syria-congress-guide-obama-pelosi-mccain/2754963/>, [JJ])

WASHINGTON — A week ago, it seemed the question of whether to take military action against Syria rested solely on the shoulders of President Obama. But he has turned to Congress to authorize military airstrikes against Syria for using chemical weapons, setting up the most consequential foreign policy vote since the 2002 authorization of the Iraq War. Obama and his supporters on Capitol Hill will have to overcome broad skepticism about the merits of military strikes and navigate the political divisions that have left Congress largely paralyzed. The vote also cast a spotlight on key lawmakers who will be critical in determining whether or not Congress authorizes Obama to use military force. Congress is still on recess, but the arm-twisting has begun and the Syria resolution will be the first order of business in both the House and Senate when they return Sept. 9. STORY: McCain, Graham express optimism on Obama Syria plan MORE: Latest development on the crisis in Syria The debate will pit Obama and House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi against both Republicans and Democrats skeptical of foreign military intervention. The White House will need support from Republican leaders such as Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., but it is not clear how much influence they will have over their own party.

#### 2014 election means that Democrats won’t get on board

Evan McMorris Santoro, 9-6-13 BuzzFeed Reporter, “Vulnerable Democrats Keep Their Distance From Obama On Syria,” <http://www.buzzfeed.com/evanmcsan/vulnerable-democrats-keep-their-distance-from-obama-on-syria>

WASHINGTON — Some of the Democrats least interested in lining up behind the president on Syria are the Democrats most likely to face a tough reelection campaign next year. President Obama acknowledged Friday that convincing Congress to authorize a military strike on Syria has been “a heavy lift” for the White House so far. The normal anti-war coalition of liberals and libertarians is falling into place, and a more unlikely coalition partner of Republican hawks is [joining them](http://www.buzzfeed.com/rosiegray/hawks-and-doves-team-up-to-oppose-syria-strikes-in-congress). For now, though, most members are on the fence. None more so than vulnerable Democrats, according to a study by the Republican opposition research firm America Rising. Using the venerable nonpartisan Cook Political Report [ratings](http://cookpolitical.com/house/charts/race-ratings) of House races, the GOP group compiled a chart of undecided Democrats and found many on the fence are the same ones the Cook Report says are facing tough elections next year. A couple already oppose strikes. Only one, West Virginia Rep. Nick Rahall (who Cook places in a “Lean Democratic” race next year), has pledged to support congressional authorization for strikes. America Rising’s chart includes whether the vulnerable Democrats signed onto either of the two bipartisan letters sent to Obama last month calling for Congress to weigh in on Syria. One was authored by Virginia Republican Rep. [Scott Rigell](http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=21FD010D-5656-4E8D-BFFD-CA6F1864937C), and the other was written by California Democratic Rep. [Barbara Lee](http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=1753AFD4-272B-4E12-B486-2598EC2B18F0). Obama gave the signatories what they wanted when he called on Congress to authorize his plan to strike Syria. But only a few of the vulnerable Democrats signed either of the letters, per the America Rising study. Some Democrats have hinted they’ll wait to hear what Obama has to say in his [White House address](http://www.buzzfeed.com/evanmcsan/obama-to-address-american-people-on-syria-tuesday) on Syria next week before making up their minds, but the Republicans at America Rising say the fact that Obama hasn’t already earned the support of so many vulnerable members of his own party shows that they think his war will be a drag on them next year. “Democrats who are facing tough reelections in 2014 are either in hiding or trying to run away from a president whose agenda is wildly unpopular with voters in their districts,” said Tim Miller, executive director of America Rising.

#### Pol cap ain’t real

Hirsh 2/7 Michael Hirsh is chief correspondent for National Journal. Hirsh previously served as the senior editor and national economics correspondent for Newsweek. Hirsh has appeared many times as a commentator on Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, and National Public Radio. He has written for the Associated Press, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, Harper’s, and Washington Monthly, and authored two books. “There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital,” 2013, http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207?page=1

Meanwhile, the Republican members of the Senate’s so-called Gang of Eight are pushing hard for a new spirit of compromise on immigration reform, a sharp change after an election year in which the GOP standard-bearer declared he would make life so miserable for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. that they would “self-deport.” But this turnaround has very little to do with Obama’s personal influence—his political mandate, as it were. It has almost entirely to do with just two numbers: 71 and 27. That’s 71 percent for Obama, 27 percent for Mitt Romney, the breakdown of the Hispanic vote in the 2012 presidential election. Obama drove home his advantage by giving a speech on immigration reform on Jan. 29 at a Hispanic-dominated high school in Nevada, a swing state he won by a surprising 8 percentage points in November. But the movement on immigration has mainly come out of the Republican Party’s recent introspection, and the realization by its more thoughtful members, such as Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, that without such a shift the party may be facing demographic death in a country where the 2010 census showed, for the first time, that white births have fallen into the minority. It’s got nothing to do with Obama’s political capital or, indeed, Obama at all. The point is not that “political capital” is a meaningless term. Often it is a synonym for “mandate” or “momentum” in the aftermath of a decisive election—and just about every politician ever elected has tried to claim more of a mandate than he actually has. Certainly, Obama can say that because he was elected and Romney wasn’t, he has a better claim on the country’s mood and direction. Many pundits still defend political capital as a useful metaphor at least. “It’s an unquantifiable but meaningful concept,” says Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute. “You can’t really look at a president and say he’s got 37 ounces of political capital. But the fact is, it’s a concept that matters, if you have popularity and some momentum on your side.” The real problem is that the idea of political capital—or mandates, or momentum—is so poorly defined that presidents and pundits often get it wrong. “Presidents usually over-estimate it,” says George Edwards, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. “The best kind of political capital—some sense of an electoral mandate to do something—is very rare. It almost never happens. In 1964, maybe. And to some degree in 1980.” For that reason, political capital is a concept that misleads far more than it enlightens. It is distortionary. It conveys the idea that we know more than we really do about the ever-elusive concept of political power, and it discounts the way unforeseen events can suddenly change everything. Instead, it suggests, erroneously, that a political figure has a concrete amount of political capital to invest, just as someone might have real investment capital—that a particular leader can bank his gains, and the size of his account determines what he can do at any given moment in history.

#### Obama has no political capital anyways

Kilgore, 9/5/13 (Ed Kilgore is a contributing writer to the Washington Monthly. He is managing editor for The Democratic Strategist and a senior fellow at the Progressive Policy Institute, “Obama’s ‘political capital,’” Washington Monthy, September 5, 2013, http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/political-animal-a/2013\_09/obamas\_political\_capital046735.php#;)

An even hoarier meme than the no-win-war complaint is naturally emerging in Washington as everyone recalibrates his or her assumptions about how the year will end: Obama’s limited “political capital” that he might have used on the fiscal front will now be “spread thin” or “stretched to the breaking point” by the need to make a case for military action against Syria. Politico’s Brown and Sherman give it a full airing today:¶ President Barack Obama faced a heavy lift in Congress this fall when his agenda included only budget issues and immigration reform.¶ Now with Syria in the mix, the president appears ready to spend a lot of the political capital that he would have kept in reserve for his domestic priorities.¶ A resolution authorizing the use of force in Syria won’t make it through the House or the Senate without significant cajoling from the White House. That means Obama, who struggles to get Congress to follow his lead on almost everything, could burn his limited leverage convincing Democrats and Republicans to vote for an unpopular military operation that even the president says he could carry out with or without their approval.¶ Now this may be true with respect to congressional Democrats if Obama ultimately needs them to swallow hard and accept some fiscal deal to avoid a government shutdown or debt default. But seriously, what sort of “political capital” does the president have with congressional Republicans? They committed to a policy of total obstruction from the day he became president and picked up right where they had left off the day he was re-elected. Obama’s only options in dealing with the GOP are to offer them cover for compromise when he must and hand them an anvil to speed their self-destruction when he can. But he has no “political capital” to spend.

#### Plan doesn’t go through congress

Sweig, ’13 [July/August 2013, [Julia E. Sweig](http://www.cfr.org/experts/latin-america-brazil-cuba/julia-e-sweig/b4230), Nelson and David Rockefeller Senior Fellow for Latin America Studies and Director for Latin America Studies, “Cuba After Communism The Economic Reforms That Are Transforming the Island”, <http://www.cfr.org/cuba/cuba-after-communism/p30991>]

The best way to change such attitudes, however, would be for Washington to take the initiative in establishing a new diplomatic and economic modus vivendi with Havana. In the short term, the two countries have numerous practical problems to solve together, including environmental and security challenges, as well as the fate of high-profile nationals serving time in U.S. and Cuban prisons. Most of the policy steps Obama should take at this stage -- removing Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, eliminating obstacles for all Americans to travel there, and licensing greater trade and investment -- would not require congressional approval or any grand bargain with Havana. Although it might be politically awkward in the United States for a president to be seen as helping Castro, on the island, such measures would strengthen the case that Cuba can stand to become a more open, democratic society without succumbing to external pressure or subversion. Deeper commercial ties, moreover, could have repercussions beyond the economic realm, giving internal reformers more leeway and increasing support on the island for greater economic and political liberalization.

#### Kerry pushes the plan.

Aho 13 (Matthew Aho, Matthew Aho is a consultant in the Corporate Practice Group. He has significant international affairs experience working on issues throughout Latin America, with a focus on Cuba, Venezuela, Central America, Peru, and Mexico. Matthew has particular experience with legal and regulatory frameworks comprising the U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba, as well as with region-wide projects on issues ranging from insecurity and violence prevention to energy and policies affecting labor-markets. Previously, Matthew was Manager of the Policy Department at the New York headquarters of Americas Society and Council of the Americas (AS/COA) and editor of Americas Quarterly, “What Does Obama's Second Term Hold for U.S.-Cuba Relations?”, cuba study group, January 23, 2013, <http://www.cubastudygroup.org/index.cfm/our-opinions?ContentRecord_id=c20ad778-24cd-46df-9fb2-3ebc664ed58d&ContentType_id=15d70174-0c41-47c6-9bd5-cc875718b6c3&Group_id=4c543850-0014-4d3c-8f87-0cbbda2e1dc7>)

While John Kerry's views on U.S.–Cuba relations have favored engagement over isolation, ultimate authority rests with a White House that has proceeded cautiously on Cuba during President Obama's first term. Aside from easing some travel restrictions, there have been only two emergent themes on Cuba policy: support for private-sector efforts to increase the flow of information to the Cuban people; and support for private economic activity on the island. Cuba policy changes still require expenditures of political capital disproportionate to the island's strategic and economic importance. Barring game-changing developments—such as release of USAID subcontractor Alan Gross—executive action during Obama's second term will likely focus on furthering goals laid out during his first. Here, however, John Kerry's leadership could prove vital and create new opportunities for U.S. business.

#### Turn – Syria strikes cause Iran nuclear

Stearns, 9/1/13 (Scott, Scott Stearns is VOA’s State Department correspondent. He has worked as VOA’s Dakar Bureau Chief, White House correspondent, and Nairobi Bureau Chief since beginning his career as a freelance reporter in the Liberian civil war, “What Message Would US Acting in Syria Send to Iran and North Korea?” Voice of America, September 1, 2013, http://www.voanews.com/content/us-syria-message-iran-north-korea/1741336.html;)

STATE DEPARTMENT — Part of President Barack Obama's argument for a military strike against Syria is a threat to broader U.S. security concerns in the Middle East and Asia.¶ Secretary of State John Kerry says acting against Syria's use of chemical weapons matters far beyond its borders.¶ "It is about whether Iran, which itself has been a victim of chemical weapons attacks, will now feel emboldened, in the absence of action, to obtain nuclear weapons," he said. "It is about Hezbollah, and North Korea, and every other terrorist group or dictator that might ever again contemplate the use of weapons of mass destruction. Will they remember that the Assad regime was stopped from those weapons’ current or future use, or will they remember that the world stood aside and created impunity?"¶ Using Syria to send a message to Iran may not work as President Obama intends, says analyst Doug Bandow. "To the extent that Iran feels isolated and threatened, in many ways it's more likely to pursue a nuclear weapon," he said.¶ Bandow says attacking Syria could further convince Iran of its need for a nuclear deterrent. "A lot of people hope if you break Syria you weaken Iran. And to some degree you do. But that does not necessarily help advance your larger objective, which is to encourage Iran to be less defensive and encourage Iran to come into the international community and set aside any nuclear ambitions," he said.¶ Chemical weapons in Syria also threaten U.S. allies in the region, says Secretary Kerry. "It matters to Israel. It matters to our close friends Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon, all of whom live just a stiff breeze away from Damascus," he said.¶ Israel has deployed missile defenses against a possible Syrian attack. But Bandow says striking Israel is too big a gamble for President Assad.¶ "The Syrian government understands that Israel has overwhelming military force. So at a time when Syria is engaged in a battle for the regime's life, it can not afford to open a second front with Israel," he said.¶ Bandow says in many ways the bigger threat for Israel is a win by Syrian rebels because he says those divided opponents would have a far harder time managing state arsenals including chemical weapons.

#### **Strikes causes regional conflict**

Barnard and Rubin 13 (Anne Barnard reported from Beirut, and Alissa J. Rubin from Kabul, Afghanistan.; “Experts Fear U.S. Plan to Strike Syria Overlooks Risks”; 08/30/13

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/31/world/middleeast/experts-fear-us-plan-to-strike-syria-overlooks-risks.html?_r=0>, [JJ])

Supporters of the president’s proposal contend that a limited punitive strike can be carried out without inflaming an already volatile situation. But a number of diplomats and other experts say it fails to adequately plan for a range of unintended consequences, from a surge in anti-Americanism that could bolster Syria’s president, Bashar al-Assad, to a wider regional conflict that could drag in other countries, including Israel and Turkey. “Our biggest problem is ignorance; we’re pretty ignorant about Syria,” said Ryan C. Crocker, a former ambassador to Syria and Lebanon, who has served in Iraq and Afghanistan and is dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University. The American strike could hit President Assad’s military without fundamentally changing the dynamic in a stalemated civil war that has already left more than 100,000 people dead. At the same time, few expect that a barrage of cruise missiles would prompt either side to work in earnest for a political settlement. Given that, the skeptics say it may not be worth the risks. “I don’t see any advantage,” said a Western official who closely observes Syria. In outlining its plans, the Obama administration has left many questions unanswered. Diplomats familiar with Mr. Assad say there is no way to know how he would respond, and they question what the United States would do if he chose to order a chemical strike or other major retaliation against civilians. That would leave the United States to choose between a loss of credibility and a more expansive — and unpopular — conflict, they said. “So he continues on in defiance — maybe he even launches another chemical attack to put a stick in our eye — and then what?” Mr. Crocker said. “Because once you start down this road, it’s pretty hard to get off it and maintain political credibility.” For the United States, the challenge is to deliver the intended message to Mr. Assad without opening the door to a takeover by rebels linked to Al Qaeda, the collapse of state institutions, or a major escalation by Syria’s allies. Skeptics doubt that the United States — or anyone else — has the information to calibrate the attack that precisely. That is partly because the United States is preparing to inject itself into a conflict that is no longer just about Syria, but has become a volatile regional morass that pits Iran and Hezbollah, the Shiite militant group in Lebanon, against Qaeda affiliates

 backed by Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf benefactors. Iran’s and Syria’s defense ministers threatened on Friday to unleash attacks on Israel if Mr. Assad was in danger. While Hezbollah has said it would wait to see the scale and nature of the attacks before responding, in practice, analysts close to the organization said, it is probably prepared for any contingency. There is also concern that Shiite-led Iraq could send thousands more militants to help Mr. Assad if it believed he was truly threatened, and that such a step would in turn further rally and embolden Sunni jihadists on both sides of its border with Syria. Many diplomats and analysts consider retaliation unlikely, but the consequences could be grim. Israel has vowed that if Hezbollah attacks it again, it will respond forcefully, drawing Lebanon into war. And if Syria lobbed missiles into Israel and it responded with airstrikes through Lebanese airspace that threatened Mr. Assad further, Hezbollah would consider that further justification to attack Israel. Even without such a direct entanglement, Lebanon could be very vulnerable. It has recently suffered its worst sectarian violence in years: a car bomb in Shiite Hezbollah territory in the Beirut suburbs, and two at Sunni mosques in the northern city of Tripoli. Lebanese authorities accused Syria on Friday of involvement in the Tripoli attacks, and intelligence officials fear such bombings could increase. Within Syria, there is also the prospect of civilian casualties, either from errant American missiles or among people near the target sites. The Syrian government has put some military bases in populated areas, and thousands of political and other prisoners are held in security buildings. Although the strikes are said to be aimed at elite units involved in chemical weapons use, Reuters reported Friday that many Sunni conscripts have been effectively imprisoned on bases because they are not trusted, leaving them vulnerable, too. Significant casualties among the very people American officials say they are protecting could be exploited by the government. “That will completely empty any justification for this” in the eyes of many, the Western official said. Some likely targets are in areas that up to now have remained relatively secure, including the corridor from western suburbs of Damascus to the Lebanese border. And in Damascus itself, a bubble of relative security, residents have expressed fear that in the aftermath, clashes could erupt. That could create a new humanitarian crisis and new refugee flows to Syria’s already burdened neighbors. American officials say they do not expect a refugee crisis because of the strikes’ limited nature, but Human Rights Watch has called on them to plan for the unexpected. “We haven’t received any indication that plans for beefed-up humanitarian response are under way,” said Lama Fakih, the group’s deputy director in Beirut. Anger over American involvement could also undo one of the major benefits to American interests from the Arab uprisings by restoring the alliance against Israel that Iran, Syria and Hezbollah had with the Sunni Palestinian group Hamas. The conflict in Syria has sorely tested that alliance, with Hamas supporting the Sunni-led Syrian rebellion. Verifying information in Syria is extraordinarily hard, and another risk, however remote it may seem to American officials, is that it turns out that the Assad government was not responsible for the chemical attack. In any case, in a region where many have their doubts after the faulty intelligence that led to war in Iraq, wide sectors of the public may remain unconvinced. That would allow Mr. Assad to paint himself as the victim of an unjust American intervention and draw more supporters back to his fold. All that said, no one is suggesting that the United States or other countries should turn a blind eye to the use of chemical weapons or the suffering of civilians. The problem, Mr. Crocker said, is to figure out a response that leaves the Syrians, the region and the United States in a better position rather than entangled in another messy conflict with an uncertain outcome.

#### Middle East war causes nuclear and bioweapon use

Russell 9 James A. Russell, senior lecturer in the Department of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, “Strategic Stability Reconsidered: Prospects for Escalation and Nuclear War in the Middle East,” Institut Français des Relations Internationales, Spring 2009, http://www.analyst-network.com/articles/141/StrategicStabilityReconsideredProspectsforEscalationandNuclearWarintheMiddleEast.pdf

Strategic stability in the region is thus undermined by various factors: (1) asymmetric interests in the bargaining framework that can introduce unpredictable behavior from actors; (2) the presence of non-state actors that introduce unpredictability into relationships between the antagonists; (3) incompatible assumptions about the structure of the deterrent relationship that makes the bargaining framework strategically unstable; (4) perceptions by Israel and the United States that its window of opportunity for military action is closing, which could prompt a preventive attack; (5) the prospect that Iran’s response to pre-emptive attacks could involve unconventional weapons, which could prompt escalation by Israel and/or the United States; (6) the lack of a communications framework to build trust and cooperation among framework participants. These systemic weaknesses in the coercive bargaining framework all suggest that escalation by any the parties could happen either on purpose or as a result of miscalculation or the pressures of wartime circumstance. Given these factors, it is disturbingly easy to imagine scenarios under which a conflict could quickly escalate in which the regional antagonists would consider the use of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. It would be a mistake to believe the nuclear taboo can somehow magically keep nuclear weapons from being used in the context of an unstable strategic framework. Systemic asymmetries between actors in fact suggest a certain increase in the probability of war – a war in which escalation could happen quickly and from a variety of participants. Once such a war starts, events would likely develop a momentum all their own and decision-making would consequently be shaped in unpredictable ways. The international community must take this possibility seriously, and muster every tool at its disposal to prevent such an outcome, which would be an unprecedented disaster for the peoples of the region, with substantial risk for the entire world.

#### **US Strikes perpetuate terrorism**

BBC 9-2 (Syria minister: US strike on Syria 'would benefit al-Qaeda'; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-23925037>; [JJ])

Speaking to the BBC's Jeremy Bowen, Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad said terrorism would flourish everywhere if the US attacked Syria Continue reading the main story Any US military action against Syria would amount to "support for al-Qaeda and its affiliates," Damascus has said. Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad also told the BBC that armed groups backed by America - not Syrian troops - had used chemical weapons.

#### In the charged atmosphere after a terrorist attack we would retaliate against Russia – causes all-out war

Ayson 10 (Robert, Professor of Strategic Studies and Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies: New Zealand at the Victoria University of Wellington,“After a Terrorist Nuclear Attack: Envisaging Catalytic Effects,” Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Volume 33, Issue 7, July, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via InformaWorld)

A terrorist nuclear attack, and even the use of nuclear weapons in response by the country attacked in the first place, would not necessarily represent the worst of the nuclear worlds imaginable. Indeed, there are reasons to wonder whether nuclear terrorism should ever be regarded as belonging in the category of truly existential threats. A contrast can be drawn here with the global catastrophe that would come from a massive nuclear exchange between two or more of the sovereign states that possess these weapons in significant numbers. Even the worst terrorism that the twenty-first century might bring would fade into insignificance alongside considerations of what a general nuclear war would have wrought in the Cold War period. And it must be admitted that as long as the major nuclear weapons states have hundreds and even thousands of nuclear weapons at their disposal, there is always the possibility of a truly awful nuclear exchange taking place precipitated entirely by state possessors themselves. But these two nuclear worlds—a non-state actor nuclear attack and a catastrophic interstate nuclear exchange—are not necessarily separable. It is just possible that some sort of terrorist attack, and especially an act of nuclear terrorism, could precipitate a chain of events leading to a massive exchange of nuclear weaponsbetween two or more of the states that possess them. In this context, today’s and tomorrow’s terrorist groups might assume the place allotted during the early Cold War years to new state possessors of small nuclear arsenals who were seen as raising the risks of a catalytic nuclear war between the superpowers started by third parties. These risks were considered in the late 1950s and early 1960s as concerns grew about nuclear proliferation, the so-called n+1 problem. It may require a considerable amount of imagination to depict an especially plausible situation where an act of nuclear terrorism could lead to such a massive inter-state nuclear war. For example, in the event of a terrorist nuclear attack on the United States, it might well be wondered just how Russia and/or China could plausibly be brought into the picture, not least because they seem unlikely to be fingered as the most obvious state sponsors or encouragers of terrorist groups. They would seem far too responsible to be involved in supporting that sort of terrorist behavior that could just as easily threaten them as well. Some possibilities, however remote, do suggest themselves. For example, how might the United States react if it was thoughtordiscovered that the fissile material used in the actof nuclear terrorismhad come from Russian stocks,40 and if for some reason Moscow denied any responsibility for nuclear laxity? The correct attribution of that nuclear material to a particular country might not be a case of science fiction given the observation by Michael May et al. that while the debris resulting from a nuclear explosion would be “spread over a wide area in tiny fragments, its radioactivity makes it detectable, identifiable and collectable, and a wealth of information can be obtained from its analysis: the efficiency of the explosion, the materials used and, most important … some indication of where the nuclear material came from.”41 Alternatively, if the act of nuclear terrorism came as a complete surprise, and American officials refused to believe that a terrorist group was fully responsible (or responsible at all) suspicion would shift immediately to state possessors. Ruling out Western ally countries like the United Kingdom and France, and probably Israel and India as well, authorities in Washington would be left with a very short list consisting of North Korea, perhaps Iran if its program continues, and possibly Pakistan. But at what stage would Russia and China be definitely ruled out in this high stakes game of nuclear Cluedo? In particular, if the act of nuclear terrorism occurred against a backdrop of existing tension in Washington’s relations with Russia and/or China, and at a time when threats had already been traded between these major powers, would officials and political leaders not be tempted to assume the worst? Of course, the chances of this occurring would only seem to increase if the United States was already involved in some sort of limited armed conflict with Russia and/or China, or if they were confronting each other from a distance in a proxy war, as unlikely as these developments may seem at the present time. The reverse might well apply too: should a nuclear terrorist attack occur in Russia or China during a period of heightened tension or even limited conflict with the United States, could Moscow and Beijing resist the pressures that might rise domestically to consider the United States as a possible perpetrator or encourager of the attack? Washington’s early response to a terrorist nuclear attack on its own soil might also raise the possibility of an unwanted (and nuclear aided) confrontation with Russia and/or China. For example, in the noise and confusion during the immediate aftermath of the terrorist nuclear attack, the U.S. president might be expected to place the country’s armed forces, including its nuclear arsenal, on a higher stage of alert. In such a tense environment, when careful planning runs up against the friction of reality, it is just possible that Moscow and/or China might mistakenly read this as a sign of U.S. intentions to use force (and possibly nuclear force) against them. In that situation, the temptations to preempt such actions might grow, although it must be admitted that any preemption would probably still meet with a devastating response. As part of its initial response to the act of nuclear terrorism (as discussed earlier) Washington might decide to order a significant conventional (or nuclear) retaliatory or disarming attack against the leadership of the terrorist group and/or states seen to support that group. Depending on the identity and especially the location of these targets, Russia and/or China might interpret such action as being far too close for their comfort, and potentially as an infringement on their spheres of influence and even on their sovereignty. One far-fetched but perhaps not impossible scenario might stem from a judgment in Washington that some of the main aiders and abetters of the terrorist action resided somewhere such as Chechnya, perhaps in connection with what Allison claims is the “Chechen insurgents’ … long-standing interest in all things nuclear.”42 American pressure on that part of the world would almost certainly raise alarms in Moscow that might require a degree of advanced consultation from Washington that the latter found itself unable or unwilling to provide. There is also the question of how other nuclear-armed states respond to the act of nuclear terrorism on another member of that special club. It could reasonably be expected that following a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States, both Russia and China would extend immediate sympathy and support to Washington and would work alongside the United States in the Security Council. But there is just a chance, albeit a slim one, where the support of Russia and/or China is less automatic in some cases than in others. For example, what would happen if the United States wished to discuss its right to retaliate against groups based in their territory? If, for some reason, Washington found the responses of Russia and China deeply underwhelming, (neither “for us or against us”) might it also suspect that they secretly were in cahoots with the group, increasing (again perhaps ever so slightly) the chances of a major exchange. If the terrorist group had some connections to groups in Russia and China, or existed in areas of the world over which Russia and China held sway, and if Washington felt that Moscow or Beijing were placing a curiously modest level of pressure on them, what conclusions might it then draw about their culpability? If Washington decided to use, or decided to threaten the use of, nuclear weapons, the responses of Russia and China would be crucial to the chances of avoiding a more serious nuclear exchange. They might surmise, for example, that while the act of nuclear terrorism was especially heinous and demanded a strong response, the response simply had to remain below the nuclear threshold. It would be one thing for a non-state actor to have broken the nuclear use taboo, but an entirely different thing for a state actor, and indeed the leading state in the international system, to do so. If Russia and China felt sufficiently strongly about that prospect, there is then the question of what options would lie open to them to dissuade the United States from such action: and as has been seen over the last several decades, the central dissuader of the use of nuclear weapons by states has been the threat of nuclear retaliation. If some readers find this simply too fanciful, and perhaps even offensive to contemplate, it may be informative to reverse the tables. Russia, which possesses an arsenal of thousands of nuclear warheads and that has been one of the two most important trustees of the non-use taboo, is subjected to an attack of nuclear terrorism. In response, Moscow places its nuclear forces very visibly on a higher state of alert and declares that it is considering the use of nuclear retaliation against the group and any of its state supporters. How would Washington view such a possibility? Would it really be keen to support Russia’s use of nuclear weapons, including outside Russia’s traditional sphere of influence? And if not, which seems quite plausible, what options would Washington have to communicate that displeasure? If China had been the victim of the nuclear terrorism and seemed likely to retaliate in kind, would the United States and Russia be happy to sit back and let this occur? In the charged atmosphere immediately after a nuclear terrorist attack,how would the attacked country respond to pressure from other major nuclear powers not to respond in kind? The phrase “how dare they tell us what to do” immediately springs to mind. Some might even go so far as to interpret this concern as a tacit form of sympathy or support for the terrorists. This might not help the chances of nuclear restraint.

## Oil

### 2AC – AT: OPEC Oil DA

#### Prices low and falling

David Bird, 8-21-13, Wall Street Journal, “Crude-Oil Futures Drop for Third Day in a Row,” <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324619504579026132108728184.html>

Light, sweet crude for October delivery fell 1.2%, or $1.26, to $103.85 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The third consecutive day of declines put oil at its lowest settlement since Aug. 8."The market made its move before the Fed," said Gene McGillian, a broker and analyst at Tradition Energy in Stamford, Conn. "There is still uncertainty about when [the Fed will] act." The market has settled into a $103-to-$108 range for U.S. crude-oil futures and "it looks like we've got a lot of volatility ahead" until more clarity comes from the Fed, said Gene McGillian, a broker and analyst at Tradition Energy in Stamford, Conn.

#### Saudis won’t flood the market—they’ll just invest in renewables

Al-Saleh et al 2008 (Yasser Al-Saleh, Paul Upham and Khaleel Malik, all from the Manchester Institute for Innovation Research, Renewable Energy Scenarios for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Oct http://www.tyndall.ac.uk/sites/default/files/wp125.pdf)

These scenarios envision a future in which global environmental concerns become significantly stronger and environmental actions become more coordinated. Greenhouse gas emissions are vigorously scrutinised with performance targets being completely agreed on and respected around the world. Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) has become a widely-adopted technology, and technological advancements in fuel cells and hydrogen storage are attributed to a strong market growth for hydrogen fuels in transport applications. As a result of environmental movements towards carbon-neutral and carbon-free technologies, the rate of climate change is slowed (yet not reversed). Given the availability of oil resources in Saudi Arabia, a ‘market flooding’ strategy that might drive oil prices down makes a lot of sense in a world where environmentally-friendly options are strongly favoured. Nevertheless, adopting such a hostile strategy, which Saudi Arabia has constantly avoided, would mean that maintaining good relations with other oil-producers could become an increasingly difficult challenge. For a country like Saudi Arabia that is blessed with very high levels of direct solar radiation, but is increasingly faced with an increased demand for electricity and water as well as a low revenue stream (owing to low oil prices), solar thermal seems to be an attractive choice worth considering.

#### Saudi Arabia doesn’t have enough in reserve to flood – they’re evidence is hype

Reuters 6/13/12, “Saudi oil spare capacity shrinking fast,” http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/13/us-energy-summit-capacity-idUSTRE75C4B320110613

Saudi Arabia's cushion of spare oil capacity is thinning far faster than widely believed, threatening to trigger price spikes in the months ahead, energy industry experts warned at the Reuters Global Energy and Climate Summit on Monday. Concerns are growing over the kingdom's ability to pump more oil beyond an anticipated summer boost, leaving the world exposed to any further unexpected disruptions. The world's top exporter promised to produce as much oil as the market needs after the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries last week failed to reach a deal. Saudi newspaper al-Hayat reported Saudi Arabia would boost output to 10 million barrels per day (bpd) in July, which Goldman Sachs' global head of commodities research Jeff Currie said would leave only 500,000 bpd spare. Currie and his team have warned for months about overstated Saudi output capacity. "If you get up to (10 mln bpd), you start to really create a very tight market relative to spare capacity," he told the Reuters Global Energy and Climate Summit in London. "But the question that's more appropriate is when do you get to 9.5, when do you get to 10? Because when you start to look out over the horizon, their ability to create more flexibility in spare capacity increases tremendously."

#### Low prices don’t kill Russia’s economy

RIA Novosti 11 (“Russian economy can survive low oil prices – Kudrin” September 09 11 http://en.rian.ru/business/20110926/167139562.html)

The Russian economy will be able to function normally for a year, if global oil prices fall to $60 per barrel, Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin said on Monday in an interview with Russia Today international news TV channel. "We expect this fall will certainly cause a decrease in our economic growth down to nearly zero or below zero, but in terms of the budget policy we'll be able to cope with this for up to a year," Kudrin said. Russia's finance minister said on Saturday he expected world oil prices to fall to $60 per barrel in the next one and a half to two years and stay at this level for about six months. After this, "we'll have to adjust policy and reduce expenditure. As a whole, however, we are ready to provide stability for a year or two and fulfil all our commitments," Kudrin said. Russia's federal budget for the next three years is based on a forecast of Urals average yearly oil price at $100 per barrel in 2012, $97 per barrel in 2013 and $101 per barrel in 2014. Russian Deputy Finance Minister Tatiana Nesterenko said last week that a fall in global oil prices to $60 per barrel could force the Russian government to cut the 2012 budget spending but added that this scenario was unlikely. The average price of Urals blend, Russia's key export commodity, stood at $109.2 per barrel in January-August 2011

#### Drop in oil prices is good for Russia – diversifies their economy and makes the Russian economy sustainable

Mark Kopinski, 1-19-11, Chief Investment Officer, International Equity, “Russia’s Push for Economic Diversification and Modernization,” <http://americancenturyblog.com/2011/01/russia%E2%80%99s-push-for-economic-diversificationand-modernization/>

 “One of the biggest problems facing Russia, however, is its lack of economic diversification and overreliance on revenues from oil and gas exports.” Since the collapse of the Soviet Union two decades ago, Russia has transformed itself from a centrally planned to a market-based economy. Along the way, however, the country’s push for economic diversification and modernization hasn’t been easy. Russia is contending with a host of issues, including a crumbling infrastructure, an aging workforce and inadequate pension system, and the development of new gas and oil fields to replace depleting current ones. Property rights remain weak and state interference in the private sector is also problematic. One of the biggest problems facing Russia, however, is its lack of economic diversification and overreliance on revenues from oil and gas exports. During the Great Recession, Russia’s economic dependence on oil and gas exports manifested itself more than the country’s leaders expected. As a result of plunging commodity prices, the country was among the hardest hit by the global economic crisis and the central government’s budget went from a surplus of 4.1% in 2008 to a deficit of 6.3% in 2009. In addition, real gross domestic product1 (GDP) growth dropped by 7.8% in 2009— the biggest decline on record. Consequently, the government is hoping to break its economic dependency on commodity export revenues and at the same time reduce its budget deficit. While economic reforms in the 1990s privatized most of Russia’s industrial base, the notable exceptions were the oil and gas sectors, where mismanagement and an exceptionally high rate of taxation has impeded growth and left them chronically underinvested. The good news for investors is that it is looking more likely that the government will relax its taxation of the sector and provide more incentives for exploration and development. The government is also selling stakes in a number of large state-owned companies to private investors. Another point is that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has fallen behind the West in the development of computer technology. In 2007, Russia launched an initiative to reinvigorate its tech sector, while reducing its economic reliance on commodity exports. Russian leaders are currently looking to build their own version of California’s Silicon Valley. In March 2010, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced that his country would build a high-tech hub outside Moscow for the research and development of five priority sectors: energy, information technology, telecommunications, biomedical technology, and atomic technologies. The Russian economy is also underdeveloped in a number of areas, including food, retail, and banking. For instance, only 30% of food is purchased through organized retail companies. The other 70% is distributed by “open-air” farmers markets, which are inefficient and where product quality can be questionable. The increasing penetration of organized retailers is providing opportunities for investors. Another area that holds investment potential is the banking sector. Russia currently has the second fastest growing banking sector in the world behind China. Economic Diversification Is Critical for Future Growth About 25% of the government’s operating budget is linked to oil and gas revenues, so Russia’s goal of economic diversification will not be an easy task. Yet its leadership is becoming increasingly aware of the fact that it must endure some short-term pain—weaning itself off the windfalls from commodity exports—to ensure long-term economic growth and prosperity. In the meantime, however, Russia is trying to improve its investment climate by fostering better relations with the West, becoming more cognizant of property and intellectual rights, and reducing the state’s influence in the economy.

# 1AR

## Topicality

### 1AR – Counter-Interpretation

#### Economic engagement includes academic exchanges

John Delury, 12-xx-09, Associate Director, Center on U.S.-China Relations, Asia Society, “North Korea Inside Out: The Case for Economic Engagement,” <http://asiasociety.org/files/pdf/North_Korea_Inside_Out.pdf>

This report makes the case for economic engagement with North Korea, describes North Korea’s unfulfilled potential to support such efforts, and offers concrete proposals for how to undertake economic engagement through academic exchange, NGO cooperation, and participation in the IFIs . Unlike foreign aid, on which the D .P .R .K . has become dependent, these types of economic engagement will enable the D .P .R .K . to provide for its own people . And unlike foreign aid, which can be diverted to the North Korean military or internal security apparatus, these actions will not strengthen the coercive power of the North Korean regime . Instead, economic engagement starts a process that may lead to significant benefits without enhancing the D .P .R .K.’s military capabilities or making the U .S.or its allies more vulnerable

### 1AR – AT: No Energy Affs

#### “Economic engagement” includes cooperation over energy- prefer government definition

Robert D. Hormats, Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment ¶ Asia Society Global Forum, Washington, DC, June 12, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/e/rls/rmk/210563.htm>

But U.S. economic engagement with the Asia-Pacific region is not limited to traditional trade and investment issues. It includes energy as well.¶ As part of the U.S.-Asia Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership, announced by President Obama at last year’s East Asia Summit, the U.S. Government has earmarked up to $6 billion in a line of credit over four years through the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. This will drive trade and investment in private sector and public-private energy-related projects across the region.¶ In addition to these resources, the United States will support capacity building programs through APEC and ASEAN, as well as with our bilateral partners, in the priority areas of interconnectivity, natural gas, renewables, and sustainable development.

## Oil

### 1AR – Russia Diversification

#### Diversification leads to sustainable long term growth in Russia

Glazov et al 4 (Jamie, Ph.D. in History with a specialty in Soviet Studies, Ion Mihai Pacepa, former acting chief of Communist Romania’s espionage service, James Woolsey, director of the CIA from 1993-95, Vladimir Bukovsky, former leading Soviet dissident, “Symposium: KGB Resurrection,” April 30 , http://www.frontpagemag.com/articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=13210)

Our oil dependence is an even more salient issue than when our percentage of imports was much less during the two oil shocks of the 1970's. The Russian economy is heavily influenced by the price of oil. Saudis, controlling at least half of the world's swing production capacity, dropped the bottom out of the oil market in 1985 and the Soviets never really recovered. We will never have that kind of control, but we can to a great extent reduce our dependence, give ourselves more leverage over the oil market, make it more difficult for the Saudis and others to raise prices to our economic and political disadvantage, and lead the Russian regime to realize that it may need to re-assess its direction. I used to believe that anything, including a strong oil market, that bolstered the Russian economy and produced prosperity would be likely to cause the growth of a middle class and, in time, more pressure for economic and political liberalization. The events of the last eighteen months or so have convinced me that such is not correct. Putin has used the economic prosperity produced by a strong oil market to consolidate his power and lead Russia toward a form of fascism -- oil prices have given him the idea that he can do anything he wants. Oil can tend to centralize power in any society except in a mature democracy such as Norway. It now seems to me that it is in our interest both in terms of our dealings with Russia and with the Middle East to do as much as possible to reduce our reliance on oil. To do this we would need to move toward alternative fuels, especially those produced from waste, that can be used in the existing infrastructure and toward more fuel efficient vehicles, such as hybrids, that are available now -- not wait on the hydrogen economy. In spite of their very high levels of oil production the Russians can't bring new production on- and off-line quickly as the Saudis can due to weather, location, etc. So if the Russians see us moving steadily toward reducing our oil use and thus their ability to make money from their high-cost production they may become far more reasonable than they are now. Today they have the bit in their teeth and, to mix a metaphor, they feel as if they have the world by the tail more and more firmly with each dollar the price of oil increases. They need to be shown that their prosperity is not assured without some fundamental changes and that it would be good for their economy and society if they diversified their economy. For more reasons than one it is in our interest for them to be worried about the possibility that oil prices could fall.