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Can International Boycotts Transform Political Systems? The Cases of Cuba and South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The economic embargo against Cuba has been widely promoted as a way to hasten the end of the Castro regime. Historically, however, the connection between embargoes and regime change is mediated by a complex of political, social, and economic conditions. Labor-market bottlenecks and domestic elite opposition, decisive factors in the South African case, are absent from that of Cuba. This study uses the factors derived from an analysis of South Africa to compare the Cuban case and concludes that the embargo against Cuba cannot have its intended results.

Since 1974, a number of nations have undergone a transition to democracy. The democratic transitions of Southern Europe in the 1970s were followed by the Latin American transitions in the 1980s, and subsequently those in Eastern Europe, South Korea, Taiwan, and South Africa. The rapid progression of these transitions in the last two decades has inspired a rich literature that rejoices in the events and critically appraises their causes (see Schwartzman 1998 for a summary of this literature).

In searching for the international influence on regime change, authors have highlighted factors such as a favorable international climate (Huntington 1991), global industrialization (Markoff 1996; Maravall and Santamaria 1986; Seidman 1994), global shocks (Martins 1986; Castells and Lacerna 1994), world cycles with shifting global hegemons (Wallerstein 1991; Poulantzas 1976; Arrighi 1994), and foreign intervention. While foreign intervention periodically has taken the form of military occupation, more often it is less intrusive.

Foreign boycotts, sanctions, and embargoes constitute part of this less-intrusive repertoire undertaken by foreign nations hoping for a regime transformation in the target state.[1] The question this article will raise is, will the boycotts and harsh economic measures the United States has employed against Cuba produce the desired regime transformation? Will these sanctions force an end to the "totalitarian state controlled by President Fidel Castro" (U.S. Dept. of State 1999, 1)?

Three distinct responses have been offered. One comes from Edward A. Casey, deputy assistant secretary, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, State Department, in his 1995 testimony before the U.S. House

Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee (1995, 49). His office believes, he said, that the embargo is working and has forced Cuba to undertake reforms that essentially compromise its ideological views. A second answer is offered by scholars such as Jorge I. Domínguez (1989), who contend that the policy has failed. Not only has it failed to bring down the Cuban government; historically it has not even deterred Cuba from its own foreign policy goals (Smith 1990). A third position argues that the impact of the economic sanctions can be gauged only since the 1989 collapse of the Eastern bloc, and that it is therefore too early to judge.

This article suggests a fourth answer: the economic sanctions lack the necessary conditions for success. This thesis is informed by work on regime transformation in general (Schwartzman 1998) and the effects of sanctions on the South African regime in particular (Schwartzman and Taylor 1999). The latter analysis raises serious doubts about the independent impact of economic sanctions on the South African transition. To the extent that sanctions appeared to be effective, it was only because they combined with a number of other social and economic factors. Can sanctions have an equal leverage without these concomitant factors? This paper compares both the Cuban and the South African realities against an ideal case derived from the literature on sanctions (Hufbauer et al. 1985; Lipton 1989; Davis 1991).

South Africa and Cuba obviously differ in major respects: South Africa is a developed capitalist state, with its limited democracy based on race, while Cuba is a developing socialist state. Yet members of the international community subjected each country to economic sanctions to coerce these nations into embracing a political system based on polyarchy. This study argues that the same factors that enabled a successful boycott against South Africa have impeded a success against Cuba. The two countries also differ not only in the openness of their economies and the amount of international adherence to the boycotts they have attracted, but also in the magnitude and nature of the internal opposition to their respective regimes. Many of those factors that were present in South Africa in March 1992, when the white population, in a national referendum, authorized Prime Minister F. W. de Klerk to continue negotiations (begun in 1990) with Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC), are absent in the Cuban case.

The intent of boycotts might be to make an economy scream. Sanctions can generate general economic crisis, which may reduce the standard of living for all inhabitants, lead regime supporters to withdraw support from the government, and (as the architects of boycotts hope) incite social unrest, forcing governmental collapse. Alternatively, sanctions may provoke a fiscal crisis that forces the state to reduce its expenditures, both on the repressive apparatus (thereby allowing opposition to make some gains), and on privileges for its core supporters (thereby losing their support).

In the Cuban case, sanction advocates have argued that each law passed by the United States has forced Castro to make concessions that either reduced his ability "to fund his repressive apparatus" or created hardships for the "nomenclature" that kept the system running" (Varona 1996, 10, 11).[2] The Cuban Liberty and Solidarity Act of 1996, or the Helms-Burton law, and its predecessor, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, or Torricelli law, sought to apply new pressures at the moment when Cuba's economic fortunes were flattened by the disintegration of the Eastern bloc. The Helms-Burton law, furthermore, attempted to make the bilateral U.S.-Cuba policy a multilateral one, arguing that Castro must be denied all credit, capital, and loans needed to perpetuate his rule.

The Role of Sanctions in South Africa

By the 1980s, after 20 years of international criticism, South Africa had become the pariah of the modern world; yet it tenaciously held on to apartheid. It asserted that it could work out its problems if left reasonably alone, free of international pressure. Members of the international community argued in the United Nations that, to the contrary, South African rulers would end apartheid only when they saw no other alternative. Trade and investment embargoes were the weapons of choice against the racial state. Without embargoes, it was argued, South Africa would pursue a reformist option—conceding to the black community some socioeconomic gains without political rights.

The sanctions took various forms. One of the earliest international protests came in 1956, when the International Table Tennis Federation expelled the all-white South African team. In 1963, U.N. Security Council Resolution 181 called for a voluntary arms embargo against South Africa for disturbing international peace and security (because of military actions against neighboring Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia). In 1964, the International Olympic Committee suspended South Africa, and in 1970 formally expelled it. In 1977 the U.N. voted for a mandatory arms embargo.

Financial sanctions began in 1985, when Chase Manhattan, a major international creditor bank, refused to roll over a maturing debt. This set off a snowball effect; many other financial institutions declined to renew and extend credit (Dollery 1989, 393). In 1986, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) became U.S. law, even over President Ronald Reagan's veto. It prohibited U.S. entities from importing and exporting certain commodities and making new investments in, or loans to, South Africa.

Despite some global noncompliance and "sanctions-bursting strategies" well into the middle 1980s (Mozia 1991, 127), South African exports and imports suffered from these international sanctions. At the same

time, South Africa found ways, albeit costly, to circumvent trade boycotts. Financial flows were another matter. The boycott by the international financial institutions caused the Johannesburg stock and foreign exchange markets to close for about one week, and the minister of finance declared a unilateral moratorium on all principal repayments for commercial bank debt, which covered about 60 percent of all outstanding debt (Dollery 1989, 393). The flow of foreign capital dropped precipitously. The survey *Business Environment Risk Information* warned against long-term investment in South Africa because "risk levels are increasing and profit potential diminishing" (cited in South African Institute of Race Relations 1983, 51). Davis argues that the accretion of costs, premiums, lost investments, and technological isolation associated with external economic pressure was slow but steady (1991, 75).

Sanctions thus forced Pretoria to pay a high economic price for apartheid and left key South African leaders no doubt about the connection between international sanctions and economic well-being. "Pretoria believes international financial sanctions compel it to cap growth at approximately 2.5 percent to 3 percent each year, a policy that generates economic insecurity, a steady decline in living standards, and a continuing outflow of capital" (Davis 1991, 74). Key business leaders, such as Henri de Villers, chairman of Standard Bank, became critical of apartheid. De Villers contended that South Africa needed the world and must abandon its defiant stance. Gavin W. Relly, managing director of the Anglo-American Corporation, also reached the conclusion that something needed to change and that simply grasping a growth bubble under a command economy was insufficient (*New York Times* 1988a). By 1986, associations representing three-fourths of the business community were asking for reforms in the apartheid system. The president of the Chamber of Mines said, "I feel strongly that the counter to U.S. disinvestment threats lies in South Africa's internal constitutional and general reform process" (quoted in Catholic Institute 1990, 144).

Ordinary citizens also responded to the effects of sanctions by voting yes in the March 1992 referendum that, in essence, approved the transition from limited, white-only democracy to full democracy. The 1992 vote for Prime Minister De Klerk to continue talks with the ANC was essentially an agreement to end the racial state and to open up civil society. Apartheid formally ended with the 1994 parliamentary elections, in which black South Africans were included among the enfranchised.

International sanctions were applied, and by 1994 the desired outcome was achieved. But was it really the foreign intervention in the form of economic sanctions that mattered? Assessments of the precise contribution of those sanctions range from positive (they brought down apartheid) to negative (not only did they fail to eliminate apartheid but they encouraged the government to become more entrenched). This

range of interpretations can be illustrated by the arms embargo. In an optimistic interpretation, Crown (1990, 168–70) attributes South Africa's failure in the Angolan struggles of 1987 and 1988 to military equipment shortages produced by the boycott. Crown suggests that the arms embargo weakened the South African navy almost to the point of collapse. Crawford (1999), in contrast, offers an extremely persuasive account of how the arms embargo stimulated a domestic arms industry that was so successful it eventually began to export—an example of import substitution industrialization. Such ambiguity regarding the direct effects of sanctions dictates a more careful examination of the economic and political environment in which sanctions were applied.

The Domestic Context

The connection between international sanctions and the collapse of apartheid was mediated by a complex of domestic political and economic factors. In the words of Dollery,

> Advocates of economic sanctions must therefore investigate the instrumentalist "black box" separating the economic from the political . . . the actual mechanisms through which effective sanctions produce political progress. (1989, 397)

Analysis of South African data from 1960 to 1990 suggests the importance of several factors (Schwartzman and Taylor 1999). First, there was a distinct link between international sanctions and domestic social movements. The Catholic Institute writes, in its *Sanctions Report* (1990, 142), that the international clamor for sanctions was loudest after cycles of black resistance and state repression; for example, the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, the urban uprisings of 1976–77, and the rise of the United Democratic Front (UDF).[3] Protests and accompanying violent reprisals increased international support for isolating South Africa and, in particular, led U.S. corporate executives to admit the limited ability to enforce "constructive engagement" (Rodman 1994, 316). Domestic protest announced the injustice and brutality of apartheid to the world, and sanctions announced the willingness of some international actors to intervene in this domestic conflict.

A second factor, independent of the international sanction movement, was that the flow of foreign investment was linked to social unrest. Foreign capital, following a purely economic criterion, shuns investing in locations plagued by social unrest (Schneider and Frey 1985).

Third, statistically most important, and equally independent of the sanction movement was the inefficient organization of one aspect of the economy. The labor market was stifled by white workers' monopolistic hold on most of the skilled labor positions. Employers were prohibited

under apartheid from enlarging the skilled labor pool with nonwhites. Apartheid had superimposed a "racial" logic on a "labor market" logic. This labor market bottleneck was associated with a declining gross domestic product, and it gave employers in the industrial and capital goods sectors an incentive to abandon apartheid.

While the 1994 outcome was what many wanted—a negotiated end to apartheid involving both de Klerk's Nationalist Party and the ANC—it is clear that sanctions alone did not produce these results. Regime change was the result of pressure, first, from domestic capitalists whose growth was restricted by the artificially constrained labor market; second, from foreign capital investors who saw disincentives to investing; and third, from the joint action of domestic protesters and sympathetic international boycotters of South African products (Schwartzman and Taylor 1999).

The research findings for South Africa follow a model first sketched by Poulantzas (1976) and partly elaborated in the literature on Latin America and Eastern Europe. These models of regime transformation locate the impetus to change not in the historically unique attributes of each country, but in global economic shifts which simultaneously alter the balance of power among domestic elites and alter their willingness to make alliances with the masses engaged in opposition. In these models, the domestic political structures become part of the evolving transnational fabric of economic relations. In short, it is impossible to understand the ultimate effect of international sanctions on regimes without tracing their particular effects through the domestic political and economic structures.

These findings raise the comparative question, can sanctions toward Cuba have their intended consequence without domestic opposition at both the citizen and leadership levels?

The Effect of the Economic Sanctions on Cuba

Some sanction advocates argue that the economic boycott of Cuba really dates from the 1991 economic and political collapse of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).[4] This trade bloc of the Soviet Union and the centrally planned economies in its orbit offered aid and markets that no single country could offset. In addition, the Cuban exile community argues, the loss of Soviet aid meant a diminished ability to maintain Cuba's repressive apparatus (Varona 1996, 11).

The effects of the economic sanctions in Cuba's case should not be underestimated. The country's infrastructure today looks frayed and worn; shortages are rampant. By 1997, Cubans had identified transportation and housing as the most troubled areas. Residents of Havana spend several hours a day waiting for and riding on public transportation. Dilapidated housing is pervasive; government estimates indicate that more than one-tenth is irreparable and must be torn down (AFP 1997, 1). Funds for renovation are inadequate, a condition that is exacerbated as more Cubans migrate from the countryside to the cities.

Accelerating internal migration from the countryside to Havana experienced a temporary slowdown following the April 1997 Decree 217, issued by the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers. Pursuant to that degree, some squatters were evicted, and those not formally registered to live in the capital became subject to deportation and fines (Rohter 1997, 1). In 1999, *Granma*, the Communist Party daily, reported that internal migration was starting to pick up again (cited in Snow 1999, 1).

Shortages also have touched Havana's infrastructure. From 1993 on, urban residents suffered continuous power outages and water shortages to individual residences and institutions alike. Power cuts are blamed on lack of parts, which previously came from the Communist bloc, and the nation's inability to afford or acquire alternative ones on the international market. Consumption of foodstuffs and articles necessary for daily existence is restricted. Ration books guarantee a more equitable distribution of supplies and food items, but only when the items are available (Díaz González 1997, 3). Since 1994, some foods may be purchased in (unregulated) produce markets, but neither their presence nor their affordability is guaranteed.

To the extent that Cuba uses transshipments from third nations to circumvent the U.S. boycott, it pays higher transportation costs. The Banco Nacional de Cuba estimates that from the period of the Cuban revolution until 1987, the embargo has cost Cuba $11.5 billion in trade disruption, national defense, and other activities (Jameson 1989, 220). Espinosa Martínez (1994, 10) cites an estimate of the impact between 1959 and 1992 as $41 billion. While the debate continues about the proper yardstick with which to measure the cost, the political effectiveness of sanctions, and the time period in which to measure them, one can say at a minimum that sanctions have certainly had the effect of raising costs that Cuba, as a target country, "must pay for maintaining the offending position" (Davis 1991, 66).

In the period 1993–94, before Helms-Burton, Cuba suffered an enormous economic collapse. The GDP's growth rate dropped 34 to 50 percent between 1991 and 1993. In 1992–93, Cuba used between 20 and 30 percent of its industrial capacity (Triana 1996, 3); and by 1993, its capacity to import had dropped 75 percent from the 1990 rate. While full employment was maintained until 1993, the crisis significantly lowered purchasing power. In addition, the Cuban labor market has been plagued by a mismatch: employment offers are principally rural, and job seekers are principally urban. All this culminated in the crisis that

Table 1. Comparison of Cases

Aspects of society at time of sanctions	Ideal Case	South Africa c.1980	Cuba c.1995
International consensus	Multilateral compliance	High[a] moderate	Low moderate
Global economic integration	Export-dependent	Moderate	High
	Import-dependent	Low	High
	Monopsonous	Low	High
	Foreign capital–dependent	High	High
Sensitivity of economy	Competition in global market	Low	High
	Economy homogeneous	Low	High
Domestic opposition	Widespread	High	Moderate
Domestic elite opposition	Present, organized, and public	High	Low

[a]A "higher" score indicates more vulnerability.

the Cubans designated the "special period." Such was the condition precipitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the major buffer against the embargo.

Will these already dire conditions, exacerbated by the intensified embargo since Helms-Burton, bring down the regime? To approach this question, the Cuban case can be weighed against a composite ideal case and the South African case according to six criteria. The criteria are taken from the literature on sanctions mentioned above and literature on social movements (see Seidman 1994). The ideal case summarized in table 1 attempts to include a range of economic, political, and social factors.

International Consensus on Sanctions

Although the sanctions against South Africa held for nearly 30 years, it was only after 1985, following the refusal of Chase Manhattan Corporation to roll over the short-term loans (Rodman 1994, 323), that more extensive international adherence could be found. Still, although the embargo clearly was porous, by the end of the 1980s, it certainly had an international consensus. In addition, the sanction movement against South Africa had multiple advocates. Belgium, for example, promoted a voluntary embargo on the provision of arms to South Africa in 1963;

Table 2. U.N. General Assembly Votes to Urge the United States to End Its Embargo of Cuba

	For	Against	Abstain
Nov. 3, 1993	88	4	57
Nov. 2, 1995	117	3	38
Nov. 2, 1996	138	3	24
Nov. 5, 1997	143	3	17
Oct. 14, 1998	157	2	12
Nov. 10, 1999	155	2	8

China in 1985 declared that its government would not enter into any military contracts with South Africa; and in 1989, the Commonwealth energetically advocated drastic financial sanctions and published its program for political change (Ovenden and Cole 1989). This is but a sample of the multilateral participation.

These two characteristics, multilateralism and density, contrast to the embargo movement against Cuba, which has not, to this moment, gained multilateral support either economically or politically, and is quite permeable. A review of the U.N. votes since 1993 (table 2) shows a growing willingness among member countries to abandon their neutral position and join the opposition to the embargo. In 1998, the United States also failed to obtain a majority vote in the U.N. Human Rights Commission to condemn Cuba (Inter Press Service 1998).

The impact of the sanctions on Cuba is summarized by periods: first the years from 1961 to the Helms-Burton legislation, and second, the period following the 1996 Act. While some may consider the earlier period less relevant, it, like the one in South Africa between the 1956 International Table Tennis Federation protest and the 1985 bank actions, attests that targeted nations can weather economic embargoes for several decades. As in the South African case, adherence to and implementation of the Cuban sanction policy has ebbed and flowed. This is true not only for the international community but also for the United States (Morley 1986).

Cuba had the advantage of some dedicated sanction discounters. Spain, for reasons of its cultural and historical ties (even under the dictatorship of Francisco Franco), maintained relations with Cuba. By 1960, Spain was Cuba's largest noncommunist European trading partner; and in 1963, it signed a three-year bilateral trade agreement with Cuba. The British also scorned the early blockade. The British company Leyland Motors won a large contract with Cuba in 1964 and helped to open the door to normal trade between Western Europe and the Castro government. Britain retained its defiant stand as late as 1991. In response to

the pending Torricelli bill, Britain responded that it "was for the British government, not the U.S. Congress, to determine the U.K.'s policy on trade with Cuba" (Jenkins 1993, 118).

Since 1962, the United States has been only partly successful in achieving global compliance with the boycott. Under the 36-year-old embargo, Cuba should not have been receiving U.S. consumer goods. Nevertheless, goods formally destined for Panama ended up in Havana's hard-currency stores (*Sun-Sentinel* 1997, 1G). Such exchanges intensified in the 1970s when Panamanian president Omar Torrijos set up a free trade zone and Cuba established a trade mission in Panama.

Chile, Peru, and Argentina reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1971, 1972, and 1973, respectively. The U.S. government, recognizing the nonadherence to the boycott, authorized subsidiaries of U.S. multinational companies in those countries to export to Cuba products with 20 percent or less U.S. content. The United States announced this "general understanding" at the 1975 meeting of the Organization of American States (Economist 1975). Then, in 1982, trying to tighten the policy and plug leaks in the embargo, President Reagan prohibited U.S. businesses from dealing with a list of firms operating in the United States, Panama, and Jamaica that were designated as Cuban conduits. Embargo porosity, along with Cuba's economic integration into the Eastern bloc (the CMEA) allowed it to weather the embargo for three decades. In addition to these concrete economic ties, there were notable acts of solidarity, such as Brazil's bestowing its honorific Southern Cross on Cuba's revolutionary leader Che Guevara (Skidmore 1967, 201).

After 1985, embargoes against South Africa shifted from trade to foreign investment. The Cuban embargo underwent a similar shift with the 1992 Torricelli and 1996 Helms-Burton acts. Along with its attempt to tighten the embargo at the moment when Cuba was losing its Soviet economic support, the objective of the 1996 act is "to generate a deeper economic deterioration in order to accelerate the fall of the current Cuban regime" (Roy 1997, 79). This is to be accomplished in part by creating hardships for other nations or economic blocs, such as the European Union, that desire to invest in Cuba. The 1996 act denies U.S. travel privileges to individuals or businesses of a third country that benefit from previously U.S.-owned properties expropriated by the Cuban government after the revolution. It allows U.S. citizens to sue in U.S. courts any agent that traffics in property confiscated by Cuba. While the former clause has left 26 chief executives of British companies vulnerable to arrest at U.S. airports (Simons 1999, 133), the latter, inscribed in Title III of the 1996 law, has been repeatedly suspended (Roy 1997, 91).

A blockade that cannot be enforced is unlikely to have much effect. The Cuban blockade has recently become porous in the more important field of direct foreign investment. Italy and Spain are counted among countries which have disregarded this law, sometimes at great cost to their own domestic political tranquility (Roy 1997). Mexico and Canada, two of the countries that have invested heavily in Cuba, complain that the Helms-Burton Act violates the agreements in the North American Free Trade Agreement. Canada in 1997 was exploring for oil in Cuba, building a new airport in Havana, and marketing the products of Cuba's sophisticated biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry. Canada formed a joint venture to develop thousands of hotel rooms. It also operates several Cuban-owned resorts and continues to fill tourist charters that weekly carry tourists to an island which they described as "cheap, safe, communist . . . and doesn't have all those Americans" (Schneider 1996).

While the United States has not realized global compliance, some companies have paid dearly for their adherence to free trade. The Spanish firm Piher Semiconductors signed a contract with Cuba in 1978. In 1983, the Reagan administration accused Piher of violating the trade embargo by trading in U.S.-made conductors, a charge that was denied. In 1985, the United States began litigation against Piher. Piher agreed to an out-of-court settlement and filed for bankruptcy two years later (Murray 1993, 15). In 1997, the United States announced that it would "punish" an Israeli-owned citrus company for doing business on Cuban land expropriated from U.S. citizens by prohibiting its executives and their families entry to the United States (*New York Times* 1997). Many U.S. firms with subsidiaries have canceled their trade deals with Cuba because of difficulties with the U.S. Treasury Department (Murray 1993, 59–66).

When foreign companies proceed with caution, it is costly to Cuba. Japan, in response to Helms-Burton's prohibition on vessels docking at U.S. ports that have previously visited Cuba, must use Cuban or third-country ships, rather than its own, for trade. Japan sends cargo to a neighboring country, such as Jamaica, and then transships it in Cuban carriers (Yamaoka 1993, 41).[5]

Varona (1996, 18–19), reflecting the position of the Cuban exile community, asserts that only courage or foolishness would lead investors to enter Cuba at this time. He identifies a number of serious problems: the uncertainty of the investment ("the probability that these joint ventures will be expropriated by any future democratic government in Cuba"); the weakened condition of the infrastructure, making the availability of water, electricity, communication services, and transportation uncertain; and the problematic nature of the financial market (instability of the peso and the shortage of banking services). Japan has restricted its investment partly because of U.S. opposition but also because of Cuba's debt problem and foreign reserve shortage.

For an embargo against a target country to be successful, it must achieve multilateral consensus and total compliance. On balance, it

appears that the international resolve for the Cuban embargo continues to weaken. While there is justification for calling the international embargo against South Africa a multilateral one (recognizing the difficulty of both monitoring and dense compliance), it may be said that the United States has had limited success in converting its bilateral trade restrictions with Cuba into multilateral ones.

Global Economic Integration

For consensual and compliant embargos to have an impact, the target economy must be sufficiently integrated into the global economy such that trade or capital boycotts will have substantial ramifications. Boycotts may do little harm to a nation with a closed economy or a monopolistic hold on a strategic resource, such as oil.

Historically, South Africa has been inserted into the international division of labor as an exporter of precious metals and raw materials and an importer of capital. Despite appreciable industrial growth since World War II, particularly in the last three decades before the collapse of apartheid, South Africa's place in the international division of labor did not change; an average 60 percent of its export earnings in the 1980s still came from raw materials and mining (Kahn 1991, 73).

Cuba has also been integrated into the global economy. In 1957, exports were valued at 30 percent of the GNP (in contrast to a Latin American average of 20 percent and a U.S. level of 4.4 percent), and sugar constituted 77 percent of the exports (Gerassi 1965, 29). Even after the revolution, Cuba continued to be an extremely open economy, with foreign trade constituting a high percentage of its national income. Estimates range from 50 percent in 1989 (Mesa-Lago 1994, 1) to 96 percent in 1984 (U.N. Statistical Office 1990, 389). Even the more conservative lower estimate depicts an economy that is open and globally integrated. This vulnerability is compounded by the concentrated nature of Cuban trade, both in product (like South Africa) and in partners (unlike South Africa). Export dependency carries challenges that derive from the vagaries of the global market. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European trading bloc, Cuba lost its "preferential prices for exports, raw materials, credit and financial terms, technical assistance and supplies" (Espinosa Martínez 1997, 9). As the price of its main exports, sugar and nickel, dropped between 1989 and 1993, Cuba's capacity to import petroleum and foodstuffs dropped by 50 percent, and the utilization of installed industrial capacity remained around 20 percent (Espinosa Martínez 1997, 10–11).

Cuba's trade relationship with the United States at the time of the revolution was basically monopsonous. In 1958, some 71 percent of Cuba's exports were destined for the United States, and 64 percent of

Table 3. Global Integration of South Africa and Cuba

Criteria	South Africa c.1980	Cuba c.1995
Exports as percentage of GDP	33.62% (1985)[a]	20.2% of GSP (1989)[b]
Top product as percentage of total exports	Gold = 42.58% (1985)[a]	Sugar = 52.62% (1995)[c] 75.2% (1991)[c]
Imports as percentage of GDP	23.07% (1985)[d]	30.5% of GSP (1989)
Top two export receivers as percentage of all export receivers	13.52%[e]	80% with CMEA (end of 1980s) 28.26% (1995)[f]
Foreign capital as percentage of GDCF	47.02% (1980)[a]	0 million (1985) 13 million (1997)[g]

Sources: [a]Author's calculations based on export data reported in IMF 1994, 198–99. [b]Mesa-Lago 1994, 2. [c]CIA 1997, 5. [d]South Africa, Central Statistical Service, 1992, 21. [e]UN 1982, 896. [f]CIA 1997, 1–2. [g]UNDP 1999.

its imports came from there. The revolution did not diminish either the trade product or trade partner concentration. By 1961, the Soviet Union had replaced the United States as Cuba's main trading partner, importing vast quantities of Cuban sugar (Smith 1984, 368). The Cuban-Soviet agreement provided that 20 percent of the imported sugar was to be paid for in U.S. dollars and the remaining 80 percent in Soviet products. During the period 1957–76, sugar averaged 82 percent of the exports, tobacco 5 percent, minerals 8 percent, and other products (such as rum) a little more than 5 percent (Smith 1984, 375). Thus in trading partner and export product concentration, Cuba surpasses South Africa in its vulnerability to trade boycotts.

Finally, both Cuba and South Africa have insufficient levels of domestic savings and are dependent on foreign capital. The South African economy suffered tremendously from capital flight, disinvestment, and the inability to continue receiving loans (Schwartzman and Taylor 1999). Cuba's foreign capital needs are more recent but nonetheless pressing. In an economy that has suffered declines of 43 percent or more of gross domestic investment (Mesa-Lago 1994, 10) and cannot capture sufficient domestic savings for future investment, foreign investment is certainly an alternative avenue to growth.

At a time when sanctions of one form or another had already been in force for a number of years (20 in South Africa and more than 35 in Cuba) and new sanctions were about to be enacted, both countries

remained globally integrated and vulnerable. Table 3 offers an overview of global integration at this juncture (1980 for South Africa and 1995 for Cuba). While both experienced a high trade integration and an extremely high product integration, Cuba suffered much more from trade partner concentration. In short, in the dimension of global economic embeddedness, Cuba, like South Africa in the 1980s, was vulnerable to boycotts.

An Economy Sensitive to Embargoes

The very level of international integration put both South Africa and Cuba in jeopardy. Features of any domestic economic organization, however, can exacerbate or ameliorate the negative effects of economic sanctions. A country may be cushioned from the effects of a boycott if, for example, its economy is diversified, or if it has a monopoly of a strategic resource. In contrast, it will suffer more if it has a more homogeneous economy or lacks a significant market share of a main export. Cuba's economy appears more sensitive in this regard (see table 4). Martínez, for example, attributes the precipitous drop in the GDP in the early 1990s to the decline in Cuba's imports suggesting a high level of economic vulnerability based on the global integration.

Mass Opposition

From Sharpeville to Soweto, South Africa saw decades of opposition and repression. The government spent extensively on internal repression; this is clear from various indicators, from the size of prison populations to the size of the police force. Yet even in the face of massive repression and periodic "states of emergency," South Africans continued to protest. Although such high levels of mobilized protest are absent in Cuba, the economic crisis has clearly affected the legitimacy of the government. The year 1994 saw antigovernment riots. In the 1995 municipal elections, 97 percent of the electorate voted but 11 percent of those ballots were considered null. Díaz González suggests that it is reasonable to conclude that those ballots were expressions of dissatisfaction with the government (1997, 6). In a poll taken in 1997, support for Castro had dropped from its postrevolution high down to 80 percent.

Group protests have also occurred. One was sparked by the news that a third commuter ferry from Regla in ten days was highjacked by Cubans seeking to flee to the United States (Raluy 1994, 1). The Cuban American National Foundation, an exile organization, maintains that 40 opposition groups exist in Cuba. The CANF also asserts that 150 human rights organizations are working on the island denouncing the abuses of the regime (Varona 1996, 22, 25). Such factors, while they indicate diminished regime support, do not come close to the extensive organized opposition that racked South Africa. During the worst of the "special period," furthermore, Cuba did not experience the supermarket or warehouse break-ins or bus burnings that were typical in Venezuela, Brazil, and other Latin American countries in the 1980s.

Table 4. Economic Sensitivity to Embargoes

	South Africa c. 1980	Cuba c. 1995
Global competition	Moderate	Sugar = 2.5% global production (1989)
Production alternatives	Import substitution industrialization	Tourism 15% GDP (1994)[a] Biotechnology 2% GDP (1994) Remittances
Industrial contribution to GDP	24.2% (1985)	24.12% (1994)[b]
Agricultural and mining contribution to GDP	19.0% (1985)	7.7% (1994)[b]

[a]Espinosa Martínez 1997, 15.
[b]Pérez Villanueva and Marquetti Nodarse 1994, 33.

This low level of civil unrest could be considered even more astonishing given the periodic distribution of arms. In 1983, after the U.S. invasion of Grenada, quantities of arms were distributed to factories, neighborhood committees, collective farms, and schools for use in the event of a U.S. invasion of Cuba. In the first half of the 1980s, some 1.5 million citizens were trained and equipped to defend the country as members of the Territorial Troop Militias. The South African comparison makes it clear that repression is not a sufficient explanation for low levels of mass protest.

It might be argued that in the face of excessive control, individual acts of protest are more likely (an argument that is refuted in the South African case) and that it is to those that we must look for evidence of opposition. First, we must not discount the safety value of emigration and exile. Often, some dissatisfaction is expressed as protest while some is expressed as emigration. A 1994 CIA report predicted a "slow-motion Mariel in which the same number of rafters [125,000] would arrive" that year as came in the mass exodus permitted by Castro in 1980 (*Washington Post* 1994, A31). Second, individual acts of protest range from acts of sabotage to artistic creations. The opposition claims that it engages in frequent acts of sabotage resulting in electrical blackouts and attacks on security agents, Communist Party members, military officers,

Table 5. Estimated Prison Population of Dissidents

South Africa	Cuba
40 per 100,000 (1985)	350–1,600 (1998)

Note: The Cuban estimates range from 350 (by human rights monitoring groups inside the country) to 1,600 (by human rights activists inside and outside the country).
Sources: South African Institute of Race Relations 1992; for Cuba: U.S. Department of State 1998, 7.

and PNR officials (Varona 1996, 22). In 1997 alone, nearly a dozen bombs exploded in hotels, restaurants, and discos in Havana and nearby resorts (*New York Times* 1998a). Central Americans arrested in 1997 were charged with cooperating with a Cuban exile in the United States in a bombing campaign (*New York Times* 1998a).

Such upheavals and individual acts of sabotage have resulted in increased levels of censorship, but they have not encountered widespread repressive police action like that which was routine in South Africa. The report on human rights practices in Cuba for 1998 issued by the U.S. Department of State maintains that, while there were no reports of politically motivated killings or disappearances, there were several credible reports of deaths from excessive use of force by national police and beatings of prisoners (1999, 2–3). The report specifically notes beatings and torture of members of the Youth for Democracy Movement. The absence of systematic data collection allows for wide-ranging estimates.

This is equally true for the number of prisoners. The 1998 estimate ranges from 350 to 1,600 (see table 5).[6] Cuba, like South Africa, has manipulated its prisoner population in response to external political pressure. In 1990, the South African government began releasing political prisoners (South African Institute for Race Relations 1992, 65). Likewise in Cuba, after the 1998 visit of Pope John Paul II, some three hundred prisoners, including one hundred political prisoners, were released (Amnesty International 1999, 1). Even in the face of opposition, a 1995 U.S. Defense Department study concluded that Cuba is stable, has no likelihood of internal rebellion, and has a military unlikely to oppose Castro. Castro retains the general support of the military and the population (U.S. House 1995, 29).[7]

In sum, the degree of regime opposition and accompanying state repression in Cuba both appear low compared to South Africa of the 1980s. Most important, to the extent that international sanctions work best when they are combined with extensive internal opposition, their chances for success are diminished in Cuba.

The comparison with South Africa illustrates that the absence of mass protest in Cuba cannot simply be attributed to the low levels of repression. But is this a historical accident? Are there some differences between socialist and capitalist societies that might explain the varying responses to the boycotts? Two such differences are suggested here, one in the realm of ideology and one in the realm of economics.

It is a grand irony that sanctions can fail because they create their own antidotes, provoking nationalistic reactions and increased solidarity (Hufbauer et al. 1985, 10). Doxey (1987) contends that sanctions work if they can enhance already existing social cleavages rather than building universal solidarity. The Cuban case offers support for this observation: the cleavages are not as deep as they were in the South African case, and the embargo offered an occasion for building solidarity. The Cuban revolution is inextricably linked with a nationalism that continually revitalizes and legitimates the socialist regime. Holmes suggests that this nationalistic form of communism was also adopted by Mao, Ho, Kim, and Tito (1997, 47).

Because the United States, the country that initiated the boycotts, is also the country that has most threatened the "nationalism" of Cuba, the nationalist ideology invigorates the revolutionary ideology. The Cuban nationalist anti-U.S. sentiment is deeply rooted in a history that dates from the 1898 occupation (Escandell and Bell Lara 1997, 18). In the recent period, the 1961 attempted Bay of Pigs invasion by Cuban exiles, the U.S. blockade during the 1962 missile crisis, and related events, such as the 1965 U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic and the 1983 invasion of Grenada, the rumored preparation for U.S. landings in Nicaragua precipitated by the November 1984 U.S. military exercises in neighboring Honduras and El Salvador (Hiatt 1984, 1), and the 1997 arrest of Cuban exiles who plotted to kill Castro during a Latin American summit meeting in Venezuela, all lend credibility to the Cuban government's declarations that Cuba is a "besieged fortress." The nationalistic ideology that accompanies the socialist regime can be considered a buffer against the boycotts.

Socialist and capitalist systems differ in many ways, but one important way is in their respective mechanisms of distribution. The former employs the apparatus of the state, and the latter the market. Despite Cuba's higher growth rates in the 1970s (Brundenius 1984, 121), the economy was insufficiently diversified under the Soviet umbrella to fend off the crisis, and it has suffered (Dello Buono 1997, 26).[8]

Nevertheless, the way a society absorbs scarcity can have a tremendous impact on the effect of the sanctions. Taking a slight liberty with the Gramscian notions of domination and hegemony, we can note that societies distribute scarcity either through force or through consent. Debt refinancing in Venezuela, Brazil, and many other Latin American

countries, for example, took its toll through market mechanisms. Scarcity flowed through the market in a somewhat regressive manner; the lower-income population suffered disproportionately.

Cuba followed a different path. The system, organized around socialist principles, had more equality built into redistribution; the 1980 Gini Coefficient was estimated at 0.26 (Díaz González 1997, 4).[9] Thus, the state could distribute scarcity in the same fashion. The "special period" was the occasion for the Cuban government to raise a degree of consciousness among average citizens regarding "equality, justice, and solidarity" (Campbell 1997, 23). Between October 1993 and May 1994, workers, unions, and assemblies discussed the crisis and its solutions. Those very same socialist structures that were the targets of the embargo helped to attenuate the crucial linkage between sanction-induced scarcity and social unrest that is assumed in the "ideal sanction model."

The Cuba-South Africa comparison suggests that boycotts may be more potent against capitalist societies because the shortages may be absorbed disproportionately by one or several groups, which then become flashpoints for protest and challenges to the regime. Thus those ideological and material structures of the Cuban regime that are eschewed by the United States may have constituted some small defense against the boycott. These factors contribute to an internal cohesion (Hernández 1989, 40) and counterbalance the voices of domestic opposition. Domínguez has rendered the same judgment: "In a broad strategic sense, U.S. policies toward Cuba have failed. U.S. punitive policies toward Cuba have not deterred the 'behavior' to which the United States has objected, and have often rallied Cubans to support their government" (1989, 24). While the sanctions against South Africa operated jointly with domestic opposition, the embargo against Cuba has not yet encountered such a parallel.[10]

Organized Elite Opposition

The international South African sanction movement had a genuine ally in various fractions of the country's capitalist class. High-ranking bank and corporate executives supported an end to apartheid. "Cracks began to appear in the white power bloc as business leaders despaired of seeing reforms implemented and repression failed, and [all the] while the white working class was losing its privileged position in the National Party" (Catholic Institute 1990, 141). Parties broke off to the right as well as the left. In 1982, for example, the Conservative party broke from the Afrikaner Nationalist party (Lundahl et al. 1992, 190), which in turn became irrevocably divided (Kotze 1998, 218). Of course, some people wanted a stiffening of the apartheid state. In the 1984 election, the

number of seats in the House of Assembly captured by the historically pro-apartheid Nationalist Party dropped to 68 percent, the lowest since 1961. In the 1989 election they dropped further to 56 percent. Thus the international sanction movement functioned alongside powerful South African allies who shared its goal of regime change.

What stands out in the South African case is that a domestic elite worked publically for an end to apartheid and that they were important architects in the transition. Cuba lacks such an active and pro–regime change elite. Nevertheless, the recent historical record offers clear models for understanding how a socialist society can give rise to processes that parallel the "fractions of capital" approach evident in the South African case. The experience of the Soviet Union suggests how a regime change could be jump-started even in the absence of fractions of private capital. The Soviet Union's economic crisis forced reforms, but factions emerged within the ruling Communist Party regarding the nature of those reforms (whether they should be radical structural reforms or not). In particular, splits have been identified between the group that managed socialism's relations with the outside world (foreign policy, counterintelligence, and foreign trade) and those who managed it internally (the party's middle-level apparatus and the KGB) (Verdery 1993, 14–15). These splinter groups (and the splintering process itself) became the handmaidens of regime change.

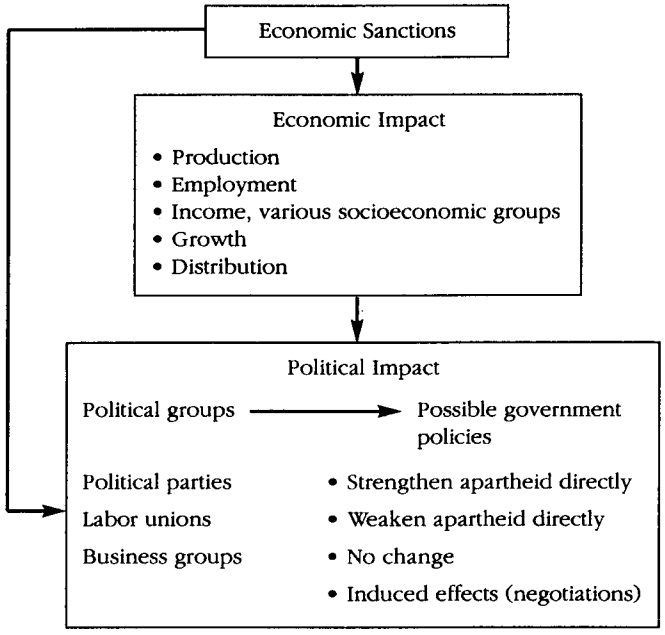
It is likely that the reforms in Cuba will produce a dual economy and that similar groups will solidify: loyal hard-liners who prefer state-owned and controlled enterprises and reformers who prefer private enterprises. Such splits are particularly likely in the dollarized industries, such as tourism and foreign direct investment (see Mesa-Lago 1994 for a comprehensive discussion of what might bring about change). Thus, without dismissing the future possibility of fractions within the ruling group, at present it is clear that the international sanctions are not paired with domestic elite opposition, as was the case in South Africa.

Evaluating the Success of Boycotts

In spite of economic vulnerability and economic hardships, the Cuban embargo has not yet given rise to macropolitical regime change. Hufbauer et al. (1985), in their analysis of 103 sanctions, beginning with the Allied blockade of Germany in World War I, find that 41 percent of sanctions with modest policy change goals were successful, compared to 18 percent with goals of major policy changes (such as regime transformation). Perhaps the macropolitical regime change criterion is too extreme, and we should look for intermediate effects of sanctions.

In his Social Accounting Matrix (SAM), Khan (1991) offers an analytical schema to judge the impact of trade sanctions against South

Figure 1. Political and Economic Impact of the Sanction Model



Source: Adapted from Khan 1991, 27.

Africa. He traces the multiplier effect of export sanctions throughout the different sectors of the economy. Khan's analysis shows that the impact of export embargoes in ten main sectors has a greater effect on whites than on all other groups (blacks, coloreds, and Asians). While the embargoes did have a negative consequence for blacks in South Africa, the consequence was greater for capital and for white labor. These, of course, were precisely the populations in a position to advocate for a regime change. Figure 1 shows Khan's schema.

In place of the more stringent criterion of total and immediate regime change, Khan enumerates four possible government policies: 1) strengthen apartheid directly, 2) weaken apartheid directly, 3) no change, and 4) induced effects (negotiations). In both South Africa and Cuba, one can identify the induced effects. Before the white-only referendum of 1992, the apartheid system had undergone some liberalization: political prisoners had been released; the ANC and other political organizations had been legalized; the Group Areas Act and the Land Acts (legislation that restricted the residential opportunities of blacks) had been repealed; and the "job reservation," legislation that restricted

blacks' job opportunities, had broken down in most industries (Lundahl et al. 1992). On the economic side, bankers, faced with the debt crisis, ambivalently called for more austere economic policies. While such policies would help reduce the deficit by discouraging imports, they would also risk alienating voters before upcoming municipal elections (*New York Times* 1988b).

Resisting the Boycott from the Inside: Induced Effects

Cuba's "special period" from 1990 to 1995 posed the severe challenge of surviving with fewer resources; of finding new trading partners who could absorb the 80 percent or so of Cuban trade that previously was absorbed by socialist countries in Eastern Europe and Asia; and, in the midst of scarcity, of creating savings for investment and growth (Carranza Valdés 1995, 17).

The Cuban government undertook economic and political reforms (Carranza Valdés 1995; Zimbalist 1992). Here we must walk a thin line between the two sides of the Cold War discourse. The U.S. side denies that Cuba has undertaken any reforms and therefore refuses to negotiate with Cuba. Wayne Smith contends that this is a "blatantly specious" argument for dismissing the reality of changes that have taken place since the 1960s in both Cuban foreign and domestic policy (1990, 11). The Cubans, in contrast to the U.S. position, maintain that the economy is finely tuned, with constant feedback and successful revision (Escandell and Bell Lara 1997, 24) and that the reforms (or "rectification," as Cubans call it) undertaken in four major areas saved Cuba from a *perestroika tropical* that would have put an end to socialism.

First, certain areas, such as tourism, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology, were targeted for growth. Second, the government, partly in an attempt to reintegrate the black market into the formal economy and partly to absorb labor surplus from the parastatals, allowed new forms of property ownership. It permitted Individual Private Enterprises (IPEs), such as home restaurants, to operate in the service sector, where owners are assessed licensing fees and heavy taxes.

Changes in the nature of agrarian property have also been forthcoming. Cuba is turning over state farms to individual cultivators and allowing some unregulated (private) food distribution. Expanses of state land have passed to cooperatives (*Unidades Básicas de Producción Cooperativa*, UBPCs) made up of state farm workers. Although ownership remains with the state, the UBPC members have usufruct of the land for an infinite period. The state continues to organize the main distribution network, using ration books to guarantee access to products when they are available. In 1994, however, it legalized private agropecuario markets (Carranza Valdés 1995, 26, 29).

Third, the state has sought foreign investment. Foreign capital was enticed by the government's willingness to forgo taxes and not to limit the expatiation of profits. Joint ventures, first allowed in 1982, became easier by 1992. By 1995, foreign investors could operate in their own right, and in a few sectors, 100 percent foreign ownership was allowed. By 1998, companies from 25 countries had opened a total of 340 joint ventures in petroleum, mining, tourism, and biotechnology (*New York Times* 1998b). Foreign investment was also visible in energy and communications. Some ventures are debt-for-equity swaps. For example, if a Japanese firm invests in tourism, the amount of debt that Cuba owes that firm is considered part of the firm's investment (Yamaoka 1993, 41). Fourth, Cuba allowed the circulation of foreign money. By dollarizing the economy in 1993, the government hoped to alleviate the scarcity of foreign exchange and to eliminate the black market.

The economic reforms unequivocally have produced modest successes. Exports were diversified to include oranges, shrimp, lobster, and medical products (non-traditional exports), and the earned foreign exchange was used for necessities ranging from technology to milk and rice. Cuba rediscovered its Latin American trading partners: while Cuba's trade with Latin America amounted to 2 percent of its total trade in 1989, those exchanges rose to 35 percent in 1997. The economy finally showed some signs of growth. "In 1994, the economy grew 2.5 percent, [even] with the declines in the sugar economy" (Triana 1996, 4). In addition to growth in sectors such as agriculture, nickel, and tourism, which averaged an annual growth rate of 13.4 percent between 1990 and 1994 (Triana 1996, 17), productivity levels have grown by 8 percent.

Cubans may call this rectification, but it is not too much of a stretch to view these economic reforms as Khan's "induced effects." At this intermediate level, then, the sanctions have had consequences for Cuba just as they did for South Africa. Furthermore, if these were the only defenses against the boycott, Cuba's future would look gloomy.

Resisting the Boycott from the Outside: Globalization

While the reforms have made a modest contribution to mitigating the effects of the Soviet collapse and the Helms-Burton law, Cuba also benefits from implementing these reforms during a new era of globalization. This international factor constitutes the second (and probably the more important) ingredient in Cuba's latitude to surmount the boycott. At least two dimensions of globalization can be identified. The globalization of capital has made international boycott compliance more difficult to achieve, and globalization has changed the very constellation of U.S. politics and U.S. interest in maintaining the boycott.

The globalization of capital has its own logic, which trumps the

national sovereignty of capital-recipient nations. This has been, of course, the theme of the dependency literature and of more contemporary work on globalization (Robinson 1996). In an ironic fashion, however, globalization simultaneously diminishes the power of those capital-sending nations. Globalization undermines the ability of sending nations to use capital as the coercive force because it undermines their historical monopoly of commodities, technology, and capital. Thus, in the early postwar period, when industrial leadership was confined to the United States and a few allies, economic boycotts held greater promise. As U.S. competitiveness declines and economic leadership becomes more dispersed around the world (Dello Buono 1997, 21), it becomes more difficult to leverage economic boycotts into political transformations. Hufbauer et al. find a period effect; namely, that 79 percent of pre-1973 sanctions were successful compared to only 34 percent of post-1973 sanctions (1985, 81).

These findings coincide with the data on the decline of U.S. hegemony. In the 1970s and 1980s, the United States faced serious competition in the global marketplace from Western Europe and Japan; Wallerstein notes that many industrial operations in those countries "had become more 'efficient' than U.S. industries" (1991, 37). By the 1990s, globalization had also expanded the set of competitors who could sell to Cuba. China in 1995 was the third-largest supplier of semifinished goods to Cuba (behind Spain and Mexico) and tied for fourth with Canada as supplier of consumer goods (again behind Spain and Mexico) (Fernández 1993, 25; CIA 1997, 12). China has also entered into joint ventures in products such as bicycles and fans.

The second aspect of globalization is the effect it has on economic interests in the United States. Recently, it has seemed to some observers that the U.S. embargo reflects the domination of Cold War–era politics over contemporary U.S. economic interests. From the perspective of the U.S. economy as a whole, however, Cuba is quite marginal (Jameson 1989, 212). Because China was considered an important market, the United States extended it most favored nation status. No parallel macroeconomic benefit can be expected from Cuba. U.S. sugar producers need not fear competition from Cuban sugar. Although Cuban sugar production averages around 5 percent of the world supply (depending on the year), it periodically has difficulty fulfilling its export agreements.

Foreign policy, however, never results from concerns about the economy as a whole; it more often stems from preferences of the ascendent economic groups. To understand fully why Mobil Oil Corporation, rice producers, and other companies have taken up the call for loosening the embargo, we must do more than simply point out that some corporations, in the face of increased foreign capital flows and international competition, are looking for new markets.

A potent analysis of the effect of globalization on domestic politics is found in the scholarship of Gourevitch (1986) and Trubovitch (1998). They are part of a tradition (such as Wallerstein, Domhoff, and Poulantzas) that connects global shifts to local ones. Both Gourevitch and Trubovitch explore the critical political realignments in the United States that have been precipitated by major shifts in international competition. For Gourevitch, shifts in foreign policy perspectives reflect the rise of new economic groups which propose new ways of managing both the U.S. economy and its integration into the global economy. Gourevitch and Trubowitz identify the 1890s, 1930s, and 1970s and 1980s as periods of shifting global competition and increased turmoil in the United States over the political dominance of different economic groups.

In his analysis of the recent shift, Trubowitz (1998) argues that the economic interests of the U.S. North and South, which formed the ruling coalition and produced both domestic and foreign policies from the New Deal to 1980, are being replaced by newer economic interests of the South and West. These new economic groups are dedicated to free trade in a way that hurts the rusting industrial northeast. Departing from that perspective, it is reasonable to suggest that the political coalition that first conceived and supported the embargo in the 1960s has lost its hegemonic control over the foreign and domestic policymaking process.

Although the data presented in this article are inadequate to answer definitively questions regarding shifts in U.S. foreign policy, some observations can be made about sectors that would be affected by trade with Cuba. On the positive side, the U.S. rice producers point out that at one time Cuba was the largest single importer of U.S. rice (in 1951 its purchases represented about half of the U.S. exports). Trade with Cuba would allow U.S. rice growers to recapture the market share of imported rice currently filled by China (Graves 1994, 95). Pork and oilseed producers also anticipate a significant benefit from having access to the Cuban market. Multinational corporations in tourism, utilities, and service could also benefit from the Cuban opening to foreign investment. On the negative side, citrus and tomato growers are less sanguine about the competition from the island economy. They already complain about the dent that Cuba has made (with its Israeli partner, the BM Corporation, a Tel Aviv–based citrus grower) in the European Union grapefruit market (U.S. House 1994, 112). Bacardi-Martini was so concerned about competition from the Cuban rum product Havana Club that it had its lawyers draft early versions of the Helms-Burton bill (which has been referred to as the Bacardi law) (Stone 1998, 7).

It is evident the global flows of capital to Cuba have swept up U.S. chief executives, who, albeit without authorization to sell, are engaged in fact-finding activities regarding commercial relations with Cuba. Caterpillar, Inc., Mobil, and Radisson Hotels were among the U.S. business firms that sent executives to discuss particulars with Castro (*New York Times* 1998b). In January 2000, a U.S. health care exhibition, the first U.S. trade show since the beginning of the embargo, brought U.S. producers in contact with "future" buyers. "Why should we lose out?" A CEO of Archer Daniels Midland was quoted as saying (*New York Times* 2000).

Sanctions do not work when businesses in the targeting country believe that they are paying too high a price (Hufbauer et al. 1985). Gourevitch and Trubowitz force us to examine more closely how the redefinition of U.S. interests and programmatic policies in regard to the Cuban embargo grew out of conflict set in motion by international developments. Both the "losers" in the new global economy—industries of the Rust Belt that perhaps could only hope for increased exports, such as tractor producers—and "winners"—industries of the Sun Belt, banking interests, investment capital, and agricultural exporters, such as rice producers—might have an interest in eliminating the embargo.

As long as the active interest in Cuba was confined to the Cuban exile community and U.S. congressional sympathizers, the situation seemed unlikely to change. Globalization has ushered in a new era and has brought new actors into the U.S.-Cuba debate. The participation of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, USA Engage, a group of 676 companies working to promote U.S. commerce (Simons 1999, 6); the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council; and large industrial and tourism companies will counterbalance the power of those for whom the Cuban boycott was simply the cost of maintaining the Cold War.

Conclusions

What can be said about the role of foreign intervention in regime transformation, or more narrowly, as the question has been posed here, about the role of economic boycotts in bringing down the Cuban regime? The first obvious conclusion is that to predict the future likelihood that sanctions will work, leverage is gained by looking at the Cuban case comparatively.

When comparing the case with that of South Africa, a number of distinctions stand out. First, in the dimension of global integration, the embargo against Cuba has a greater potential for damage given the more fragile and open nature of the Cuban economy. South Africa embarked on industrial development earlier in the century and had a capital goods sector already installed by the 1980s, when the sanctions movement gained new momentum. Cuba lacked this diversified infrastructure and became more globally integrated.

In the other dimensions, Cuba finds itself in a more advantageous position. Damage to the economy is only the first intermediate effect. That economic devastation must be experienced by different social and

political groups in a way that mobilizes them to act to change government policies. This is where the Cuban society deviates most from the South African case. Cuba lacks powerful elite opposition. While it has some mass opposition, the level of unrest is insufficient either to transform directly the regime or to discourage foreign investment (crucial in the South African boycott). The outcome has been to maintain the socialist regime with economic reforms (induced effects).

Finally, much of the political debate about the boycott is insensitive to changes in the global economy. Cuba benefits from a new globalization that now makes it more difficult for any one country to quarantine another. Cuba further benefits in that the new globalization has undermined the U.S. policy community that erected the sanctions.

Short of armies of occupation, regime changes have been the outcome of global–civil society interactions. Explanations that identify single factors, such as "they desired freedom" or "globalization made them do it," will misspecify the totality of social processes that bring about regime change. Change will come, but if comparative history offers a lesson, it will not be through economic sanctions.

Notes

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1. *Sanctions* is the word most frequently used in the South African context. Some scholars see the use of the term *embargo* as part of Cuba's propaganda, because it invokes a vision of commercial isolation maintained by military or specifically naval force. Clearly this does not describe the actions of the United States (with the exception of the Cuban missile crisis). The literature on Cuba makes frequent and interchangeable use of all three terms; therefore, so does this article.

2. The *Cuba Country Report* (Department of State 1999, 1) also argues that the economic crisis has made it difficult for the government to reward the members of CDRs (Committees for the Defense of the Revolution) for their vigilance in suppressing opposition and dissent.

3. The UDF, founded in 1983, was an antiapartheid coalition. It claimed members and affiliated associations that crossed tribal and racial lines.

4. The data used in this section come from a number of sources, including the Cuban government, international agencies (many of which receive data from the former), publications by Cuban specialists, and the Cuban and foreign press. One has to maintain a healthy skepticism regarding these data, both for the underdeveloped nature of data collection and the politically charged nature of the data themselves. The figures must be treated as approximations. Cuba, however, is certainly not alone in keeping a tight control on its data. South Africa also refused to publish trade statistics altogether after 1987 (Hanlon 1990, 75).

5. Countries that maintained economic ties with South Africa did so despite what Darrell L. Huffman, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in South Africa, referred to as the hassle factor: "polemics back home from antiapartheid spokesmen, and pressure from stockholding churches, universities, and other institutions on U.S. companies to divest themselves" (*Business Week* 1980).

6. Political prisoners clearly differ from common criminals; but in the case of South Africa, where the majority of the population was denied citizenship, the line between political and criminal could easily blur. For the purpose of the comparison with Cuba, all prisoners are also treated as if they were political prisoners. This yields the most conservative estimate possible.

7. Nestor Sánchez, one of the report's authors, is a former CIA agent and was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration.

8. Dello Buono argues that the Cuban economy, even at its peak, continued as an agro-exporter between 1975 and 1985. "As a result of its insertion in the Socialist bloc, Cuba managed to develop an advanced social formation on one end and a distorted economic formation on the other" (1997, 26).

9. The Gini Index ranges from 0 to 1; 0 represents equity of the income distribution. The Gini Index for the household distribution of other Latin American countries includes Brazil, 0.590 (1985); Chile, 0.560 (1987); Costa Rica, 0.500 (1986); and Mexico, 0.474 (1974) (Stallings and Peres 2000).

10. Many scholars have discussed the recent economic reforms and their social and political consequences. As Mesa-Lago and others suggest, these reforms are facilitating the creation of new social classes in Cuba. They include groups such as black marketeers, employees of enterprises in the hard currency sector, small entrepreneurs, the self-employed, and those who receive transfers from relatives in exile (1994, ii). Be they in the formal, informal, or illegal economy, these groups can be imagined as forming the basis of active opposition to the regime.

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Critical Debates

Japan's Economic Presence in Latin America

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Sanchís Muñoz, José. *Japón y la Argentina: historia de sus relaciones.* Buenos Aires: Editorial Latinoamericana, 1997. Notes, bibliography, appendix, 344 pp.
Ninomiya, Masato. *O desenvolvimento das relações Brasil-Japão a luz da expansão económica de região Asia-Pacífico.* São Paulo: Kaleidos Primus, 1996. Tables, notes, 219 pp.
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Di Tella, Torcuato S., and Akio Hosono, eds. *Japón/América Latina: la construcción de un vínculo.* Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1998. Tables, figures, notes, bibliography, 227 pp.
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The Japanese presence in Latin America dates back more than a century, to the era when thousands of immigrants settled mainly in Brazil and Peru. Later other Japanese came, chiefly to Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, and Paraguay. Japan's economic presence, however, is a more recent phenomenon that acquired significance after the 1960s and 1970s, when trade and Japanese investment in its various forms grew rapidly in the region. The Japanese automobiles, electronics, and machinery began dominating the consumer market with new and improved technologies. Meanwhile, as a result of its high growth rate and its accelerated development, Japan itself became economically strong. In 1975 Japan was elected a member of the Group of Seven.

Over the past 12 years or so, a body of literature has grown on Japanese-Latin American relations. The books under review here are the latest examples of this trend. They cover the historical evolution of