### sex trafficking

#### Lifting the embargo is critical for women’s rights – ensures employment

**Associated Press 13** - [Cites a report by Sarah Stevens - executive director of the Center for Democracy in the Americas, long-time human rights advocate, works with U.S. policymakers, journalists and others, to change the debate on U.S. foreign policy toward the hemisphere has led dozens of delegations of U.S. policymakers, academics, experts, and philanthropists to Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Venezuela on fact-finding and research missions. “Cuba gender equality good, but threatened says report” 3/8/13 <http://m.jamaicaobserver.com/mobile/business/Cuba-gender-equality-good--but-threatened-says-report_13801067> //NG]

Cuba has made great strides in gender equality, but still has work to do in eradicating macho attitudes and supporting opportunities for women in business and leadership, according to a new report from a US study group published to coincide with International Women's Day today. The Washington-based Centre for Democracy in the Americas also warned that the island's economic difficulties and drive to restructure its socialist model could put at risk the advances in gender equality since the Cuban Revolution. "Just like everywhere, in times of economic crisis it's women and families and kids that are often the most vulnerable," Sarah Stephens, the group's executive director, said yesterday. During numerous research trips to the island and interviews with a wide range of Cuban women, Stephens said, that was "one of the concerns that we heard again and again." President Raul Castro's economic reform plan includes massive reductions in state jobs, with those workers to be absorbed by an expanded private sector that has grown to 181 approved trades. But the center report noted that many of those are male-dominated professions — mechanics, masons, construction workers and so on — and to date, 24 per cent of small businesses are run by women. Moreover there's no provision for women in the private sector to maintain rights they enjoy in government jobs, such as paid maternity leave and breaks for breast-feeding. The centre recommended that Cuba implement measures to support women as independent workers and small business owners, such as offering training in finance and marketing, improving access to credit and providing day care. "What we heard from women was that much of the safety net, many of the benefits they received working for the state, they still desperately need in order to make ends meet, in order to be able to both hold down a job and take care of the home and the family and put meals on the table," Stephens said. The report also recommended that the United States engage with Cuban women and society at large, including opening US markets to Cuban goods. Stephens' centre is generally sympathetic to Havana and actively lobbies for changes in US policy toward the island, including the lifting of the 51-year economic embargo. Overall the report praised Cuba on gender equality especially compared with the rest of the region, noting advances in indicators such as universal literacy, low maternal death rates, high representation of women in higher education, the enshrinement of equal rights in the constitution and legal guarantees in the family code. Still, it noted that Cuba has been criticised both internally and externally on domestic violence and it warned that cutbacks in the health and education systems potentially threaten gender equality if not handled properly. It also suggested that a glass ceiling still exists to a certain extent, saying that while Cuban women constitute 53 per cent of workers with graduate degrees, they occupy just 34 per cent of executive positions. Fewer than 40 per cent of women are employed, and they earn less than half of what men make, the study found. "This is especially dispiriting to the highly trained women who emerge year after year from Cuban colleges, yet remain unable to fully employ their talents," the report said. Castro, other officials and intellectuals have often stressed the importance of making Cuban society and government more inclusive of women, people of Afro-Cuban descent and youth. In late February a new parliament formed with women making up 42 per cent of its membership, continuing a gradual upward trend over the years. Thirty-nine per cent were black or mestizo. Castro also convened a new ruling Council of State with two women among its five vice presidents. Sonia Delgado, a 52-year-history teacher in Havana, said she is grateful that women in Cuba have rights to equal education, equal pay for equal work and free contraception and abortion. But Delgado said some workplace discrimination continues, and bosses can be hesitant to hire female employees for fear they might have children and miss work. In many families a husband's role is to "help out" rather than "share" household chores, she added. "After the triumph of the revolution, women's lives changed and doors were opened," Delgado said. "But I would say machismo continues to exist in our society. Perhaps out of sight, but there it is, lurking."

#### Embargo destroys employment which is the root cause of prostitution

**Karseeboom, 3** (Jennifer Karsseboom, 3/26/3, “Poverty Pushes Cuban Women into Sex Tourism”, [http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/211/44367.html)//EM](http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/211/44367.html%29//EM)

From north to south, Havana to Santiago de Cuba, amidst the decaying buildings, propagandizing billboards and food stores with empty shelves there are two things in Cuba which are always in full supply: prostitutes and sex tourists. In a country with few employment options that offer enough upon which to subsist and an embargo that contributes to substandard living conditions for the majority of the population, women and girls flock to densely populated Havana in search of sexual employment in hotels, bars, restaurants and on the streets. Sex tourists flock to Havana and other cities in search of a form of escapism that is cheap, safe and exotic. In Cuba, foreign men can command Cuban women and girls with the same ease used to order cocktails.

#### Cuban economic reforms are inevitable – however, the AFF safeguards against potential economic disaters through the transition

**Ashby 13 –** Senior Research Fellow at the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, he served in the U.S. Commerce Department's International Trade Administration as Director of the Office of Mexico and the Caribbean and acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for the Western Hemisphere(Timothy, "Preserving Stability in Cuba After Normalizing Relations with the United States – The Importance of Trading with State-Owned Enterprises" 3/29/13, Council on Hemispheric Affairs, http://www.coha.org/preserving-stability-in-cuba-timothy-ashby/)//AD

Cuba under Raúl Castro has entered a new period of economic, social, and political transformation. Reforms instituted within the past few years have brought the expansion of private sector entrepreneurial activity, including lifting restrictions on the sales of residential real estate, automobiles, and electronic goods. Additional reforms included, more than a million hectares of idle land has been leased to private farmers, where citizens have been granted permission to stay in hotels previously reserved for tourists, and freedom being granted for most Cubans to travel abroad.

Stating that it was time for the “gradual transfer” of “key roles to new generations,” President Raúl Castro announced that he will retire by 2018, and named as his possible successor a man who was not even born at the time of the Cuban Revolution. [1]

The twilight of the Castro era presents challenges and opportunities for US policy makers. Normalization of relations is inevitable, regardless of timing, yet external and internal factors may accelerate or retard the process.

The death of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez is likely to undermine the already dysfunctional Cuban economy, if it leads to reductions in oil imports and other forms of aid. This could bring social chaos, especially among the island’s disaffected youth. Such an outcome would generate adverse consequences for US national and regional security. To maintain Cuba’s social and economic stability while reforms are maturing, the United States must throw itself open to **unrestricted bilateral trade** with all Cuban enterprises, both private and state-owned.

The collapse of Cuba’s tottering economy could seismically impact the United States and neighboring countries. It certainly did during the Mariel Boatlift of 1980, precipitated by a downturn in the Cuban economy which led to tensions on the island. Over 125,000 Cuban refugees landed in the Miami area, including 31,000 criminals and mental patients. Today, the United States defines its national security interests regarding Cuba as follows:

• Avoid one or more mass migrations;

• Prevent Cuba from becoming another porous border that allows continuous large-scale migration to the hemisphere;

• Prevent Cuba from becoming a major source or transshipment point for the illegal drug trade;

• Avoid Cuba becoming a state with ungoverned spaces that could provide a platform for terrorists and others wishing to harm the United States. [2]

All of these national security threats are directly related to economic and social conditions within Cuba.

US policy specifically supports “a market-oriented economic system” [3] toward Cuba, yet regulations prohibit the importation of any goods of Cuban origin, whether from the island’s potentially booming private sector – including 300,000 agricultural producers – or State-Owned Enterprises (“SOEs”). [4] Such a policy is counterproductive to US interests. Regardless of over 400,000 entrepreneurs, including agricultural cultivators, it could be many years, if ever, when Cuba’s private sector would be ready to serve as the engine of economic growth. SOEs employ 72 percent of Cuban workers. [5]

A rational commercial rapprochement towards Cuba would therefore require a change in current laws and in the system of regulations prohibiting the importation of Cuban goods and products. Normalized bilateral trade will benefit the Cuban people by helping to provide economic stability and fostering the growth of a middle class – both of which are essential for the foundation of democratic institutions. Two-way trade must include both Cuba’s private sector as well as SOEs.

#### The plan changes elite calculus – it removes the fear of regime change and creates buy in for economic and political reform

**Lopez-Levy 11** – PhD candidate at Josef Korbel School of International Studies, coauthor of “Raul Castro and the New Cuba” (Arturo, New America Foundation, May 2011, [http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/naf\_all\_cuba\_reform\_final.pdf)//EK](http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/naf_all_cuba_reform_final.pdf%29//EK)

Diplomacy, not sanctions, must be the primary tool for resolving differences with Havana and advancing U.S. interests. It is worth remembering that since the 2008 presidential campaign in which President Obama proclaimed the value of negotiating with countries like Cuba, without preconditions, engagement was never defended on the basis of sympathy for the interlocutors but rather, on how best to promote American values and interests. American repudiation of the Castros’ conduct may or may not be well earned, but it should not be an excuse for constraining American influence with Cuban society and elites. Sanctions, if used, should be “smart”, with the objective of influencing Cuban policy (particularly when such policies are under serious debate and transformation), not affecting regime change. While Cuba’s elite do harbor disagreements about how extensive the reform process should be, all factions are united against changes that would render Cuba in any way vulnerable to external efforts at regime change. Different from the model of “Fidel in Command”, the emerging model of bureaucratic politics under Raul is not insulated from elite sensitivities. To the extent that postrevolutionary elites are threatened by U.S. policy (The conditions of the Helms-Burton Act, for instance), they are going to oppose policy changes. To the extent that their interests in a market-oriented reform are advanced by political concessions such as the release of the political prisoners, they will advocate for them. The processes of marketization and political liberalization create an opportunity for the U.S. to initiate actions that could lead to a proliferation of meaningful changes in Cuba. American support for both a democratic and an economically stable Cuba are far from mutually exclusive. As the experience of other countries demonstrates, economic and political reforms are intertwined. Democracy in the long run tends to produce stable governments but the process of getting there is inherently destabilizing. Multiparty elections, for instance, in the absence of a stabilizing economic and social environment tend to be destabilizing and often violent. A growing, market-oriented Cuban economy that enjoys substantial participation from the Cuban Diaspora will be a **major deterrent against violence**. There are numerous examples, world-wide, of the positive repercussions a transition to a market economy (the Cuban non-state sector would jump from 15% of GDP today to 35% in 2015) has for the independence of civil society. The United States should support such a course in Cuba.

### Sanctions/GTG 2AC (1:00)

#### 1. We meet – they misunderstand the Aff – we don’t just lift barriers to private engagement – NTR requires a new trade agreement and is active pursuit of bilateral trade relations

French, 9– editor of and a frequent contributor to The Havana Note, led more than two dozen research trips to Cuba (Anya, “Options for Engagement A Resource Guide for Reforming U.S. Policy toward Cuba” <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/library/resources/documents/Cuba/USPolicy/options-for-engagement.pdf>)

The path to “normal” trade relations

If the United States were to lift its trade embargo against Cuba, this would not automatically confer “normal” status to the bilateral trade relationship. It would mean that the United States and Cuba have the opportunity to begin trading in more goods and services than they have in the last fifty years. Whether much expanded trade actually occurs depends on whether the United States were to take additional steps beyond lifting the embargo: the most important of which is the provision of Normal Trade Relations (NTR). NTR is a technical term which refers to the provision of nondiscriminatory treatment toward trading partners. Cuba and North Korea are the only two countries to which the United States continues to deny “normal trade relations.” All other countries either have permanent normal trade relations or temporary, renewable normal trade relations with the United States.161 Assuming that the Cuba-specific trade sanctions contained in the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (the continuity of which was codified by the 1996 Helms-Burton Act) were to be eliminated, achieving normal trade relations between Cuba and the United States would not be a simple matter. A first stumbling block could be the 1974 Trade Act provision dubbed “Jackson-Vanik,” which prohibits non-market economy countries from receiving normal tariff treatment, entering into a bilateral commercial agreement, or receiving any U.S. government credits or loan guarantees, until the President has reported to Congress that such a country does not: 1) deny its citizens the right to emigrate, 2) impose an unreasonable tax or fine for emigrating, and 3) impose more than a “nominal tax, levy, fine, fee or other charge on any citizen as a consequence of the desire of such citizen to emigrate to the country of his choice.”162 Thus, Cuba’s restrictions on its citizens’ emigration rights pose an obstacle to normalization of bilateral trade. Only once the requirements set forth by the Jackson-Vanik amendment have been met, (and absent any other Cuba-specific sanctions, such as the Export Administration Act controls on countries found to be supporting international terrorism), could the United States begin negotiations of a bilateral commercial agreement with Cuba. To begin to extend normal trade relations to Cuba, the United States would need to enter into a reciprocal trade agreement with Cuba (not equivalent to a “free trade agreement”) that would provide a balance of trade benefits and protections to U.S. exports and commercial entities doing business with Cuba, at the same time it would provide such benefits to Cuba. Such an agreement would need to include protection for U.S. patents and trademarks and for “industrial rights and processes,” include a safeguard mechanism to prevent market disruptions due to trade, and provide that the agreement, and its continuation, be subject to the national security interests of both parties.163 Assuming bilateral relations had reached the appropriate milestones to begin discussing two-way trade, negotiating such an agreement could potentially take years, as both countries would need to adopt statutory and regulatory changes.

#### 2. Counter-Interpretation –

#### A. Economic engagement is government trade agreements and foreign aid – specific to the topic

Daga, 13- director of research at Politicas Publicas para la Libertad, in Bolivia, and a visiting senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation (Sergio, “Economics of the 2013-2014 Debate Topic:

U.S. Economic Engagement Toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela”, National Center for Policy Analysis, 5/15, <http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/Message_to_Debaters_6-7-13.pdf>)

Economic engagement between or among countries can take many forms, but this document will focus on government-to-government engagement through 1) international trade agreements designed to lower barriers to trade; and 2) government foreign aid; next, we will contrast government-to-government economic engagement with private economic engagement through 3) international investment, called foreign direct investment; and 4) remittances and migration by individuals. All of these areas are important with respect to the countries mentioned in the debate resolution; however, when discussing economic engagement by the U.S. federal government, some issues are more important with respect to some countries than to others.

#### B. Its means associated with

Oxford Dictionaries, 13(its, http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/its?view=uk)

Definition of its determiner belonging to or associated with a thing previously mentioned or easily identified: turn the camera on its side he chose the area for its atmosphere belonging to or associated with a child or animal of unspecified sex: a baby in its mother’s womb

#### 3. Prefer it –

#### A. Predictability –

**It’s from a policy analyst that chose to write exclusively about the limits of the debate topic their evidence doesn’t assume the resolutional wording of “its economic engagement”**

#### B. Education –

**Embargo alterations are a necessary precondition for 90% of Cuba Affs with meaningful lit – the Aff has to be more, not less – they limit out a third of the topic**

#### C. Aff ground –

**Sanctions provide USfg key warrants – that’s why nobody reads border infrastructure**

#### D. Better for limits –

**Allowing any Aff related to government transfers un-limits – trade and aid solves predictable link ground**

#### E. Neg ground –

**Elimination of sanctions provides link-uniqueness for Aid links – that’s why teams want to be Neg versus Cuba and Venezuela**

#### 4. No limits offense –

**OFAC and the Executive Branch are responsible for small sanction alteration Affs**

#### 5. No ground loss –

**Commodity PICs and recycled impact-turn net-benefits apply to all of them – just prep the backfile**

#### 6. Reasonability –

**Competing interpretations force a race to the bottom to arbitrarily limit out the Aff – crowds out substantive topic discussion – if our interpretation is reasonably predictable and has fair ground, don’t vote on T**

### 2ac fem ir

#### Framework: the role of the ballot is to determine whether the aff is better than the status quo or a competitive policy option. This means that they can have the K but fiating the alt is a voting issue—

#### a) utopian fiat – they don’t specify an agent or mechanism for achieving the alt making it a rigged game to test the AFF versus utopia

#### b) decision-making – the agent of the alt is not directly competitive with the plan so we are not engaging in opportunity cost thinking—which is the most rigorous way to test the AFF and is the most important critical thinking skill we take away from debate

#### Social science proves—multipolarity supports the natural incentive to seek status by fighting

**Wohlforth, 09** – professor of government at Dartmouth (William, “Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War,” World Affairs, January, project muse)

The upshot is a near scholarly consensus that unpolarity’s consequences for great power conflict are indeterminate and that a power shift resulting in a return to bipolarity or multipolarity will not raise the specter of great power war. This article questions the consensus on two counts. First, I show that it depends crucially on a dubious assumption about human motivation. Prominent theories of war are based on the assumption that people are mainly motivated by the instrumental pursuit of tangible ends such as physical security and material prosperity. This is why such theories seem irrelevant to interactions among great powers in an international environment that diminishes the utility of war for the pursuit of such ends. Yet we know that people are motivated by a great many noninstrumental motives, not least by concerns regarding their social status. 3 As John Harsanyi noted, “Apart from economic payoffs, social status (social rank) seems to be the most important incentive and motivating force of social behavior.”4 This proposition rests on much firmer scientific ground now than when Harsanyi expressed it a generation ago, as cumulating research shows that humans appear to be hardwired for sensitivity to status and that relative standing is a powerful and independent motivator of behavior.5 [End Page 29]

Second, I question the dominant view that status quo evaluations are relatively independent of the distribution of capabilities. If the status of states depends in some measure on their relative capabilities, and if states derive utility from status, then different distributions of capabilities may affect levels of satisfaction, just as different income distributions may affect levels of status competition in domestic settings. 6 Building on research in psychology and sociology, I argue that even capabilities distributions among major powers foster ambiguous status hierarchies, which generate more dissatisfaction and clashes over the status quo. And the more stratified the distribution of capabilities, the less likely such status competition is.

Unipolarity thus generates far fewer incentives than either bipolarity or multipolarity for direct great power positional competition over status. Elites in the other major powers continue to prefer higher status, but in a unipolar system they face comparatively weak incentives to translate that preference into costly action. And the absence of such incentives matters because social status is a positional good—something whose value depends on how much one has in relation to others.7 “If everyone has high status,” Randall Schweller notes, “no one does.”8 While one actor might increase its status, all cannot simultaneously do so. High status is thus inherently scarce, and competitions for status tend to be zero sum.9

#### We control uniqueness – violence is at its lowest level in history because hegemony and strong economic growth are the deeper proximate checks against war

\*War is at its lowest level in history because of US primacy---best statistical studies prove heg solves war because it makes democratic peace resilient globalization sustainable---it’s the deeper cause of proximate checks against war

**Owen 11 –** John M. Owen Professor of Politics at University of Virginia PhD from Harvard "DON’T DISCOUNT HEGEMONY" Feb 11 www.cato-unbound.org/2011/02/11/john-owen/dont-discount-hegemony/

Andrew Mack and his colleagues at the Human Security Report Project are to be congratulated. Not only do they present a study with a striking conclusion, driven by data, free of theoretical or ideological bias, but they also do something quite unfashionable: they bear good news. Social scientists really are not supposed to do that. Our job is, if not to be Malthusians, then at least to point out disturbing trends, looming catastrophes, and the imbecility and mendacity of policy makers. And then it is to say why, if people listen to us, things will get better. We do this as if our careers depended upon it, and perhaps they do; for if all is going to be well, what need then for us?

Our colleagues at Simon Fraser University are brave indeed. That may sound like a setup, but it is not. I shall challenge neither the data nor the general conclusion that violent conflict around the world has been decreasing in fits and starts since the Second World War. When it comes to violent conflict among and within countries, things have been getting better. (The trends have not been linear—Figure 1.1 actually shows that the frequency of interstate wars peaked in the 1980s—but the 65-year movement is clear.) Instead I shall accept that Mack et al. are correct on the macro-trends, and focus on their explanations they advance for these remarkable trends. With apologies to any readers of this forum who recoil from academic debates, this might get mildly theoretical and even more mildly methodological.

Concerning international wars, one version of the “nuclear-peace” theory is not in fact laid to rest by the data. It is certainly true that nuclear-armed states have been involved in many wars. They have even been attacked (think of Israel), which falsifies the simple claim of “assured destruction”—that any nuclear country A will deter any kind of attack by any country B because B fears a retaliatory nuclear strike from A.

But the most important “nuclear-peace” claim has been about mutually assured destruction, which obtains between two robustly nuclear-armed states. The claim is that (1) rational states having second-strike capabilities—enough deliverable nuclear weaponry to survive a nuclear first strike by an enemy—will have an overwhelming incentive not to attack one another; and (2) we can safely assume that nuclear-armed states are rational. It follows that states with a second-strike capability will not fight one another.

Their colossal atomic arsenals neither kept the United States at peace with North Vietnam during the Cold War nor the Soviet Union at peace with Afghanistan. But the argument remains strong that those arsenals did help keep the United States and Soviet Union at peace with each other. Why non-nuclear states are not deterred from fighting nuclear states is an important and open question. But in a time when calls to ban the Bomb are being heard from more and more quarters, we must be clear about precisely what the broad trends toward peace can and cannot tell us. They may tell us nothing about why we have had no World War III, and little about the wisdom of banning the Bomb now.

Regarding the downward trend in international war, Professor Mack is friendlier to more palatable theories such as the “democratic peace” (democracies do not fight one another, and the proportion of democracies has increased, hence less war); the interdependence or “commercial peace” (states with extensive economic ties find it irrational to fight one another, and interdependence has increased, hence less war); and the notion that people around the world are more anti-war than their forebears were. Concerning the downward trend in civil wars, he favors theories of economic growth (where commerce is enriching enough people, violence is less appealing—a logic similar to that of the “commercial peace” thesis that applies among nations) and the end of the Cold War (which end reduced superpower support for rival rebel factions in so many Third-World countries).

These are all plausible mechanisms for peace. What is more, none of them excludes any other; all could be working toward the same end. That would be somewhat puzzling, however. Is the world just lucky these days? How is it that an array of peace-inducing factors happens to be working coincidentally in our time, when such a magical array was absent in the past? The answer may be that one or more of these mechanisms reinforces some of the others, or perhaps some of them are mutually reinforcing. Some scholars, for example, have been focusing on whether economic growth might support democracy and vice versa, and whether both might support international cooperation, including to end civil wars.

We would still need to explain how this charmed circle of causes got started, however. And here let me raise another factor, perhaps even less appealing than the “nuclear peace” thesis, at least outside of the United States. That factor is what international relations scholars call hegemony—specifically American hegemony.

A theory that many regard as discredited, but that refuses to go away, is called hegemonic stability theory. The theory emerged in the 1970s in the realm of international political economy. It asserts that for the global economy to remain open—for countries to keep barriers to trade and investment low—one powerful country must take the lead. Depending on the theorist we consult, “taking the lead” entails paying for global public goods (keeping the sea lanes open, providing liquidity to the international economy), coercion (threatening to raise trade barriers or withdraw military protection from countries that cheat on the rules), or both. The theory is skeptical that international cooperation in economic matters can emerge or endure absent a hegemon. The distastefulness of such claims is self-evident: they imply that it is good for everyone the world over if one country has more wealth and power than others. More precisely, they imply that it has been good for the world that the United States has been so predominant.

There is no obvious reason why hegemonic stability theory could not apply to other areas of international cooperation, including in security affairs, human rights, international law, peacekeeping (UN or otherwise), and so on. What I want to suggest here—suggest, not test—is that American hegemony might just be a deep cause of the steady decline of political deaths in the world.

How could that be? After all, the report states that United States is the third most war-prone country since 1945. Many of the deaths depicted in Figure 10.4 were in wars that involved the United States (the Vietnam War being the leading one). Notwithstanding politicians’ claims to the contrary, a candid look at U.S. foreign policy reveals that the country is as ruthlessly self-interested as any other great power in history.

The answer is that U.S. hegemony might just be a deeper cause of the proximate causes outlined by Professor Mack. Consider economic growth and openness to foreign trade and investment, which (so say some theories) render violence irrational. American power and policies may be responsible for these in two related ways. First, at least since the 1940s Washington has prodded other countries to embrace the market capitalism that entails economic openness and produces sustainable economic growth. The United States promotes capitalism for selfish reasons, of course: its own domestic system depends upon growth, which in turn depends upon the efficiency gains from economic interaction with foreign countries, and the more the better. During the Cold War most of its allies accepted some degree of market-driven growth.

Second, the U.S.-led western victory in the Cold War damaged the credibility of alternative paths to development—communism and import-substituting industrialization being the two leading ones—and left market capitalism the best model. The end of the Cold War also involved an end to the billions of rubles in Soviet material support for regimes that tried to make these alternative models work. (It also, as Professor Mack notes, eliminated the superpowers’ incentives to feed civil violence in the Third World.) What we call globalization is caused in part by the emergence of the United States as the global hegemon.

The same case can be made, with somewhat more difficulty, concerning the spread of democracy. Washington has supported democracy only under certain conditions—the chief one being the absence of a popular anti-American movement in the target state—but those conditions have become much more widespread following the collapse of communism. Thus in the 1980s the Reagan administration—the most anti-communist government America ever had—began to dump America’s old dictator friends, starting in the Philippines. Today Islamists tend to be anti-American, and so the Obama administration is skittish about democracy in Egypt and other authoritarian Muslim countries. But general U.S. material and moral support for liberal democracy remains strong.

#### Permutation do the plan and non-mutually exclusive parts of the alternative–their links misconstrue realism and the state can help us

**Lind 2005** (Michael, Executive Editor of the National Interest, “Of Arms and the Woman,” Jan 20, http://feminism.eserver.org/of-arms-and-the-woman.txt)

The first thing that must be said about the feminist critique of realism is that it is by no means incompatible with realism, properly understood. In fact, realist theory can hardly be recognized in the feminist caricature of it. Take the idea of the innate human propensity for conflict. Although some realist thinkers such as Hans Morgenthau have confused the matter (often under the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr) with misleading talk of "original sin," the controlling idea of realism is that there is an ineradicable potential for conflict between human beings--"men" in the inclusive, gender-neutral sense-- when they are organized in groups. Realism is not about conflict between individual men, that is, males; if it were, it would be a theory of barroom brawls or adolescent male crime. It is about conflict between rival communities, and those communities include women and men alike.

Feminist critics of realism, then, begin by attacking a straw man, or a straw male. Even worse, they tend to indulge in the stereotypes that they otherwise abhor: aggression is "male," conciliation is "female." To their credit, most feminist theorists are aware of this danger, ever mindful of their dogma that all sexual identity is socially constructed, ever fearful that they will hear the cry of "Essentialist!" raised against them. Thus Enloe, in an earlier book called Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics, struggles with how to answer what she calls "the `What about Margaret Thatcher?' taunt."

Her answer is that women like Margaret Thatcher and Jeane Kirkpatrick reinforce the patriarchy by making international conflict look "less man-made, more people-made and thus more legitimate and harder to reverse." Enloe applies this analysis consistently--right-wing women like Phyllis Schlafly are pawns of the patriarchal-militarist power structure, while left-wing women like the Greenham Common Women are disinterested proponents of the good of humanity. Still, Enloe is troubled enough to return to the question: "some women's class aspirations and their racist fears lured them into the role of controlling other women for the sake of imperial rule." Admit that, however, and you are close to conceding the point about collective human behavior made by realists.

Then there is "the state." Here, too, there is nothing in realism that cannot accommodate many feminine observations about the particular patriarchal features of particular historic states. The realist definition of "the state" as a sovereign entity with an existence and a strategy distinct from that of individuals is very broad, including medieval duchies and ancient empires-- and, perhaps, female biker gangs. Realist theory holds no preference for the modern nation-state, though a word might be spoken in its defense. Again and again in feminist writings one encounters the claim that the modern nation- state is inherently "gendered," as though its predecessors--feudal dynastic regimes, theocratic empires, city-states, tribal amphictyonies--were not even more rigidly patriarchal.

Completely missing from such an analysis is any acknowledgement that the successes of feminism have been largely based on appeals to the universal norms governing citizens of the impersonal, bureaucratic nation-state. Those appeals would have made no sense in any previous political system. Notwithstanding this, feminist scholars tend to join free marketeers, multiculturalists and Wilsonians in their approval of the (mostly imaginary) dissolution of the nation-state in a new world order. If the nation-state is "gendered," Enloe reasons, then perhaps the post-national nonstate need not be: "Perhaps effective u.n. soldiering will call for a new kind of masculinity, one less reliant on misogyny, less insecure about heterosexual credentials." (If the recent "peacekeeping" of u.n. forces in Bosnia and Somalia shows anything, however, it is that a little more of the old masculinity may be necessary to prevent mass slaughter--and mass rape, too.)

**Feminism can’t explain international relations**

**LIND 2005** (Michael, Executive Editor of the National Interest, “Of Arms and the Woman,” Jan 20, http://feminism.eserver.org/of-arms-and-the-woman.txt)

Though realist theory can survive, and perhaps even accommodate, many of the arguments of feminism with respect to collective conflict and state sovereignty, realism must reject the third aspect of the feminist criticism: the redefinition of security to mean social justice. From the Marxist left, feminists have picked up the argument that interstate violence is just one genre of "structural violence," which includes the economic oppression of lower classes by upper classes (Marxism) and the subordination of women to men by custom and by violence (feminism). But this notion merely disguises a change of subject as a change of approach. To say that mass rape by soldiers in wartime and wife-beating in societies at peace (excuse me, at "peace") are parts of the same phenomenon is to abandon any pretense of engaging in serious thinking about international relations. The result may be feminist theory, but it is not a theory of world politics. It is a theory of human society in general. When, as in "ecofeminism," the mistreatment of women by men in all societies, in peace and at war, is fused, as a subject of analysis, with the mistreatment of the ecosystem by humanity, one has a theory of everything, and a theory of everything is usually not very much

#### Their alternative is nihilist—it rejects all forms of political action that could improve the way society views gender.

**Whitworth 1994** - Assistant Professor of Political Science York University (Sandra, Feminism and International Relations, Towards a Political Economy of Gender in Interstate and Non-Governmental Institutions, page 22-23)

This points also to the serious limitations involved in feminist post-modernist understandings of 'social construction'. While acknowledging that identities and meanings are never natural or universal, postmodernists locate the construction of those meanings almost exclusively in the play of an ambiguously defined power, organised through discourse. This means that identities and meanings are constructed in the absence of knowing actors, and more importantly, that there is very little that knowing actors can do to challenge those meanings or identities. The ways in which power manifests itself, the particular meanings and identities that emerge, seem almost inevitable. They are unrelated to prevailing material conditions or the activities of agents and institutions. Similarly, critics may describe the play of power in the construction of meaning, but cannot participate in changing it.63 As Marysia Zalewski writes: The post-modernist intention to challenge the power of dominant discourses in an attempt to lead those discourses into disarray is at first glance appealing, but we have to ask what will the replacement be? If we are to believe that all is contingent and we have no base on to which we can ground claims to truth, then 'power alone will determine the oufeome of competing truth claims'. Post-modernist discourse does not offer any criteria for choosing among competing explanations and thus has a tendency to lead towards nihilism - an accusation often levelled at the purveyors of post-modernism and to which they seem unable to provide any answer, except perhaps in the words of one post-modernist scholar 'what's wrong with nihilism'?64 Postmodernists are equally post-feminist, a title they sometimes adopt, for their analysis loses sight of the political imperatives which inform feminism: to uncover and change inequalities between women and men. As Ann Marie Goetz suggests, when many of the issues surrounding women and international relations are ones which concern the very survival of those women, postmodernism's continued back-pedalling and disclaimers are not only politically unacceptable, they are, more importantly, politically irresponsible.

#### Critiques of gender relations that do not pose concrete alternatives are destined to fail.

**Caprioli, 04** (“Feminist IR Theory and Quantitative Methodology: A Critical Analysis” Mary Caprioli, Dept. of Political Science, University of Tennessee. International Studies Review. Volume 42 Issue 1 Page 193-197, March 2004. http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/doi/10.1111/0020-8833.00076).

If researchers cannot add gender to an analysis, then they must necessarily use a purely female-centered analysis, even though the utility of using a purely female centered analysis seems equally biased. Such research would merely be gendercentric based on women rather than men, and it would thereby provide an equally biased account of international relations as those that are male-centric. Although one might speculate that having research done from the two opposing worldviews might more fully explain international relations, surely an integrated approach would offer a more comprehensive analysis of world affairs. Beyond a female-centric analysis, some scholars (for example, Carver 2002) argue that feminist research must offer a critique of gender as a set of power relations. Gender categories, however, do exist and have very real implications for individuals, social relations, and international affairs. Critiquing the social construction of gender is important, but it fails to provide new theories of international relations or to address the implications of gender for what happens in the world.

#### Feminist thought just reproduces gender stereotypes

**Witworth**, **94** prof of political science and female studies @ York U, (Feminism and International Relations, pg 20, 1994)

Even when not concerned with mothering as such, much of the politics that emerge from radical feminism within IR depend on a ‘re-thinking’ from the perspective of women. What is left unexplained is how simply thinking differently will alter the material realities of relations of domination between men and women. Structural (patriarchal) relations are acknowledged, but not analysed in radical feminism’s reliance on the experiences, behaviours and perceptions of ‘women’. As Sandra Harding notes, the essential and universal ‘man’, long the focus of feminist critiques, has merely been replaced here with the essential and universal ‘woman’. And indeed, that notion of ‘woman’ not only ignores important differences amongst women, but it also reproduces exactly the stereotypical vision of women and men, masculine and feminine, that has been produced under patriarchy. Those women who do not fit the mould – who, for example, take up arms in military struggle – are quickly dismissed as expressing ‘negative’ or ‘inauthentic’ feminine values (the same accusation is more rarely made against men). In this way, it comes as no surprise when mainstream IR theorists such as Robert Reohane happily embrace the tenets of radical feminism. It requires little in the way of re-thinking or movement from accepted and comfortable assumptions about stereotypes. Radical feminists find themselves defending the same account of women as nurturing, pacifist, submissive mothers as men do under patriarchy, anti-feminists and the New Right. As some writers suggest, this in itself should give feminists pause to reconsider this position.

### 2ac alan gross counterplan

### 2ac condo

#### Condo is a voting issue –

#### a) Skew – condo allows them to arbitrarily kick arguments destroying effective 2ac strategy

#### b) Decision-making – the need to concede is an important skill to understand arg interaction – allowing them to arbitrarily kick positions prevents this skill

#### c) C/I – Pre–round condo allows them to pick their best offense before the round and is reciprocal

#### d) Reject the team to deter abuse and rejecting the arg links to all our offense

#### Cuba veto tanks counterplan solvency

\*Cuba will veto conditional reform – empirics prove that specifically in the case of the embargo, attempts to engage Cuba by demanding reciprocal action hands Cuba the ability to veto US policy – that short-circuits US moderation which collapses engagement with Cuba

**Ratliff 09 –** Research Fellow at the Independent Institute and a member of the Board of Advisors of the Institute’s Center on Global Prosperity. He is also a Research Fellow and Curator of the Americas Collection at the Hoover Institution(William, “Why and How to Lift the U.S. Embargo on Cuba”, 5/7, http://www.independent.org/newsroom/article.asp?id=2496)

How has the embargo failed? It has not brought down the Castro brothers, advanced democracy, freedom, human rights or prosperity in Cuba, or gotten compensation for Americans whose assets Cuba seized decades ago. It largely denies Americans the freedom to travel to Cuba, or to trade freely and otherwise interact Cubans on the island.

And in recent decades it has given Fidel the scapegoat he needs—us—to excuse his economic utopianism and brutality.

Supporters of the embargo see it as an expression of America’s moral indignation at Castro’s brutal policies. By limiting the flow of dollars to Cuba we deny some funds to Cuban security forces, as they argue, but we simultaneously withhold support for the daily lives of the Cuban people.

For twenty years the embargo placated the very noisy Cuban American community in Florida, but by late 2008 even a majority of Cuban Americans, according to a Florida International University poll, had turned against it. It isn’t that Cuban Americans are going soft on Fidel, but that a majority finally see or admit that this policy is more harmful than positive to its own interests.

And it is harmful to U.S. interests as well, which ought to be our primary concern, alienating the Hemisphere and the world as a whole while having only negative impacts in Cuba.

The Cuban American National Foundation, long the epicenter of anti-Castroism in the United States, recently admitted that for many years the embargo has been “little beyond posturing for domestic electoral purposes.”

How can we best end this policy with a minimum of confrontation, frustration and delay?

The only way we can keep full control of the process is by **lifting it unilaterally**.

The State Department recently lauded the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia. “It has long been and remains the position of the United States that normalization should take place without preconditions,” State said. So why not between the United States and Cuba, where the pain of the past hardly equals that of Turkey and Armenia?

Is Castro a brutal dictator? Sure, but his atrocities are hardly worse than those of Robert Mugabe, the thug who rules Zimbabwe, a country we recognize.

The United States demands more concessions from Cuba for recognition than from any other country in history. In fact, the Helms Burton Act is blatantly imperialistic, in the spirit of the Platt Amendment to the Monroe Doctrine a century ago, which poisoned U.S. relations with Cuba for decades.

Negotiations without preconditions, which Obama says he supports, are the next best though potentially deeply flawed approach. Informal discussions between U.S. and Cuban diplomats already are underway. If Cuban pragmatists, including President Raul Castro, can over-ride Fidel’s anti-American passions, perhaps the United States, if we are very flexible, and Cuba can work out a step-by-step, face-saving plan to reduce tensions and normalize relations.

The Obama administration got off to a positive start by dropping the misguided 2004 Bush administration restrictions on remittances and travel to Cuba, but then in public statements fell immediately into the trap of previous administrations by demanding “reciprocity.”

This seems a just and reasonable demand, but in the propaganda-filled public arena it is a game-stopper. In practical terms, the public demand for reciprocity **hands Cuba a veto over U.S. policy**, which it has used before to short-circuit emerging U.S. moderation. Cuba will never make tradeoffs on important matters so long as the core of the basically flawed embargo remains in place.

Lifting the embargo would unleash a new dynamic and put full responsibility for Cuban rights violations and economic failure squarely on Cuba’s leaders where it belongs.

We can hope, but can’t guarantee, that ending the embargo will encourage real domestic reforms in Cuba. We can guarantee that it will rid us of a demeaning, hypocritical and counterproductive policy.

#### Perm: do both- solves the link to the net benefit

#### Even if Cuba releases Alan Gross they’ll just arrest more people- renders the CP useless

Martinez 11- journalist who lives in South Florida, writes for SunSentinel (Guillermo, SunSentinel, “New year marks another year of imprisonment for Cuba's citizenry”, December 29, 2011, <http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2011-12-29/news/fl-gmcol-cuba-travel-martinez-1229-20111229_1_travel-restrictions-regime-political-prisoners>)//EK

It is a regime that has made many promises and kept few. The last time I was allowed to travel to the country where I was born was in 1978. Cuba was about to release 3,500 political prisoners and wanted the world's media, particularly those in South Florida, to know about it. Since then the jails have been full. The regime is always ready to release a political prisoner to a friendly visitor much as one would give a rose on Valentine's Day to a loved one. Cuba grows prisoners as others do flowers. Thus on a day they were to have lifted the travel restrictions, they freed another 2,900 prisoners — nobody knows how many were political, for in Cuba the distinction between a political and a common criminal is in the eyes of the regime. Yet, within the past few months, hundreds have been arrested throughout the island. Their crime is their demand for the release of political prisoners and to have the regime recognize the most basic human rights.

#### Perm: do the counterplan-it’s not competitive. Our interpretation is that the cp must be functionally and textually competitive- this is neither because it does the entirety of the plan.

#### Cuba says no- they want to exchange for the Wasp Network

**Rodriguez, 11–** staff writer, cites senior Cuban officials (Olga, “AP Interview: Cuba won't unilaterally free Gross”, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20111009/lt-mexico-cuba-alarcon/>)//NG

MEXICO CITY — The United States should not expect Cuba to make a unilateral humanitarian gesture to release an imprisoned American government contractor, a senior Cuban official said Sunday.

Cuban Parliament President Ricardo Alarcon told The Associated Press in an interview that to expect such a gesture on behalf of Alan Gross "would not be reasonable."

Gross was sentenced to 15 years in prison in March for crimes against the Cuban state. He was arrested in December 2009 after getting caught illegally bringing communications equipment onto the island while on a USAID-funded democracy building program.

Cuba's Supreme Court upheld Gross' sentence in August, and U.S. efforts turned to winning his release on humanitarian grounds. Both his elderly mother and adult daughter are battling cancer and his family has suffered financial hardship since his arrest, says his wife, Judy Gross.

During a visit to Mexico, Alarcon said the U.S. government "should get a good armchair and sit down to wait" if it is hoping for a humanitarian release.

"To expect a unilateral gesture wouldn't be reasonable," Alarcon said.

He also had harsh words for former New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who visited Cuba in early September to negotiate Gross' release. Cuban officials rebuffed his efforts, and Richardson went home without seeing Gross.

Alarcon said Richardson went to Cuba on a private trip and not as part of a U.S. mission. Richardson's trip "was like doing amateur diplomacy, and that doesn't exist, that's Bill's invention," Alarcon said.

Richardson has said he was invited to the island by Cuban officials to negotiate Gross' release.

Alarcon said Richardson suggested the U.S. and Cuba conduct a swap between Gross and Rene Gonzalez, one of five Cuban nationals convicted in 2001 as part of the "Wasp Network" that sought to spy on U.S. military installations in South Florida. Gonzalez has dual U.S.-Cuban citizenship.

Gonzalez was released Friday after 13 years in prison but a judge has ordered him to serve three years probation in the U.S. before returning to Cuba.

Cuban officials say the five attempted to prevent terrorist attacks on the island by monitoring Cuban exiles and tried to place operatives inside the campaigns of anti-Castro politicians. They were convicted of espionage and of trying to infiltrate U.S. military bases.

"Richardson has entangled everything because I can't believe someone would seriously think that there could be a negotiation between Rene Gonzalez ... a man who was about to complete his sentence ... and a man who is just about to start serving his," Alarcon said.

He said Gonzalez's life is at risk if he remains in South Florida, especially after U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Republican from Florida, said Gonzalez "has American blood on his hands."

"Not only is his life at risk ... but someone could be interested in provoking an incident with him to have the judge send him back to prison," Alarcon said.

Alarcon said sending Gonzalez back to Cuba would be in the best interests of both the United States and Cuba, and he also urged the Obama administration free the four other members of the ring still in prison.

#### Conditions counterplans are a voting issue:

#### a- Annihilates aff ground— they result in doing 100% of the plan—which ruins the debate and biases it towards the neg because it forces us to generate offense against an external mechanism instead of reading defenses of the plan. They get to chose what to condition on where the literature is on their side which destroys predictability.

#### b- Kills education- conditions gives negatives an incentive to avoid topic research because they can always just change the process of the plan—learning the depth of a specific policy and rigorous examination of the literature instead of generic conditions debates is critical to better policy advocacy skills and every other benefit to debate.

### 2ac debt ceiling

#### Won’t pass – base opposition and no moderates

**Gandelman, 9/18/13** – (Joe, “Republicans all in: government shutdown by Repubicans virtually certain” <http://themoderatevoice.com/186749/republicans-all-in-government-shutdown-by-repubicans-virtually-certain/>)

It’s going to happen. You can bet on it. Republicans now seem all in – despite some pesky noises from they-must-be-RINO websites such as the Wall Street Journal and the National Review about the dangers — to set the stage for a government shut down. And don’t be surprised if it then gets worse and House Republicans engineer a default on the debt ceiling as well:

House Republicans are moving forward with a government funding bill that would defund ObamaCare.

The legislation is a nod to House conservatives, some of whom quickly backed the plan.

But Senate Democrats and the White House have promised to reject any legislation that would defund the healthcare law, meaning the legislation won’t move farther than the House.

Unless the House and Senate can agree on legislation and get it to the White House by Oct. 1, the government will shut down at that time.

Basically, the GOP House leadership is politically twerking its powerful Tea Party sympathetic members. But the consquences to many Americans that even a brief shutdown would bring could be huge.

And who says this will necessarily be a brief shutdown?

The House measure would keep the government funded through Dec. 15 at the current $986 billion spending rate, rather than the lower $967 billion level called for in the 2011 Budget Control Act.

GOP leaders also announced Wednesday that they will condition a debt ceiling increase on a one-year delay of ObamaCare, approval of the Keystone XL pipeline and an outline for tax reform.

In other words:

Republicans are going to use political extortion — hurting the United States’s economy — if they can’t get policies that they are unable to get by winning elections or putting together coalitions in Congress. It’s a tough choice for Barack Obama and the Democrats: if this is allowed to happen it will fundamentally change the form of American democracy.

Republican Study Committee Chairman Steve Scalise (R-La.) said he was on board with the plan despite the higher spending level.

“This reflects the principles we’ve been pushing for,” he said. “We want to address ObamaCare directly in the CR. We want to address ObamaCare in the debt ceiling and this keeps both of those moving.”

Yes — in a way unprecedented in American democracy. And:

Rep. Tom Graves (R-Ga.), who authored a one-year CR that would increase defense spending while defunding ObamaCare, said he would vote for the new Boehner plan.

“It’s a step in the right direction,” Graves said. “The American people should view this as a victory.”

I agree with Booman: there is a notable lack of adults in the Republican room, and a notably large number of conservative talk show host followers and Tea Party members. Booman:

It’s a two-pronged approach. On the continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government, the Republicans will limit the funding to December 15th. The funding level will be slightly above what the Budget Control Act of 2011 calls for. And it will defund ObamaCare.

On the debt ceiling, they will have a separate vote that will delay ObamaCare for a year, authorize the Keystone XL pipeline, and provide an outline for tax reform.

Their hope is that they can successfully pass the buck to Republican senators who will be expected to sustain a filibuster against any CR or debt ceiling hike that includes money for health care.

It really doesn’t matter whether the Senate Republicans go along with the plan or not, because the government will shut down either way and we will default on our debts either way.

The pressure on Republican senators will be intense, but they’d rather let the House take the blame for the catastrophe.

The fact that the Senate Minority Leader, Mitch McConnell, is facing a primary challenge from his right makes it unlikely that he will ride to the House’s rescue this time around. If we’re hoping for adult leadership in the Senate, it will have to come from a rump of moderate Republican senators that doesn’t seem to exist.

#### Don’t evaluate the disad- not a logical opportunity cost

#### PC not key

**Klein, 9/18/13 -** columnist at the Washington Post, as well as a contributor to MSNBC. His work focuses on domestic and economic policymaking,(Ezra, Washington Post, “The White House doesn’t think it can prevent a government shutdown” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/09/18/the-white-house-doesnt-think-it-can-prevent-a-government-shutdown/>)

And there is a difference between 2011 and 2013. Two of them, in fact.

1) In 2011, the White House knew whom to deal with. Back then, House Speaker John Boehner actually did seem reasonably in sync with his party on these issues, and so the White House was able to negotiate with Republican leadership on a deal. Today, the relevant negotiations are happening in the Republican Party, with GOP leadership trying to fight conservatives who want to shut down the government, and no one knows who actually has the power to cut and close a deal.

2) In 2011, the White House was willing to deal. The White House believed, in its gut, that Republicans had been given a mandate in the 2010 elections to extract exactly the kind of concessions they were demanding. In addition, the White House believed President Obama would be a likelier bet for reelection if he could cut a "grand bargain" with the newly resurgent Republicans, taking their key issue away from them.

This year, it's the White House that won the last election, and so they see no popular legitimacy behind Republican demands. In addition, they are deeply, fervently committed to the proposition that they will never again negotiate around the debt ceiling, as that's a tactic history will judge them harshly for repeatedly enabling. So even if Boehner could cut a deal on the debt ceiling, the White House isn't open to negotiating.

All of which helps explain the White House's more alarmist communications strategy. In 2011, the White House was confident they could cut a deal with Republicans and, in some ways, eager to do so. That gave them a sense of control over the situation.

This year, they're not willing to cut a deal with the Republicans on the debt ceiling, and they're not sure the Republicans can cut a deal with themselves on funding the government, all of which means the White House doesn't have much control over this situation. That's why they're trying to worry business and Wall Street and other outside actors who could put pressure on the GOP.

#### fiat solves the link- overcomes political opposition

#### Obama doesn’t push the plan

**Fiedler, 13–** WLS web writer (Christine, “Bobby Rush pushes for better trade relations with Cuba”, <http://www.wlsam.com/common/page.php?pt=Bobby+Rush+pushes+for+better+trade+relations+with+Cuba&id=37263&is_corp=0>, NG)

Congressman Bobby Rush is trying to lift trade restrictions on Cuba. He reintroduced legislation to lift the embargo, travel, and parcel restrictions, normalize trade relations, and it would take Cuba off of the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

Rush says the U.S. has "shut the door on our two nations coming together to work to build a strong alliance" and that "Cuba is no longer a threat" to the U.S.

His bill also asks for the release of Alan Phillip Gross. Gross was working as a U.S. government contractor when he was arrested and prosecuted in 2011 for bringing phones and computer equipment to Cuba's Jewish community without a permit. He is currently serving a 15-year prison sentence in Cuba.

Improving U.S.-Cuba relations has been a goal of Rush; this follows his United States-Cuba Trade Normalization Act in 2009.

#### Voting neg triggers the da- the round is a debate in Congress

#### PC low and fails- syria and gun control prove

**Koring, 9/16/13** (Paul, The Globe and Mail (Canada), “Obama faces fall clash with Congress;

Despite averting military action in Syria, U.S. President fights plunging approval ratings and feuding Republicans on Capitol Hill” lexis)

The President's handling of Syria has hurt him, according to some. Mr. Obama "seems to be very uncomfortable being commander-in-chief of this nation," said Senator Bob Corker, a Tennessee Republican, adding it left the President "a diminished figure here on Capitol Hill."

Americans strongly opposed military intervention in Syria, but they still want their presidents to command global respect. Mr. Obama's embrace of Russian help on Syria may enhance his image internationally as a conciliator, but, at home, it can be seen as seen as weak - or vacillating. Americans want their presidents to speak softly and carry a big stick, even if they are also weary of overseas wars.

In turn, despite the President's impressive oratory, he may be wearing out his bully pulpit. Powerful speeches have failed, so far - on gun control, budget reform and immigration - and now the President has spent more scarce second-term political capital wooing congressional leaders on Syrian strikes that may never materialize. The mood is ugly on Capitol Hill and it's made worse by warnings that delays and the time spent talking about Syria may cost members the week off they had planned starting Sept 23.

With the President's approval rating plunging - and backing for "Obamacare" slipping below 40 per cent - the right wing of the Republican party is seeking ways to "defund" the ambitious health-care program. The most recent Pew Research Center poll, published last week, put the President's approval at 44 per cent, down 11 points over a year ago.

On Capitol Hill, it's a three-cornered fight, with Mr. Obama facing off against the Republican-dominated House of Representatives, and the Republicans in Congress bitterly divided over whether it's worth pushing the nation over a fiscal cliff to drive a stake into the President's health-care program.

Everyone has an eye on the 2014 elections and frustrations are threatening to boil.

#### PC fails and winners win

**Lawrence, 9/17/13 -** national correspondent at National Journal.(Jill, “Obama Says He’s Not Worried About Style Points. He Should Be.” National Journal, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/whitehouse/obama-says-he-s-not-worried-about-style-points-he-should-be-20130917>)

In some ways Obama's fifth year is typical of fifth years, when reelected presidents aim high and often fail. But in some ways it is atypical, notably in the number of failures, setbacks, and incompletes Obama has piled up. Gun control and immigration reform are stalled. Two Obama favorites withdrew their names as potential nominees in the face of congressional opposition – Susan Rice, once a frontrunner for secretary of state, followed by Larry Summers, a top candidate to head the Federal Reserve. Secretary of State John Kerry's possibly offhand remark about Assad giving up his chemical weapons, and Putin's jump into the arena with a diplomatic proposal, saved him from almost certain defeat on Capitol Hill. Edward Snowden set the national security establishment on its heels, then won temporary refuge from … Putin. It's far from clear how that will be resolved.

And that's as true for the budget and debt-limit showdowns ahead.

Some of Obama's troubles are due to the intransigence of House conservatives, and some may be inevitable in a world far less black and white than the one Reagan faced. But the impression of ineffectiveness is the same.

"People don't like it when circumstances are dictating the way in which a president behaves. They want him to be the one in charge," says Dallek, who has written books about nine presidents, including Reagan and Franklin Roosevelt. "It's unfair… On the other hand, that's what goes with the territory. People expect presidents to be in command, and they can't always be in command, and the public is not forgiving."

Obama's job approval numbers remain in the mid-40s. The farther they fall below 50 percent, history suggests, the worse he can expect Democrats to do in the midterm House and Senate elections next year. Obama would likely be in worse trouble with the public, at least in the short term, if he had pushed forward with a military strike in Syria. In fact, a new Pew Research Center poll shows 67 percent approve of Obama's switch to diplomacy. But his journey to that point made him look weak and indecisive.

Indeed, the year's setbacks are accumulating and that is dangerous for Obama.

"At some point people make a collective decision and they don't listen to the president anymore. That's what happened to both Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush," Cannon says. "I don't think Obama has quite gone off the diving board yet in the way that Carter or Bush did … but he's close to the edge. He needs to have some successes and perceptions of success."

#### **Plan popular – oil lobby**

Sadowski, 11 – JD, Hofstra University School of Law, and Managing Editor of the Journal of International Business and Law (Richard, “Cuban Offshore Drilling: Preparation and Prevention within the Framework of the United States’ Embargo”, 12 Sustainable Dev. L. & Pol’y 37, lexis)//KW

ECONOMICS: U.S. COMPANIES WANT IN For U.S. companies, the embargo creates concern that they will lose out on an opportunity to develop a nearby resource. 35 Oil companies have a long history of utilizing political pressure for self-serving purposes.3126 American politicians, ever fearful of high energy costs, are especially susceptible to oil-lobby pressures. 37 This dynamic was exemplified in 2008, when then-Vice President Dick Cheney told the board of directors of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce that "oil is being drilled right now sixty miles off the coast of Florida. But we're not doing it, the Chinese are, in cooperation with the Cuban government. Even the communists have figured out that a good answer to high prices is more supply."38

This pressure for U.S. investment in oil is exacerbated by America's expected increase in consumption rates.39 Oil company stocks are valued in large part on access to reserves.40 Thus, more leases, including those in Cuban waters, equal higher stock valuation. 41 "The last thing that American energy companies want is to be trapped on the sidelines by sanctions while European, Canadian and Latin American rivals are free to develop new oil resources on the doorstep of the United States." 42

THE BP DISASTER ADDS TO CONCERNS Further pressure on the embargo comes from those voicing environmental concerns about Cuba's drilling plans.43 These concerns are undoubtedly more poignant in the wake of British Petroleum's ("BP") historically tragic Deepwater Horizon oil spill. 44 Currently, there is no agreement between the United States and Cuba to deal with oil spills. 45 The embargo would prevent, or at least hamper, any efforts by U.S. companies to aid any cleanup efforts. 46 In addition, the embargo bans U.S. technologies designed to prevent or contain oil spills from being sold to Cuba.47 David Guggenheim, a senior fellow at the Washington Ocean Foundation punctuated the United States' concerns over the potential impacts of Cuba's drilling by remarking that "the Gulf isn't going to respect any boundaries when it comes to oil spills." 48 This statement was recently exemplified by Cuba's own expressed fears that oil from the BP disaster would reach its shores. 49 The Deep Horizon oil spill's threat was enough that several Cuban leaders called for the reexamination of Cuba's own plan to extract oil off its shores.50 Nonetheless, Cuba's oil exploration plans seem unfazed.5'

#### No default impact – it’s political hype

**Boccia, 9/18/13 –** fellow in federal budgetary affairs at the Heritage Foundation(Romina, “Debt Limit: Options and the Way Forward” <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/09/debt-limit-options-and-the-way-forward>)

If Congress does not raise the debt limit by mid-October, the Treasury would not necessarily default on debt obligations. Even while cash-strapped, the Treasury can reasonably be expected to prioritize principal and interest payments on the national debt, protecting the full faith and credit of the United States above all other spending. It is almost impossible to conceive that the Treasury and the President would choose to default on debt obligations because doing so would have damaging economic consequences.

Nevertheless, the Treasury and the President have repeatedly invoked the threat of default to pressure Congress into raising the debt ceiling without substantial spending cuts and policy reforms. In July, Secretary Lew said on ABC’s This Week: “Congress can’t let us default. Congress has to do its work.”[6] On August 26, he wrote to Congress: “Congress should act as soon as possible to protect America’s good credit by extending normal borrowing authority well before any risk of default becomes imminent.”[7] President Obama also mentioned default at the G-20 summit: “That includes making sure we don’t risk a U.S. default over paying bills we’ve already racked up.”[8 ]