

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

CUBA'S TRANSITION AFTER CASTRO: CUBAN-AMERICAN VIEWS –

HOW BEST TO ADVANCE CHANGE IN CUBA?

Washington, D.C.

Monday, April 2, 2007

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. PASCUAL: Good morning. My name is Carlos Pascual. I am the Vice President and Director of the Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution. I'd like to welcome you here today for this event on Cuba's transition after Castro with the focus on Cuban-American views on how best to advance change in Cuba.

This is part of an all-day conference that we are sponsoring today in conjunction with a Cuba study group and in collaboration with Florida International University. And the intent of this conference is to be able to bring together ideas of the dynamics of change in Cuba, the instruments and the levers for change and understanding of the politics behind it.

For those of you who are new to the Brookings Institution -- and I say this because there are many from the Cuban-American community who follow issues of transition in Cuba who may not be as familiar with Brookings -- let me just say a couple of things: We are an independent and nonpartisan think tank, in fact the oldest think tank in the United States. We are a policy research institution; that is our focus. We're not an advocacy group, we focus on policy

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research.

The scholars of Brookings Institution take positions on issues. We advocate particular policy views, but there is no Brookings Institution view on Cuba, or Iraq, or any other matter. In fact, I guarantee you that if you go down the halls of Brookings and ask the people here their views on any given issue, you'll probably get about 15 or 20 different positions.

Why this focus on Cuba? Really, two reasons: The first is that whether it is weeks, or months, or years away, Fidel Castro will pass away, and that will create an opportunity for the most significant change in Cuba and U.S.-Cuba relations since Fidel Castro came into power in January of 1959. If one's goal is a free and democratic Cuba, one cannot assume that that change is guaranteed after Fidel leaves. The Cuban people will ultimately, and should, ultimately drive and design their own future.

For us to be able to support that, it is important for us to understand the dynamics of change that can take place within the government of Cuba, its military, the intelligence services, the general population, the Afro-Cuban community, the youth. It is among those points of power, those parts of the population that we will see the pushes and the pulls on how Cuba will

transform itself.

We have to be realistic about the incentives and the self-interests of Cuba's future leaders as well. Inevitably, they will want to maintain power, and what are the right policy tools to respond to a situation like that? What we do know from history is that it would have been a mistake to have the same policy toward Mikhail Gorbachev's Russia, Soviet Union, as we did toward Brezhnev. Indeed, we could have missed an opportunity of historic proportion. And it's in that spirit of understanding what the right and most constructive policies might be that we are having this conference, and we look forward to being able to put forward a report on the conference results.

The second reason for this focus on Cuba has to be the political drivers of policy, and on Cuba the politics of policy have been focused in the Cuban-American community. And today we are particularly fortunate through this panel to have the benefit of an outstanding and totally recent poll completed at the beginning of last week by Florida International University. And we will focus on some of the trends and dynamics highlighted in that poll right now.

In order to guide us through this discussion we have the benefit of three professors and leaders at Florida International University. To begin with,

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Guillermo Grenier will take us through the basic contents of the poll. Guillermo is a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Following Guillermo, Hugh Gladwin, who is the Director of the Institute for Public Opinion Research and Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, will follow up and add some additional comments.

And then finally, Damian Fernandez, who is a Professor of the Department of International Relations and the Vice Provost to Florida International University, as well as the Director of the Cuban Research Institute, will help us understand these poll results in a broader context.

And then finally, following on their comments, we have the benefit of Vicki Huddleston, who is a friend and a colleague at Brookings Institution, a Nonresident Senior Fellow here, and a former Chief of Mission at the Cuban Interest Section in Havana -- of U.S. Interest Section in Havana, who will be able to look at these issues from a perspective of how -- what the ramifications are for U.S. policy.

So I thank you all for joining. I thank my cosponsors from the Cuba Study Group and our partners in Florida International University and, Guillermo, I'd like to ask you to come forth.

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DR. GRENIER: Well, good morning, and thank you for coming. And I also would like to thank the Brookings Institute as well as the Cuba Study Group, that helped FIU and the Cuban Research Institute conduct this poll. We have been conducting this poll -- Hugh Gladwin and I have been conducting this poll since 1991 -- asking many of the questions that you will see today, repeatedly, since 1991, not every year but years when things we think are worth measuring.

And what you will see is that there has been change over the years, and what you'll see is that there are some reasons why those changes occurred. It's not just because of the Cuban community as a whole has changed its mind; it's just that different people with different mind-sets have come, as well as those who have changed their minds, too, living the Miami area.

This poll was conducted, specifically, in Miami, Dade County. We have done polls in New Jersey as well as in the Broward County area looking at different attitudes of Cuban-American communities living throughout the United States, but this is not one of them.

We started doing this poll trying to understand the Cuban-American political culture which is probably the most unresearched element of

Cuban-American reality in the United States. Most of the literature on Cuban-Americans is focused on the success stories, the economic success stories, economic adaptations, successful economic adaptations, the ability to shape an entire area and, in essence, dominate cultural developments of a major metropolitan area.

This is ironical because, in essence, the political forces, micro and macro, are at the core of the existence and the origins of contemporary Cuban-American presence in the United States. In fact, whatever image most Americans have of Cuban-Americans I would say is probably constituted more than anything else by political features such as staunch anti-Castroism, militancy, terrorism, political conservatism, and a dominant affiliation with the Republican Party. So these are clearly the faults of many of our public officials as well as the public in general about what the community is like.

But there's much more than that in the community, of course. We don't always vote directly on Cuba policy. We vote on taxes, and child care, and health care, and things like that. So the monolithic view of the population, Cuban-American population, is unlikely to really exist, if it ever did exist at all, and unlikely to exist now in the 21st century.

People have left the island at different times for different reasons. When we speak of a Cuban-American community, we're speaking of a group that has had an almost continuous flow into the South Florida regions since 1959. The flow can be categorized by waves which we'll look at in a minute. And I'm not sure that we should expect people who lost everything in the revolutionary turmoil immediately after 1959 to feel the same about Cuba as those that came in the 1980s-1990s and are still coming now.

So this poll tries to tease out the subtleties and the differences among different segments of the community, specifically as they relate to Cuba policy.

The big picture, as here you have a bit of methodology -- and Hugh will talk more about the methodology in a second -- the big picture that you see is that Cuban-American are eager for change. What you have is a population that is expecting for change to occur within the next five years at the maximum. That's 17 percent or so look at the next years being when the rubber meets the road. About 45 percent look at the next one to five years, so you see a population that really is expecting change relatively rapidly.

What you see at the bottom of all these charts until you notice that

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that's no longer there is how the polls have changed over time. Each one of these bars represents a year that we've conducted the poll. And it takes a little bit of time to kind of look at and make sense of these bars, right, but I'm going to leave this one up here just so you will get used to looking at the different -- at the polls as it's changed over time, the responses that have changed over time.

Now, while this desire for change has been a constant in the Cuban-American community, some key variables have altered their significance over the last 15 years that we've conducted the poll. What you see now is a more pragmatic approach to changes you had before. There's always been this hope that change would occur overnight, as you will see when we discuss dramatic violent change in a minute. But now you have more -- the Cuban-American population is looking for policy solutions that will drive change.

The tightening the embargo. The embargo is a very strong symbol in the Cuban-American community. It is an alliance between the Cuban-American community and the United States of America trying to squeeze the government that neither of them particularly wants to go on forever. What you see in the light blue lines there is the favoring of tightening the embargo. All right, so what you see is a decrease in the support for tightening the embargo.

Now, we're still looking at 58 percent of the population, as you see in the far right corner of the upper row there. But that has been as high as 85 percent in 1985. So you see that there's a decrease. This is the lowest figure that we've ever had for tightening, of a population that tightens the embargo.

The fact is that there's still a dominant part of the population that sees the embargo as an important part of the U.S. policy. That's the stick, in essence, that drives a lot of the other answers. When you break down some of the restrictions that the embargo imposes on the community, then is when you start to see some variations within that community.

For example, to allow -- this is a positive -- allow medicine sales to Cuba. The light blue again is the positive response here: We would like to have medicine sales to Cuba. Hugh will talk a bit about the wording of these questions in a minute. Seventy-two percent of the population would like to allow medicine sales to the island, and that is again, as you see on the top, the highest number perhaps in 2004. We were in the error margins of the 2004 poll.

Food sales. Allow food sales to the island, 62 percent support that. Lower than medicine, but still the highest number that we've had in the 15 years that we've been conducting the poll.

Unrestricted travel. This is unrestricted, this is not just family travel. This is you, me, you know, my neighbors, my Filipino friends, everybody go to the island. Fifty-five percent of the poll's populations supports unrestricted travel to the island. Now, that is again the highest number. We've had 53 percent, we've had 50 percent. In 1991, for those of you whose memory works that far back, everybody thought everything was going to change immediately in Cuba. You know, the Soviet Union was going down, the support that the Cubans had been receiving from the Soviet Union was going to dry up, so things were going to change. So at that point in time we had 50 percent. In 2004 we had 53 percent, now we have 55 percent of the population wanting unrestricted travel to the island.

National dialogue, which is a very hot word in Miami, if those you who live there know this, to be a *dielo vero* (?) is a -- it's not a term of endearment and has not been over the years.

Now, this was the highest answer of percentages favoring a dialogue between the Cuban community in the United States, the U.S. government and the Government of the Island, 65 percent. That is by far the highest. Now, we've had 56 percent, we've had 52 percent, we've had 52 percent -

- you can see across the top that there has been a sizable portion of the population that's been willing to entertain this as a policy option for many, many years. But now we're finally over -- the respondents are over 60 percent, and clearly it is a very strong force within the community.

Now, there's one thing: It's very rare to find things that all Cubans agree on. I mean you have six people in the room and there are eight opinions. But you have one element of the poll consistently has shown that the Cuban population in the United States is willing to assist the human rights groups working on the island, so called dissidents, the opposition, however you want to call it. That has been a consistent element of Cubans thinking about the future of the island. They want to support the people in the island trying to promote change in that island -- on that island.

Now, here are a lot of numbers, but I want you to have a sense of how the waves have an impact on opinions, okay, and you don't need to look at all of this stuff, but look at, for example, favor ending the U.S. embargo: 42.5 percent at the very top line favor the lifting the embargo.

Now, you can see as you look across there that not all waves coming have the same attitude towards the embargo. Here you only have 22

percent, the early arrivals 22 percent support lifting the embargo. At the other end, the ones that have come since 1995, close to 60 percent, so that kind of difference is evident in all our questions. That is, the community is not monolithic. It depends on when you came because there are different reasons, why you came. There are different receptions that you have received in this country. The community itself in Miami has changed over time.

The question that I want to focus on, real quickly as we move on rapidly, is a favorable return to the 2003 policy. Right -- where are we? -- right there. Sixty-four percent -- and this is family travel in essence, okay? That was the big shift in 2003, remittances and family travel. Sixty-four percent support returning to that 2003 Clinton-Bush policy. And again over the waves, as we look over the period of time the people arrived here, 85.7 percent of the new arrivals favor that return, whereas only 35 percent or 36 percent you round up of the early arrivals do that.

When you conceive -- and this was an important little chart just because it shows you how the communities have broken down. Now, this is the 2003 policy broken down by waves, the return to that. So you can clearly see that after 1995 you have a lot of blue there, but the blue is present in all groups. It's

not -- it's a sizable minority even in the folks that have come between in earlier waves.

Now, this chart will guarantee to make your eyes bleed if you look at it too long, but I only want to show you the trend. The trends of all of these variables that we have been talking about favoring more moderate approaches to policies used from the islands are clearly up.

Here we have things, diplomatic relations -- which I think we should probably go back to real quickly -- favor reestablishing U.S. diplomatic relations with Cuba. Fifty-seven percent of the entire population supports that; 72.3 percent support that. But the purpose of this chart right here was basically to show you in essence that there is an upward flow based on when you got here. There is a significant difference between early arrivals and later arrivals, and guess who's growing: the later arrivals. The biological solution is taking care of the rest of us.

This chart will be very brief because I just want to raise one issue with you that is very important in recognizing the policy concerns of Cuban-Americans, and that is U.S. citizenship. Sixty-five point nine (65.9) of all -- 66 percent of all Cuban-Americans in Miami, Dade County, are citizens. Now, look

at these groups of the early arrivals: 96.5, yeah, 97 percent. Even the ones characterized by the Marial* boat lift, you have 81 percent citizenship. After that, it tapers down rapidly.

Now, what does that mean? It means that when you are a registered voter, these are the people that are regis- -- you have a high registration rate anyway, 60 percent, but these are the numbers that count for a lot of politicians, the people that came earlier, because they are the ones that have registered most and have become citizens.

Now, a quick tally of those citizenship numbers shows that if you came after 1985, you have about 85 percent -- about 30 percent of the people are citizens; if you came before 1985, you have over 91 percent of the people are citizens. So just there you have a bulk of voters that puts all of these opinions in the context of who's going to vote for what.

And again, here you have that return to the 2003 policy, but then let's look at the registered voters that support that policy. And there you have a majority of the registered voters favor over, you know, what? Sixty, seventy-some percent, is that right? I can't quite even read it off my own thing.

SPEAKER: Fifty-four percent.

DR. GRENIER: Fifty-four percent, yeah. Okay, there we go.
Fifty-four percent favor return to the 2003 policy.

Hugh, do you want to take over on the methodology?

So these were just -- the things I want you to carry away from this brief presentation is that there is change. They're changes that are driven by policy now. It's not just what people that want to go see *tia cuka* (?) on the island. There are some specific policy issues that are the focus of the change, and that the change is supported variably by people -- by Cuban-Americans depending a lot on when they came to the United States.

DR. GLADWIN: Okay, I just want to say if you take a couple of minutes to talk about the methodology of the poll, first the questions themselves and how they're formatted, and then a little bit about the sampling and waiting.

This is a tracking poll that's done every so often, and we want to get, first off, as much replicability from one year to the next as we can, which means it's very important that we have the same questions and the same context of questions each time.

Secondly, we want to be sure that the questions themselves are not biased as we go along. So what we've done is, you know, back in 1991 when

Guillermo and I first did this, we spent a lot of time developing these questions. We've been criticized across the spectrum and praised across the spectrum for the way the questions have been worded and come out, which indicates to us we did a fairly good job in designing them.

But then since we've started, we keep the beginning of the poll the same. You know, it's virtually the same questions -- I mean it is, yeah, virtually the same questions for the first five, six, seven minutes of the poll, and the exact same question wording. That's very important because answers to a poll question depend, as we in the survey research business know, not just on the question itself but on the context that the interview creates.

And if I could just point to -- this is one question that people every year have kind of raised their eyebrows about: Supporting the U.S. invasion of Cuba, it's always had a majority. The darker-colored bars at the top are the opposed, and that's gone down a little bit over the years, but it's still there's favoring a majority. I mean, what does that mean?

What that means to us is that the context of the first questions of the poll, and particularly the first one -- When do you expect political change to occur in Cuba? -- creates a kind of environment of thinking about the issue of

frustration, if you will, about what the situation is. And you get answers that seem contradictory. Many people will say they favor dialogue, they favor U.S. invasion.

The last time we did it we did some follow-up for those who called for invasion to see what that meant. It meant something like, for most people, like the U.S. going into Haiti. But we have to keep it in because we don't want to suddenly switch to a beginning of the poll that's kind of warm and fuzzy suddenly and would influence the results. It's exactly the same beginning and the same context.

Okay, now, the other thing we do in polling in general these days, as careful as you can be about encouraging a good response rate and everything else, you still have a bias towards having older people answer more readily, and women answer more readily. And this is particularly pronounced in Miami. It's one of the most difficult areas to do polling in the country.

So to compensate for that we weight by board-age categories and gender. We weight the results after first checking to make sure it doesn't affect the statistical significance against the U.S. -- that is, census figures. And for that we use the 2005 American community survey, U.S. census figures.

So, and then we ran, once we put that in, we went back to look at the actual census data on number of Cubans -- yeah, this is Cubans born outside the U.S. by year of first entry. So this is just a census check on the waves that Guillermo just talked about, and it does match very well.

Now, one area I'll say where I think we probably did not do a good job where you can't do -- a weighting procedure like this is for to get an accurate measure of the number of Cubans of African descent in Miami. That's partly because there are big problems with the census questions. There are also big problems because the census questions, when you ask them in a poll, don't actually make much sense in terms of the prevailing view of race and color in Miami. So I would suspect that our numbers may be somewhat off in terms of that category.

So end of methodological points. Thank you.

DR. FERNANDEZ: I guess it's my lucky day to follow the section of methodology. Anything I say now is brilliant. I'm going to make four points and then reach some conclusions.

The first point is a contextual one. It's the one I call "the paradox of control." Cuban-Americans have been represented both as being in control and

on the verge of out of control. And I think this poll sheds light on the fact that first we're not in control of U.S. policy. There's a lot of dissonance there between the way that we think or what we desire and what the actual policy formulation is.

And we're definitely not out of control. I mean this is a group that is over time increasingly moderate. It's a group that is not monolithic, that is quite diversified in many of its public opinions. We're not as extreme as we're represented, and, in fact, the image of Cuban-Americans as extremists or as being in control and the single driver of U.S. policy is a very handy and misguided stereotype on our community. The poll undermines these useful clichés, and I hope the media takes note of that.

Clearly, the poll also shows that we are, in fact, not in sync with many of the current policy aspects in place. It reminds me almost of a Bohrhist* story in which the supposed controller is, in fact, being controlled. And Cuban-Americans have become now the object of trying to be controlled: limit their access to the island, limit their travel, limit their remittances; which leads to a second point here: voting Republican acting like Democrats.

There is that policy dissonance at the heart of Cuban-American political action and public opinion. Cuban-Americans supported the Bush

electoral campaigns both times around, but there is great frustration as to the policy outcomes. It seems that President Bush's initial take on sanctions regarding Cuba and other countries resonated much better with the community. And that initial take was soft on the people, tough on the governments.

And, in fact, what we've had is rather tough on the people and not very tough on governments, as we've seen by issues of trade, sale of medicine, and grain, and foodstuff, in part to address some of the constituencies in the Republican Party that favor a greater access to the Cuban market.

The prior U.S. policy -- that is the one that had a two-track which allowed people-to-people contract and also calibrated steps in the Cuban government -- made some positive changes towards a more open political and economic system, seems therefore to resonate with these two currents in the Cuban-American policy culture -- that is, one that wants to be tough on the government but soft on the people, that two-track approach -- address stakeholders in a much more elegant way.

The third point is the shifting center of political gravity, and I think this is very important. Over time Cuban-Americans are looking less at Washington and even less at Miami as a source of political change on the island.

Now there's a consensus that it's within the island that political innovation will transpire -- clearly, not as soon as many of us would want, but then, eventually, through the human rights groups, through the opposition there is great support in the community over time to support these political actors inside Cuba. And there's even support for negotiation and for dialogue.

That also is new. And I think that that presents a context for change that is different from 10 years ago in which we thought that it was exclusively lobby in Washington or the U.S. card that would have the final say in the political outcome on the island.

And fourth point, before I reach conclusions, is less passion, more affection, more dollars. And that is that over time what we've seen is the politics of passion, this moral imperative to negate any of the engagement aspects of Cuba, that seems to be eroded over time and sliding to a more moderate policy in which humanitarian concerns, family concerns, travel and engagement that U.S. values and other pro-democratic values would have an impact on the island. That seems to be taking its place.

And also great support for the politics of the dollar, that is, greater access to the market seems also to resonate with some folks in the Cuban-

American community in increasing numbers.

Now, what does this all mean? Well, Cuban-Americans have changed in significant ways over the past 10 years, and the reasons for that change are multiple. Yet it's not reflected in our political leadership and our U.S. policy the change at the grass roots. There is more political space for policy changes, more political space than ever before I would say. Policymakers will find support for their policies if their changes are in the making, but these changes really aren't the margin, not necessarily at the center of the embargo one way or the other.

And I think that we need to start looking at the aspects of U.S. policy, not exclusively Cuban-Americans as the drivers of this policy, and this is where the debate is really of interest. What are the aspects of continuity and change? What explains beyond Miami the continuity and change in U.S. policy towards the island?

Thank you.

AMB. HUDDLESTON: Well, Damian said that he was lucky because he followed methodology, but I'm unlucky because I follow Damian.

I'd like to tell you just a little story about when I was the principal officer in Havana, Cuba, and this was during the time that our policies were, in fact, more liberal on Cuban-American travel as well as on people-to-people, as well as bilateral cooperation on migration and antinarcotics and crime.

But one evening I was driving the Interest Section car, which is a rather nice black Crown Victoria, down Kinta Avenita, and I saw a group of teenagers. And I stopped and I picked them up, and they jumped in the car, and they said, "Aw, wow, this is a beautiful car. Where did you get it?"

I said, "Well, it belongs to the Interest Section."

And he said, "Oh, well, what do you do at the Interest Section?"

I said, "Well, I work there. I'm the chief of Interest Section."

They said, "Oh, be our mother. Take us to Miami."

Well, I'm telling you this story because those kids should stay in Havana. They should want to stay in Havana because Havana should be a place where there's hope for the future, where they can get jobs, where they can raise families, where they can have good housing and enough to eat, and good health care. And one of the main ways that can come about is the same way, in fact, that this came about in Eastern Europe. And that is through more contact.

And what Guillermo and Hugh have just told us is that the younger generation of Cuban-Americans understands that absolutely perfectly: that if there's going to be real change in Cuba, there has to be contact. There has to be people talking to each other.

So let me just reiterate a couple of things very quickly. The first of all, this is the first time we've seen a majority of Cuban-Americans now say: Lift the travel ban. Nine percent more than in 2004 are saying that. These percentages really are astounding.

This is the first time we had a majority say: Reestablish diplomatic relations with Cuba. That means maybe an ambassador -- God forbid -- and that was a 14 percent change from 2004. Something is really going on there. And now a national dialogue with Cuba. This national dialogue would be exiles, dissidents, and the government of Cuba, but something the government of Cuba isn't particularly interested in, but this, as Damian is pointing out, means Cuban-Americans are looking at this in a logical way, and that's a 10 percent increase from 2004.

So there is real change, real desire for change in the Cuban-American community. But that same desire for change is in Cuba, too. Cubans

clearly have to be tired of living under an authoritarian system.

I remember my colleagues -- and some of them are here this morning with me -- in Havana used to say -- and these were the Eastern European ambassadors: The control of the Cuban government is greater than the control of the communist Eastern European governments over their people. So there is no doubt that in Cuba people want more freedom. And a Gallup poll that was mentioned this morning indicates that.

Now, of course, the slide I like best up here, if you want to put that back up, is the slide that says, "Go back to the policies at the beginning of the Bush administration and at the end of the Clinton administration." Well, I do admit that I have some vested interest in that since that was when I was there. But I can tell you what I saw, and this was the time that we call the Cuban Spring, and we have the former ambassador from United Kingdom, the former ambassador from Canada who were here at the same time.

Because there were so many Americans coming down, "so many" being maybe a total of 20,000, they were talking to church groups. They were helping church groups, providing money so that they could start having farms. And from the farms they would take produce, they would can the produce, and

then they would make meals, and they would take those meals to the elderly.
This is building civil society. This is grass roots democracy.

We had doctors going down that were doing operations with Cuban doctors and showing them the latest skills. This is grass roots democracy, and this helps Cubans in Cuba. This is the soft side of policy that Damian is talking about.

Across the board we had the groups coming down, many of them with museums, many of them with foreign affairs consuls, and they would meet in the hotels with brave Cuban dissidents like Ramon Colas, who's here with us today, and Cubans could see them talking in the hotel to these Americans when generally the only Cubans who can go into the hotel happened to be the Cubans who are serving the tourists.

And so this is where we have to get back to if we're going to see real change, and if we're going to influence what happens. Because time is running out not just on the Cuban Revolution but also on U.S. policy.

Thank you very much.

MR. PASCUAL: Okay, thank you.

(Applause)

Let me extend a thanks to all of the panelists for being very thoughtful and provocative in putting information on the table and your analysis of the situation as it's unfolding on U.S. policy toward Cuba and within the Cuban-American community.

And, Guillermo, you began by reinforcing the point that the thing that has been constant has been a desire for change among the Cuban-American community, and I think it's important to start with that because within it, it begins to suggest, is that the question that people are raising right now is, what's the best way to pursue that? What's the most effective way to pursue that? And I think that gets us to the crux of some of the political issues that we face right now.

But let me begin with a couple of questions first related to the embargo, and, Guillermo, I'm going to turn to you first, and I'm going to hand you your mike here.

One of the slides that you did not put up is whether or not there has been a perception that the embargo has failed or succeeded.

DR. GRENIER: Right.

MR. PASCUAL: And if I'm correct, and I was looking back to the

figures, 76.4 percent have said that the embargo's not worked well, or not very well.

DR. GRENIER: That's right.

MR. PASCUAL: Yet at the same time you get this continuation of still a significant majority wanting to keep the embargo. Can you help us understand this and put that into context?

DR. GRENIER: Yeah. I think anybody who listens to Miami probably had a leg up on trying to explain that. I think that what you're seeing is, obviously, a -- the fact that it has not worked well, you don't have to be a sociologist to figure that out. I would say rocket science, but I think that's an easy way out.

And but what's persistent is the desire for to maintain some kind of coherence and a stick element of U.S. foreign policy. I don't think you'll ever see a complete transition on the Cuban-American community's attitude saying, "The heck with the embargo, let's just open it all up." I think to expect something like that before you say, hey, real change has occurred in the community, is really to not understand the community.

I think what you're going to continue to see is the realization that

the embargo has not worked, and that could be for a variety of reasons, by the way. It could be for the reasons saying, "Well, you know, they can get anything, every other Latin American country trades with Cuba. Most countries around the world trade with Cuba," so, no, it has not worked. The reasons why the government is the way it is, it's not -- it doesn't have to do with the embargo. It has other, you know, dynamics behind it.

So, but at the same time you see that while it has not worked for whatever reason you want to have that opinion, there is a desire to see certain elements of the embargo changed. So I think it's a coherent answer, not a logical one.

MR. PASCUAL: So, in effect, taking away the embargo is giving a present to Fidel, is giving something without necessarily getting something in return. But it doesn't necessarily mean that your perception isn't that it's a failed policy; that it's a policy that it doesn't work. So you may still want to -- your position may be to keep the embargo, but there's a need for other policy changes that are put in place that will have a more effective impact.

DR. GRENIER: Even the way you phrased it, I think, is interesting because it very well reflects a lot of the ideas driving the Cuban

community's desire for change. You said Fidel. Yeah, we've personalized the whole revolution in many ways as being the revolution of one man, and here is Fidel. And we've often thought of his death as being the end of exile.

Well, you know, it's getting close to that time, and Cubans, after the first few days of partying after Fidel's illness, have come to realize that it's very likely that the death of Fidel might not bring along any changes. So now what? You know he's going to die. Now what?

Do we wait for somebody else to die, and the next person, and just kind of wait until the biological solution takes care of the whole -- you know?

So because of that, you see, it's kind of ambivalent in a way. Yeah, we have this policy of the embargo, but at the same time we want to try new things because the ball's in our court, basically.

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MR. PASCUAL: Damian, if I can come to you, you made a very impassionate plea that the Cuban-American is not in control of U.S. policy in Cuba, that that's a cliché. At the same time, there's not a politician that I have ever known who is dealing with the politics of Florida who has not come back and asked the question, you know, how does it play with the Cuban-American

community? What's it going to do?

Now, the point's been made a couple of times that Cuban-American vote on issues that are broader than just Cuba, that there are other factors. But the political reality that we've all seen is that certainly the perceptions of the Cuban-American community matter. Cuban-American interest groups play a powerful force, and indeed part of what also came out of the poll itself was that there is still among those Cuban-Americans who are registered voters, let's say a more traditional view on how policy should be maintained.

I found the most interesting, in fact, the attitudes toward 2003 policies because it's almost 50/50. It's at kind of that break point, but I want to come back to this. Is this a long-standing issue that you would argue that the Cuban-American community has not been that central? Or are we at a break point here? Is this the point right now where that transition is really occurring and where the demographics are changing?

MR. FERNANDEZ: Well, I think that the image of control has really helped the Cuban-American community. On the one hand that image translates into this notion that Cuban Americans are a swing vote in a swing state. So it exacerbates the power of Cuban Americans.

In fact, I think that what's happening is that voting block, it's more flexible than rigid, and I think that they vote in other issues besides Cuba issues. And that a Cuba issue well framed, it's not going to be the deciding factor for a lot of younger Cuban Americans, and the trend is there for greater electoral flexibility.

MR. PASCUAL: Okay.

DR. GLADWIN: Could I just step in now?

MR. PASCUAL: Yes, please.

DR. GLADWIN: We haven't mentioned it, but in most of these wave graphs at the extreme right-hand side of the screen has been Cuban Americans born in the U.S., second generation, the party registration is interesting because the most recent arrivals who have become citizens still register as a majority of Republicans, but those born in the U.S. are 50 percent Republican.

And my institute does a lot of other polling on other issues, and we find if you go away from foreign policy and Cuban policy, Cuban Americans in general are much more like other Hispanics in Florida than other groups. As a matter of fact, on the issue of government, whether the government should be the supported health care in the United States, Cuban Americans in Florida have the

highest percentage of any group in the states saying that the government should be supporting health care.

So I think the community has been, you know, the dialogue that involves the community, the political dialogue in the United States, has exclusively focused on this foreign policy issues which, of course, is a primary emotional issue to the community. But there are all these other issues that are very important, also.

MR. PASCUAL: Let me just ask before turning to the audience one other question for clarification. During a presentation Frank Calzone (?), who is an activist in the Cuban American community, passed me a note saying that there are no restrictions on the sales of medicines to Cuba. Can you clarify that?

SPEAKER: Well, I mean there are some conditions, I think, and there are some folks from the State Department that can speak to these, but it would have to be cash sales and also I think you need to get some sort of license to engage in those other transactions. But I can be corrected, if I'm not --

MR. PASCUAL: Okay. Frank, do you want to clarify what your question was?

MR. CALZONE: That's not quite true. This is one of the things that the Cuban government has been advocating for a number of years, and I'm surprised that you use that in the poll, because, of course, that then means that maybe there are other premises in the poll that are not quite true.

For many, many years going back to the previous administration, Cuba is allowed to purchase medicine in Cuba. As a matter of fact, Cuba does not purchase medicine in Cuba because it's cheaper for them to buy it in Canada and other places. So I would hope that in the future you would take a look at the premise of the question, the idea of cash sales, that doesn't mean that they cannot buy -- I mean listening to you, the audience had the impression that no sales could be made, and the reason they have to be cash sales is that Castro often does not pay for his imports.

Thanks.

SPEAKER: We have asked that question from 1991, so it's tough to pull it out. We've asked that every year, and there have been change variations throughout the years, or the perception of respondents at least. So --

MR. PASCUAL: What's interesting is whether the elements of it are factually correct or not. I don't know enough to be able to judge that. What is

interesting is still a perception among the Cuban American community that the ability to actually make those sales would be a useful thing. And I think that at least if one from a qualitative perspective can draw insight from that, it might be a useful way to frame that issue.

Other questions?

SPEAKER: (Inaudible) -- in Cuba, a key to transition in Central Europe and certainly in Poland was lack of revenge. The nomenclature had a shot and a stake in change, forgetting the top guys, the Ayzulskis*, the generals, the bad guys. Those were dealt with. But the people that ran the system were allowed to enjoy democracy and get involved in democracy. They weren't all thrown in jail, et cetera, et cetera.

And I'm curious whether your poll gives any -- what I sense is not very good -- but does it give any sense of where the Cuban American community comes out on revenge?

MR. PASCUAL: Damian, do you want to --

DR. FERNANDEZ: Well, if my hypothesis is correct that there is less of that passion, then there would be less of the revenge. And that there has been a process of reconciliation people-to-people, not only because the policy of

the U.S. government, but Miami is the center of engagement with the Cubans on the island. No other city engages with Cuba the way we engage. No other community engages with remittances, with travel, with phone calls, with emails. I mean we know what's happening there.

I think that over the past 10 years there's been that kind of people-to-people reconciliation which can dampen any interest or the force of revenge down the line.

DR. GLADWIN: And I suppose just another way of looking at it, which is the factor of fear within the Cuban American community -- within the Cuban community on the island of revenge. That is, as a moderation in our community begins to become more evident, the Cuban American community, Miami, Dade specifically, and throughout the United States, then that fear on the other side might ebb a bit, which might open up other doors of reconciliation and talks and the like. I think that being recalcitrant on one end does incite fears of revenge on the other. The more you spread out the spectrum of tolerance to receive different, or see different solutions to the problem, I think that will soften that fear and perhaps even (inaudible).

MR. PASCUAL: Vicki, you wanted to comment on this?

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MS. HUDDLESTON: Well, it's such a great question, but because the Cuban Americans have been the essential parts of the policy, they also turn out to be essential parts of Cuba's future. And the real strong possibilities for investment probably are the Cuban American community.

The real fear, if there is one that Cubans have of change, is that they're not going to be in charge of the change. And so diminishing the fear for Cubans so that they know that they're still going to be running -- or they will be running the country is absolutely essential. But equally essential is getting buy-in from the Cuban Americans, because they need to be part of it, too.

MR. PASCUAL: That's very helpful. I'm going to have to put two of my colleagues here on notice. I had a little set of videos from the Cuba Study Group and Pepe Hernandez from the Cuban-American National Foundation. I think it would be very helpful to come back to the two of you as two individuals engaged with two major Cuban American groups based in Miami, your perception of this issue of revenge, and one of the things that could be a proxy for that could be the land issue.

And, inevitably, there are going to be very emotional feelings about that, and I wonder if you would mind commenting from your perspective.

SPEAKER: As you know, the Cuba Study Group has been doing polling in the Cuban American community since 2002. And we have asked a number of different questions in those polls, and two of the questions that we have asked in those polls consistently address some of the concerns that you raised ambassador.

We have asked before whether the Cuban American community would favor or would align themselves with the police or the Catholic Church towards forgiveness or reconciliation, and, historically, we have seen the majority of the Cuban American community favoring those kinds of processes.

We have also asked questions because the issue of housing is clearly a major player in the fear factor that exists in the Cuba population, and we know that fear is in itself an obstacle to change. And, therefore, we have addressed the issue of property in those polls asking whether both the people who have owned homes in Cuba and people who have not, we have asked the question: Would you favor the property of those homes belonging to the people that live in them, or would you sort of like to take them back?

And overwhelmingly, and by the way across all the different groups of people that have come to the United States at different stages,

overwhelmingly, the response has been: Let the people who live in those properties own those properties. That has been a critical factor.

In fact, Consenzu Coano (?), an organization or a collection of organizations that both the Cuban American National Foundation, and the Cuba Study Group, and Iglío Tepas Independienta, D'Ramonco Las Heds (?), all three of those organizations are part of Consenzu. One of the statement that Consenzu has come together on is that title to the residential properties of Cubans should be belong to the people that live in those properties today, and that any issue concerning the value of those properties for restitution should perhaps be left to a matter of between the previous owners and a future Cuban state. But that clearly the title should belong to those people.

So those are two questions which are major fear factors that delay change. I think the Cuban American community has adequately expressed itself on their position on these two issues.

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you. Pepe?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you very much. One of the real problems that the Cuban American community has had in the United States is over the years, not only now but over the years, is the ignorance. The ignorance

on the part of the rest of the United States and the government here and in Washington about really the real nature of the community. And the fact that our community is very dynamic, and the community has been changing all through the years.

This question of revenge is something that passed a long time ago from the minds or the primary interest of the Cuban American community, and basically for one very good reason. And it is that 40 or 50 years have passed since that happened. In our community right now, it's 70 percent those in our community were born under Fidel Castro.

So really they didn't have that impact of those like myself that came fairly -- so -- so this is something that has been changing with our community, and at the present time the stereotype of the community has been extremely radical, has been wanting to get back all the properties that they left back in Cuba has continued throughout the United States and the rest of the world, basically fed by propaganda from Cuba.

But the fact of the matter is that we have come to the conclusion, the great majority of our community has come to the conclusion that if there is going to be a transition in Cuba, we Cubans have to sit down and put our minds

together and try to come up with a solution that there is not going to be a situation where there are going to be winners and losers.

As a matter of fact, I think that from the standpoint of my generation, we have to consider that we are all losers, those on one part of the revolution, those who supported the revolution, that thought that this was going to change forever the Cuban way of thinking, the Cuban national project. If there as one and alls that we felt at the beginning that we were going to wipe out completely the revolution, that is not going to happen. And it's not going to happen because there is a new generation.

And the problem that we have for that change to take place, these new generations both in Havana and in Miami, has to take forward, has to make the decisions. But it would help if the United States and the people in the United States would help to understand that this is really what is happening in our community.

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you. Thanks very much. Let me come to the middle of the room here.

MR. TEAGUE: Thank you.

MR. PASCUAL: You can introduce yourself as well.

MR. TEAGUE: My name is Walter Teague. I'm a social worker here in Washington and Maryland.

My question has to do with shifting public opinion, and I'm wondering if it's reflected also in the Cuban American community. We're seen a big shift in American public opinion about U.S. intervention and to bring democracy and regime change, for example, to Iraq.

I'm wondering if among the Cuban Americans there was a shift about such serious intervention as the commission for assistance to a free Cuba. What is the attitude toward the U.S. government taking a fairly heavy-handed lead on bringing about change?

MR. PASCUAL: Do you remember the old --

SPEAKER: What?

MR. PASCUAL: Do you remember last year's poll (inaudible) whether the U.S. should be involved?

DR. GLADWIN: Oh, yeah.

MR. PASCUAL: Go head.

DR. GLADWIN: I say yeah, we have -- we didn't this year. We had to reduce the length considerably, but we have asked the question: What is it

-- do you believe the next president of Cuba should be someone from the exile community or someone, from someone on the island? Or, no, it was --

DR. GRENIER: We did ask that one.

DR. GLADWIN: Right.

DR. GRENIER: We also asked the question of, how involved do you think the U.S. government should be?

DR. GLADWIN: Right.

DR. GRENIER: I mean -- yeah, right -- the U.S. government should be in the development of a free Cuba. And for the life of me -- you'll have to go to the website to figure out the percentages. I can't remember them.

DR. GLADWIN: Just kind of split, as I recall.

DR. GRENIER: Yeah. Well, what else is new?

MR. PASCUAL: Ellis, did you want to (inaudible).

DR. GRENIER: Kind of split, that's a safe answer.

SPEAKER: Again, that's a question that we have asked consistently in all of the Cuba Study Group polls. And if I remember the numbers, over 1 million, almost 80-some percent of the respondents believed that the future of Cuba needs to be crafted by the Cubans alone, not in Washington.

Even, you know, a significant number of the Cuban American community believes that way.

SPEAKER: If I might just comment from my previous experience in the U.S. government, the Commission on Assistance for a Free Cuba, that study actually focuses principally on what can be done at a point in time that there's a transition government in Cuba leading to democracy. So the vast bulk of that report is a whole series of options of what could be done under those kinds of conditions.

The U.S. government has had a policy of hastening transition, but that has not necessarily been part of what's in the Commission on Assistance for a Free Cuba, and so the irony of it is that the policy has been to hasten change; the principal tool has been embargo. Embargo has not necessarily worked. The position has been consistently that a succession from Fidel to Raul would not be acceptable.

But the huge challenge is, well, what's the alternative? And so what is arising now is, I think, a questioning of what are the tools that are available? What are the tools that are available to engage with the Cuban people to help them better understand what the options might be that might be tools that

might be available to empower the Cuban people, because if, in fact, the embargo has been the principal tool and that hasn't brought success, then what are the other alternatives to bring about transition, particularly in this context?

Where I think that there is a clear recognition and I think Cudleso Iglegius (?), Pepe Hernandez, Damian Fernandez have reinforced this point that there is going to be change, that there is now a perception of a shift of locus if that change is going to come internally from within the island, that it's not going to come out of Washington.

Let me go to this side of the room, in the back over here.

MR. LOYOLA: Mario Loyola. I work for *National Review*.

One of the things that's confusing about and almost surreal about this whole debate is that if you read the Helms-Burton legislation, and it's basically a laundry list of U.S. government's ultimate demands for a transitional government in Cuba --

SPEAKER: Right.

MR. LOYOLA: -- elections, they have to be political presenters, they have to do all these things, but it imposes on the administration an all-or-nothing approach. It seems to make it impossible for the administration to

negotiate incremental reforms that still leave the Cuban government, the communists, in power for any length of time.

Then when you complain about that and say, well, the Bush administration now doesn't have any scope to negotiate incremental reforms, then the Bush administration says, oh, no, no, we have all the flexibility that we need to negotiate incremental reforms in Cuba.

And I don't know if -- I don't see how that can possibly be true. But if it is, if somebody would like to explain why the Bush administration has taken the anomalous position that it's going to accept congressionally-imposed foreign policy in this instance when in all other instances it's been so solicitous of White House prerogatives, I'm just confused. I think a lot of people probably are.

MR. PASCUAL: Any of our panelists want to tackle that?

DR. GLADWIN: I'm confused a bit. I don't really want to do it.

MR. PASCUAL: Mark, do you want to comment, please? Thank you. Mark, please introduce yourself.

DR. FALCOFF: I'm Mark Falcoff with the American Enterprises Institute.

Here's the way I see that. There is a very fragile consensus

underling Helms-Burton, and it's a very complex piece of legislation. My own personal view is that if there's any serious change underway in Cuba, that consensus will collapse. There already is a strong minority opinion even within the Republican representation in the House of Representatives to change certain aspects of our policy. I don't know whether that will prosper or not. A lot depends on Cuba.

But if things start to change in Cuba, it seems to me that any administration and any Congress would wish to have flexibility to participate and get involved in this. And so I wouldn't regard Helms-Burton as some sort of theological monument in granite that constrains any administration because I am sure that if any administration decides to respond to changes on the ground in Cuba, they will find a way of doing so. At least that's always been my view about Helms-Burton.

MR. PASCUAL: Scott?

MR. HARRELL: Scott Harrell, Brookings.

I'm just wondering if you all can give us your best analytical read. You've given us a survey of popular opinion amongst Cuban Americans living in Miami. Several people have mentioned that there are other Cuban American

communities around the United States. Many of you have said in fact Cuban Americans are not making U.S. foreign policy.

Certainly there must be some leading Cuban Americans for whom survey data would not be available, but you could analyze who are the leading voices as well as who are voices from outside the Cuban American community were making policy towards Cuba.

So I wonder if you can tell us, how should we value all the information from your survey? It's obviously one small piece of a much bigger puzzle. Has it told us anything about where policy is heading, or simply where Cuban Americans perceive policy heading?

DR. GLADWIN: Neither. I think it's -- I don't think -- it tells us what Cuban Americans would like policy to head. I don't think they foresee it moving in this direction, particularly, at least the ones that -- or at least, you know, I don't know that they do. I think that there is a great desire for policy to change, but you are right in the sense that what is missing in this big picture is some kind of leadership that would then take this obvious diversity which for many of us -- it might be new to some of you -- but for many of us has been very obvious for many, many years. But make it -- that's where leadership is lacking is

to actually make this diversity matter and make it part of a Cuban identity as well.

Cuban identity has been identified as being very tight around one specific issue: Cuba. As populations have aged and diversified, you can't say that anymore as much. But what's missing is the leadership. I don't think there is a leader right now.

We have some leaders in the audience right now that are trying to read the tea leaves, as we say, and look at how much of the army would be kind of -- you know, what groups should they jump out of and say, "Hey, I'm the leader of this group."? Right, because clearly the population is changing in a way where a leader who wants to make changing travel an issue, for example, or changing family travel an issue, they would have a lot of takers. But who's going to take that all the time, I'm not sure?

MR. PASCUAL: Vicki, if I can ask you to build on this, because you've worked on Cuban policy on the ground, you've worked on it from Washington, you've seen the dynamic of how policy gets formulated. And from your experience working on these issues, how significant is a poll like this? What impact or influence can it had on policy, and what kind of political space does it create?

MS. HUDDLESTON: I hope it's going to create a lot of political space, but I was going to say if we just reached the break point, it seems to me that Cuban Americans have been essential in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, and they have not wanted to break the isolation of Cuba and tell what we see in this poll in 2007, and now they're saying we do want to break the isolation of the Cuban people either because the embargo hasn't worked, because over 70 percent say it hasn't worked, or because they just feel now that they need that kind of contact.

And I think one of the reasons that's come about is because when this administration decided to turn around the policies that were in place in 2002, they cut down so much on that family travel, on the medicines, on the remittances, that people then realized just how important this was to their future.

And so I agree with Guillermo 100 percent. We've seen a lot of leaders in the Cuban community, in the Cuban American community, but they're all been very conservative leaders. Now we have to look either to the new generation or some of the gentlemen and women, I hope -- because we have some very dynamic Cuban women -- Cuban American women -- to take a leadership role and say: Now is the moment of change. Fidel is going. U.S. policy wants to

go someplace different, and there's a majority behind us.

DR. GLADWIN: If I may, I think also it might be erroneous to fall back into the issue of control that Damian was talking about. That is, this idea that Cuban Americans by themselves can shape and change Cuban American policy.

I mean the fact of the matter is -- and I know I'm saying it probably to the wrong audience here -- but Cuba's just not that important to U.S. foreign policy. It comes into a radar when it's an immigration issue; it comes into the radar when it's this local Florida which-way-is-Florida-going-to-swing issue, how are we going to swing Cuban votes. But, in general -- and I think I know inside the beltway everything seems important -- but out there in the hinterland, this doesn't seem that Cuba is that important to U.S. foreign policy.

So until the leadership makes it important, until Cuban American leaders make it important based on U.S. ground rules for engagement, that is, it's important but to who? To Cubans on the island? But does that matter to us in the electoral process here?

MS. HUDDLESTON: Ah, but it's very important to U.S. presidential policy.

DR. GLADWIN: Well, that's the thing. When it's domestic policy, then it becomes important.

MR. PASCUAL: Let me come back all the way at the back of the room.

MR. MILLIKIN: Al Millikin, *Washington Independent Writers*.

How do any of you see how the Cuban government has controlled the exchange of American dollars effected change otherwise? And, on the other hand, the further restrictions in the change in the people, the people program in the latter part of the Bush administration, how has that effected change? And how much do the Cuban Americans really care about these things?

SPEAKER: Well, as a political scientist, I don't think that the economy is the only determinant of politics. And those proponents of the embargo who argue that, in fact, starving the Cuban economy of cash is going to topple the regime, I think it's economic determinism that it's not necessarily automatic how that's going to happen.

In fact, reasonable people can disagree about the impact of either economic engagement or disengagement. That is, Vicki made the point with which I agree that remittances can help civil society and even the opposition

flourish by providing the resources to start a microenterprise, for instance.

There are those who believe that, in fact, any economic negotiation with Cuba would end up eventually in the government's coffers, and would support the police state there. So I think that again reasonable people can disagree on that impact, and it's hard to know.

What we know, though, is that at a moment's of openness -- that is greater travel, greater connection, greater remittances -- is where there is greater social space which we'll hope that at some moment will translate into political space.

MR. PASCUAL: I'd like to -- well, let me go on the back there, and you've been very patient. And then I'll come back to my question.

SPEAKER: Well, I heard Dr. Grenier say you don't have to be a rocket scientist to know that the embargo has failed.

DR. GRENIER: Actually, I studied sociology. One of my students --

SPEAKER: But I don't think you have to be a rocket scientist to know that Canadian and European engagement has also failed. The U.S. has the largest diplomatic mission in Havana. There's more U.S. diplomats in Havana

than Russians, Canadians, Mexicans, and what the U.S. did was it stopped tourist travel. It enforced the law. There's still engagement in Cuba, real engagement with members of civil society, not just tourist travel to the island.

U.S. policy should be predicated on internal reforms in Cuba, and on the whole issue of Cuban Americans dictating U.S. foreign policy, I think what dictates U.S. foreign policy is the U.S. national interest.

MR. PASCUAL: Comment? Vicki, do you want to --

MS. HUDDLESTON: You're absolutely right, we are the biggest mission, but, unfortunately, at this point we have so little contact with the Cuban government that we have very little insight into what's going on. And that's why I would really advocate the idea of bilateral cooperation in areas that are of neutral interest, such as antinarcotics, crime, and migration. That's where you begin the dialogue between governments is where you have a mutual interest.

MR. PASCUAL: I think one of the things that's also important to point out is that it's possible to advocate a policy of engagement with a country and still not necessarily say that you're supporting that country. And probably the prime example of that was Ronald Reagan toward the Soviet Union. I mean he was an individual who was able to say, "Tear down that wall," and refer to the

evil empire, yet at the same time the level of grain sales from the United States to the Soviet Union were astronomical in that period.

The engagement that we tried to promote in bringing people from the Soviet Union to the United States in order to get to know them and to help them see alternatives was particularly high.

And so the challenge here was to find that right balance of policies that will, in fact, give those who are internally within a country the capacity to understand where the incoherence is within their own system, to have a sense of what the alternatives can be and how to form their political positions in that context.

And I think that that's one of the key issues that we face today, is not so much a question of whether or not the engagement and seeking an end to a particular system -- those two things can certainly exist -- the question becomes how to do that in the most constructive way possible.

But I want to turn first of all and ask one question of a colleague who is here, Andres Rosenthal, if I might. I'm sorry, he's right next to you. No -- I mean right there.

And Andres was formerly the Deputy Foreign Minister of Mexico,

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and so you've had the challenge of formulating, trying to formulate policy as a diplomat and a politician, both toward Cuba and toward the United States on Cuba. And can you comment a little bit about the challenge of doing that in an effective way? What some of the constraints are, and what you see, as someone who has worked these issues, from another diplomatic perspective? What some of the critical needs are and how policy needs to move forward.

MR. ROSENTHAL: I'll try. I think we spoke about this a moment ago upstairs, and it is true that most Latin American countries do not engage in speaking to the United States about Cuba, especially now. And that's fundamentally because the United States doesn't want to talk about Cuba to any Latin American countries.

Normally, the United States policy has been: We have enough contacts, we have enough on the agenda with Cuba directly, whether its immigration, or drug trafficking, or Guantanamo or anything else. We don't need intermediaries.

The only time that this did not happen, Carlos, was when we organized the first meeting between the secretary of state of the United States and the then Vice President (inaudible) Rodriguez of Cuba in Mexico City. That was

watershed in terms of the timing. It was Secretary of State Hague, and it was watershed because it was the first direct contact. There were only four people in the room. I was one of them. And other than that, as far as I know the U.S. administration, succeeding U.S. administrations, have tried to keep Cuba off the agenda.

Now, whether that is changing or not and whether it might change in the future is an open question. We all know that there are 33 Latin American Caribbean countries that maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba, normal diplomatic relations, some more friendly than others. But it is a vast majority of the hemisphere that was not the case until quite recently.

There is today, if it were a decision of that majority to go to the OAS and reincorporate Cuba into the OAS, the United States would be isolated in its opposition. And we know that there is considerable opposition.

But the fact is that it's very difficult for any of us to engage the U.S. on this discussion, and I don't know whether that will change or not. We're hopeful it will. The Spanish government is currently in Havana, the foreign minister of Spain together with a rather large delegation today and tomorrow, the first visit to Havana by a foreign minister of an E.U. country since 2003, and the

first Spanish visit since 1998, if I'm not mistaken.

And there are also other contacts and other possibilities of Canadian, Mexican, Spanish, and other countries getting involved in trying to create a Friends of Cuba group. And whether the U.S. is willing to be involved in that or not I think is for others to discuss. But we would hope that that would happen, and we think that this poll plus the things that have been said about how the Cuban American community has evolved in its thinking.

I remember meeting with Mr. Muskanosa* (?) in the Mexican foreign ministry, and there the opposition was no dialogue, no discussion, nothing. It was just absolutely a closed door, and that's obviously no longer the case.

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you Andres. There are still many questions in the audience. I wish we could satisfy all of them. We just simply can't, but --

DR. GLADWIN: Carlos, could I just say that the results are completely on the web, and you can go to probably the Brookings side. I know the *Miami Herald*, Miami dot com as a direct link now, so if people want to see that --

MR. PASCUAL: Well, what I was going to do was come back to the Panel and give each of you --

DR. GLADWIN: I'm sorry, I didn't want to let that go.

MR. PASCUAL: -- one second to have any final comments.

DR. GLADWIN: Yes.

MR. PASCUAL: So be ready to blurt out what the website is.

DR. GLADWIN: Okay.

MR. PASCUAL: But let me ask our panelists if there are any final words they want to leave us with, and I'll go through in the order of their presentations they gave.

DR. GRENIER: No, I think that what one should carry away from a meeting like this is that at least the Cuban American community is changing. The demographics are changing. It's not a monolithic community. It's up to leaders in that community and outside of that community to make those changes important where they need to be important, either American on stage for electoral politics, or the international stage of hemispheric development.

MR. PASCUAL: Okay. Website.

DR. GLADWIN: Yeah. I think if you just Google FIU/Cuba Poll,

or go to Miami.com, *The Herald* website.

MR. PASCUAL: Okay. Thank you again for the work that you did on the poll and then providing us the means that's --

Damian?

DR. FERNANDEZ: Well, I think it's important to remember that Cuban Americans are unified in terms of what goal we want to see unfold in Cuba. That is a democratic, peaceful transition, a better Cuba for Cubans, but that we differ in terms of how to get there. And that's fine, that's part of the democratic exercise, and we cannot polarize the differences too much because I think that polarization in fact undermines a possibility of consensus.

MR. PASCUAL: And Vicki?

MS. HUDDLESTON: We need to do it right. It's too big not to do it right with Cuba 90 miles off our coast with this thing going on for almost 50 years, if we mess this one up, it really is going to be a tragedy, not just for Florida and Cuban Americans but for all of us who are interested in seeing a democratic Cuba.

Perhaps the best way to move forward in addition to what we've seen from the Cuban American change of line is with our friends and allies in

Latin America and in Europe who also care about getting this right.

MR. PASCUAL: Okay, thanks. It's quite interesting that when Ronald Reagan said tear down that wall, he said it from a perspective of moral superiority, a belief that if, in fact, you took away those restrictions that the values that we believe in -- that democracy, that market economy, that openness and freedom and competition would speak for themselves. Interesting point on which to reflect.

Thank you to our Panel.

(Applause)

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