Exit, Voice, and Hostility in Cuba

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Albert Hirschman's categories of 'exit,' 'voice,' and 'loyalty,' which were previously applied to the analysis of emigration and protests in East Germany, are discussed and applied to the case of Cuba. Incentives for different types of action which may be derived from policy decisions regarding migration, as well as information and repression, are placed in the context of the strategic interaction between the United States and Cuban governments. A game-theoretic model of the typical Cold War conflict between the two former German regimes is compared with the US-Cuba interaction regarding migration policy. In spite of some coincidence between the two governments to prefer 'exit,' successive waves of emigration of people from Castro's Cuba to the United States in the period 1959–1995 have induced an increasing degree of cooperation between the two governments over time to close off borders.

"Latin American powerholders have long encouraged their potential enemies and potential critics to remove themselves from the scene through voluntary exile." Albert O. Hirschman, Exit, Voice, and Loyalty, 1970:60.

Under Fidel Castro's revolutionary regime, a continuous flow of people have left Cuba for the United States, while anti-Castro opposition in the island remained relatively weak. This article discusses and applies Albert Hirschman's categories of 'exit,' 'voice' and 'loyalty' to the analysis of this case. A game-theoretic analysis of the interaction between the United States and Cuba shows how governmental strategies create incentives for the different types of action. The analysis can explain the emergence of increasing cooperation despite great antagonism between the two governments.

Hirschman's categories of different types of action have proven valid not only in analyzing relations between individuals and inefficient firms or organizations, such as voluntary associations, trade unions and political parties, but also in understanding political relations between citizens and governments. A government to which its citizens can develop 'loyalty' may be analyzed as a kind of voluntary association if the citizens have not only the possibility to protest ('voice') but also a migration alternative ('exit'). Hirschman's own analysis of the interlacing between emigration movements and protests

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in the former East Germany shows that his categories are particularly useful for studying political conflicts in authoritarian regimes that are in competition with a neighbor to which citizens can try to emigrate. This obviously is also the case of Cuba in relation to the United States (see Hirschman, 1970; 1981; 1986:Ch. 4; and 1993, reproduced in 1995:Ch. 1).

The first section of this article discusses Hirschman’s scheme of relations between ‘exit,’ ‘voice,’ and ‘loyalty.’ I propose to add a fourth category, ‘hostility.’ I particularly consider how people can be motivated to different actions as a result of interactions between rulers of two regimes in competition. Next, the analysis of the interaction between the United States and Cuban governments shows how different types of action have been induced among Cubans dissatisfied with Castro’s regime. A game-theoretic model of this interaction and its outcomes is presented, which are compared with the typical Cold War conflict between the two former German regimes. In the third section, successive waves of ‘exit’ or emigration of people from Castro’s Cuba to the United States in the period 1959–1995 are placed in the context of the strategic interaction between the two governments. Finally, the increasing degree of cooperation between the United States and Cuba over time to prevent ‘exit’ is discussed.

ENLARGING HIRSCHMAN’S SCHEME

Beginning with a preliminary conceptual discussion of the different ways of action and their relationships, two dimensions can be distinguished: 1) the actors’ motives – relative satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the present state of things in light of a conceivable alternative; 2) the action target – the present state or the alternative. In the case of Cuba, the present state of things is represented by an authoritarian government and a socialist economy, while a conceivable alternative, according to the information available to Cuban citizens, is a democratic regime with a capitalist economy such as the one represented by the United States.

According to this scheme, relative dissatisfaction with the existing state can induce two actions: ‘voice,’ which is an action against the existing state, and ‘exit,’ which is an action in favor of the alternative. Similarly, relative satisfaction or at least acquiescence with the existing state can be associated with two actions: ‘loyalty,’ which is an action in favor of the existing state, as presented in Hirschman’s original scheme, and ‘hostility,’ a term that I introduce to define an action against the alternative (manifested in anti-American and anti-imperialist sentiments). In other words, there are two possible actions
regarding the existing state (the Cuban regime in our analysis): voice (against) and loyalty (in favor), and two possible actions regarding the alternative (the United States): exit (in favor) and hostility (against) (see Figure I for a graphic presentation). These definitions can help to clarify some relations of rivalry, complementarity, substitution and exclusion between the different political actions. As discussed by Hirschman, ‘voice’ and ‘exit’ may be rival or complementary actions on the part of the individual dissatisfied with the existing state. Both actions express a similar motive of dissatisfaction, but they are addressed to opposite targets: against the existing state (voice) or in favor of the alternative (exit).

As any authoritarian ruler, including Fidel Castro, knows, ‘exit’ may grow at the expense of contributions to collective ‘voice,’ as potential critics leave to exile. Yet ‘exit’ may cease to be available or become extremely costly for the individual because of a restrictive decision in migration policy, as when Cuba closes its borders to prevent emigration of the most skilled people, or when the United States raises new barriers to immigrants. A high cost of ‘exit’ for the individual can create incentives to consider ‘voice,’ and being involved in a political protest action may deter people from emigrating.

In spite of this usual trade-off, ‘exit’ and ‘voice’ can be complementary forces when people become extremely pessimistic about a regime’s future performance in comparison with the alternative, as Hirschman observed for East Germany in the late 1980s and we will discuss here for Cuba. At some point of deterioration, a new wave of emigration can have the effect of diffusing information regarding the widespread dissatisfaction with the existing regime. This can increase people’s expectations about the efficacy of their action, weaken the regime’s resistance to complaints, and induce other people to protest against it.

Analogous relations can be established between ‘loyalty’ and ‘hostility’ for individuals satisfied with the existing state: at moderate levels of relative satisfaction with the present regime, they are rival actions, but they can become complementary actions for highly satisfied people – extremely proud patriots may also be aggressively hostile to strangers.

In contrast, ‘voice’ and ‘loyalty’ can be substitutive actions, since they express different motives – dissatisfaction and satisfaction – but they are addressed to the same target, the existing state (in our case, the Cuban regime). Likewise, ‘exit’ and ‘hostility’ can also become substitutive actions. When would-be emigrants run up against some restrictive U.S. migration policy, their frustration and resentment may convert the desire for ‘exit’ into ‘hostility’ towards the alternative state.
Finally, some pairs of actions correspond to opposite motives (satisfaction and dissatisfaction) and are addressed to opposite targets. 'Voice' and 'hostility' are contrasting and mutually exclusive collective actions: 'voice' is a form of 'hostility' to the existing regime; 'hostility' is 'voice' against the alternative. The members of the vocal opposition to the Cuban regime develop action contrary to those Cubans voicing their hostile opposition to the United States, and in this context of frontal conflict it seems very difficult for any individual to shift sides. Similarly, 'exit' and 'loyalty' are contrasting individual actions, since 'exit' or emigration to the United States implies disloyalty to Cuba and a new 'loyalty' to the alternative regime.

Figure 1. Four Types of Political Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTOR'S MOTIVE</th>
<th>ACTION TARGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction</td>
<td>Existing state (Cuba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>substitute</td>
<td>VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rival</td>
<td>complementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>LOYALTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rival</td>
<td>complementary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE U.S.-CUBA CONFLICT.

We have seen that different types of action can be induced by different public policies implemented by the rulers both of the existing regime and of the alternative. United States and Cuban policies inducing 'exit' and 'voice' can be analyzed in the following way.

U.S. Preferences

U.S. preferences regarding political relations between the Cuban citizens and Fidel Castro's regime were defined in the early 1960s, mainly for foreign policy motives. After a short period of nonintervention in Cuban politics, and at the initiative of the president (whose decisions we will provisionally refer to as the United States'), the United States adopted a series of measures designed...
to overthrow Castro and to prevent revolutionary extension or contagion in Latin America. U.S. policy regarding Cuba was to promote both ‘voice’ against the Cuban regime and ‘exit’ from the island.

U.S. motives were strongly determined by its Cold War with the USSR, especially after Castro declared his regime to be socialist and turned to the Soviets for protection in 1961. However, the United States has maintained its interventionist policy regarding Cuba after the Cuban regime’s failure in its attempts to extend revolution to other countries, the end of the Cold War, and the dissolution of the USSR. U.S. policy regarding Cuba differs somewhat from the typical Cold War conflict, which can be represented by the policy of West Germany (supported by the United States) regarding East Germany (the conflict analyzed by Albert Hirschman, as has been pointed out above). U.S. policy regarding Cuba is related not only to the Cold War, but also reflects traditional U.S. interventionist foreign policy in the Caribbean, one that was established long before the socialist orientation of Castro’s government. U.S. policy could be explained by the proximity of Cuba and the resulting historical tendency of the United States to dominate the island, which was virtually an American protectorate from the end of the Spanish colonial dominion in 1898 on (for U.S. policy toward Cuba, see Bender, 1981; Brenner, 1988; Mitchell, 1992; Arboleya, 1996).

Three basic elements define U.S. policy regarding Cuba since the early 1960s: open immigration, commercial embargo, and belligerent information policies. U.S. open migration policy toward Cubans started formally with the Cuba Refugee Program in February 1961, which was extended with the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act one year later and with the Cuban Adjustment of Status Act in 1966. These measures followed the pattern of previous Cold-War decisions, such as the Walter-McCarran Act approved in 1952 to benefit emigrés from Central and East European Communist regimes. Since the 1960s, U.S. migration policy toward Cubans has generously welcomed emigrés as “political refugees,” even illegal immigrants, and has promoted by affirmative action their professional and social inclusion in American society (Masud-Piloto, 1996).

This U.S. policy strongly favoring ‘exit’ from Cuba has contrasted markedly with U.S. migration policy regarding Mexico and other Central

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2I will refer to the policy of the United States as if it were a single actor, although governments can speak with varied voices and must cope with divisions even within their own ranks. In parallel to the prominence of foreign policy motives in U.S. migration policy regarding Cuba, the president has been the most relevant actor. A shift in this role was perceived when domestic motives became more relevant.
American and Caribbean countries, to whose emigrants the U.S. has often closed its borders. In the words of Christopher Mitchell (1992:23–24), “For the most part, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s, migrants from ‘adversary’ governments (especially Cuba and [after 1979] Nicaragua) tended to be welcomed by U.S. policy. By contrast, U.S. government agencies frequently sought to deter or deport migrants who asserted political motivations and came from nations with regimes friendly to the U.S.”

Presumably, two effects were expected from this policy encouraging ‘exit.’ First, it would drain human capital from Cuba in order to undermine its revolutionary experiment and its potential example for other Latin American countries. Second, it would organize ‘voice’ among Cuban exiles, an attempt that, although it dramatically failed at the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, was transformed into different forms of U.S. government cooperation with anti-Castro groups in Miami.

This migration policy, initially inspired by American foreign policy, has further created some domestic problems in the United States. Open borders for Cuban refugees has been a policy strongly supported by previous Cuban residents and recent immigrants. But it has set a precedent for major migrations from other countries in the area, arousing alarm regarding illegal immigrants among residents in some states and contributing to an increasingly hostile public opinion concerning immigration in the United States.

U.S. policies have come to favor ‘voice’ over ‘exit.’ This contrasts with the strong policy of openness sustained by West Germany against the barriers to emigration raised by the Eastern Communist regime. In this, the U.S. government has held back from the desires of anti-Castro leaders in exile in Miami (whose preferences were similar to those of West Germans toward their Eastern counterpart). However, while increasingly hesitant about promoting ‘exit,’ the United States has not implemented a unilateral closing of borders to Cuban emigrés. The United States has come to introduce barriers in its migration policy toward Cuba conditioned to parallel restrictive decisions by the Cuban government. The United States has shown a distinct interest in not arousing anti-American ‘hostility’ among dissatisfied Cuban citizens by any unilateral decision to close off borders. As will be documented below, U.S. reluctance to treat Cuba like any other Latin American country has led the American government to the paradox of cooperating with the Cuban government on joint restrictions over migration movements.

The political action by Cuban citizens most preferred by the United States is thus ‘voice’ – indirectly promoted by accumulative, increasingly
harsh embargo measures. The priority given to embargo and internal ‘voice’ has the advantage for the United States of working for Castro’s fall and the opportunity to reintroduce American influence in the island without incurring the costs of receiving massive numbers of migrants in the United States.

Cuba’s Preferences

In order to define President Fidel Castro’s political preferences (which I will refer to as Cuba’s) in its interplay with the United States, we must consider the Cuban regime’s direct repression of internal ‘voice,’ its highly restrictive information policy, and its manipulative migration strategy.

Cubans’ lack of sound information about the democratic, capitalist world in general and the United States in particular has produced the unexpected effect that many dissatisfied Cubans tend to idealize the American way of life and nourish hope of starting a new life in the United States. In his analysis of the conflict between the two German regimes, Albert Hirschman insightfully noted that access to Western media, and particularly to West German television, paradoxically restrained ‘exit’ among East Germans, since everybody could have a “vicarious, daily escape” to the West by watching television. In contrast, places like the city of Dresden became important centers of ‘voice’ in 1989, because among other reasons the geography blocked reception of West German television. Misinformed about life in the West, Dresden’s people tended to idealize it more than other East Germans and to develop stronger pressures for change (Hirschman, 1995:19–20, 30). Similarly, it can be argued that Cuban censorship of foreign media has indirectly promoted dissatisfied Cubans’ wishes to emigrate to the unknown, somewhat idealized United States.

Castro’s preference has been to promote ‘loyalty’ to the regime and to prevent emigration of skilled workers, professionals and technicians, whose departure could damage the Cuban economy. But to the extent that Castro’s regime has not delivered according to its ideological promises, and especially in periods of economic crisis, it has preferred to promote ‘exit’ rather than incur the risk of facing massive internal voices of protest. In this preference, Cuban rulers differ from the East German rulers’ priority to prevent the ‘exit’ of its citizens in order to reinforce the economic performance of the socialist experiment. Castro’s policy seems rather closer to other Latin American regimes’ policies in poor countries that are subject to massive emigration of its disenchanted citizens. As has been noted by Jorge Domínguez (1992:53), from the beginning of the revolution in 1959 “Cuba’s initial decision was to
allow emigration. In contrast to the East German government’s decision in 1961 to build a wall across the city of Berlin to prevent emigration, the Cuban government chose to export the opposition in order to consolidate the regime, even at the cost of economic and social dislocation.”

Certainly the Cuban government would prefer to maintain control over its citizens with the help of a unilateral U.S. restrictive policy on migration, a situation that would allow Castro’s government to blame the United States for blocking Cubans’ exit from the island and might induce resentment and ‘hostility’ toward the United States among frustrated emigrants. However, if the United States generously maintains open borders to Cuban emigres, the Cuban regime would have to act unilaterally to prevent emigration and run the risk of provoking internal ‘voice’ against the regime. Faced with this dilemma, Castro’s government tends to prefer ‘exit’ and to open its borders to the United States.

Writing about managers of an inefficient public enterprise, Hirschman (1970:44–45, 59–60) noted that they “may be less sensitive to the loss of revenue due to the switch of customers to a competing mode than to the protests of an aroused public that has a vital stake in the service, has no alternative, and will therefore ‘raise hell.’ In the same way, the rulers of an inefficient authoritarian government may be less sensitive to the additional deterioration of its performance owing to emigration of its more alert and potentially activist citizens than to their desperate protests. In Hirschman’s words, “Those who hold power in the lazy monopoly [or the inefficient dictatorship] may actually have an interest in creating some limited opportunities for exit on the part of those whose voice might be uncomfortable.” When successful, this policy will result in “an oppression of the weak by the incompetent.”

**U.S.-Cuba Interaction**

According to the above analysis, the United States and Cuba have opposite preferences regarding ‘voice.’ It is the political action most preferred by the United States for overthrowing Castro and reestablishing American influence in the island, and the development most feared by the Cuban regime. ‘Hostility’ to the United States, the contrasting and mutually exclusive action, is logically preferred by the Cuban regime and least preferred by the United States. Obviously, these contradictory preferences regarding different types of action correspond to the U.S. desire to induce dissatisfaction and the Cuban revolutionary regime’s desire to promote satisfaction among Cubans.

Yet both governments can share a preference for a ‘lesser evil.’ Both can accommodate ‘exit,’ an action demonstrating some Cuban citizens’ dissatis-
faction with the present state of things. For Cuba, opening its borders to 'exit' may be a safety valve that prevents its least preferred alternative, 'voice,' although at the cost of undermining socialist performance. For the United States, opening its borders to allow Cubans to vote with their feet against Communism may show the failure of the Cuban revolutionary experiment and prevent 'hostility' among would-be emigrés, although at the cost of domestic tensions between older residents and new immigrants. Both Cuba and the United States would prefer to close their borders to migration in order to avoid domestic difficulties. But this would require the two governments to coordinate their measures to restrict migration, since any unilateral decision would allow the other party to blame the former for the frustration that would result.

The paradox is that while the United States has adopted an exceptional migration policy toward Cuba (on the basis of Cold-War motives and its peculiar foreign policy interests in the Caribbean), Cuba's adopting a more typical Latin American country's migration strategy (in spite of the exceptional nature of its revolutionary regime in the region) gives Castro's government some advantage in its interplay with the United States. Specifically, Cuba has had incentives to promote successive waves of emigration to the United States in the expectation of obtaining a cooperative response by the United States toward mutual closing of borders. This has induced the United States to modify to some extent the exceptional, foreign policy-oriented migration policy it has pursued toward the Cuban government.

The strategic interaction between the United States and Cuban governments regarding migration can be modeled with the help of game theory. Different outcomes (and the corresponding induction of different types of action) can be produced by different strategies of 'open' and 'closed' borders. According to the discussion just presented, U.S. and Cuban preferences regarding these outcomes are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>UNITED STATES AND CUBA PREFERENCE ORDERS REGARDING MIGRATION POLICY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordinal value</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed</td>
<td>closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Open: open borders, permissive migration policy. Closed: closed borders, restrictive migration policy. Ordinal values indicate preferences regarding outcomes from the most preferred 4 to the least preferred 1.
The interaction between the two governments is presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Migration Game between Cuba and the United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Each cell symbolizes an outcome produced by two actors' choices and its values according to Table 1. The value on the left corresponds to the actor on the left (Cuba), and the value on the right corresponds to the actor above (U.S.). In a one-shot game, actors have dominant strategies producing the inefficient outcome 2, 2; through iterated plays, mutual cooperation can emerge and produce the efficient outcome 3, 3.

This game is a Prisoner's Dilemma, which has an inefficient equilibrium at outcome 2, 2, located at the upper-left cell of the matrix, and an efficient outcome at 3, 3, the lower-right cell.

At the efficient outcome 3, 3, both actors maintain 'closed' strategies which prevent 'exit' of dissatisfied Cubans from the island. If this is the initial state, pressures to emigrate and illegal flights may push the Cuban government to choose to open the borders. This move transfers the outcome to the upper-right cell of the matrix, where Cuba obtains its highest value of 4 and the United States its lowest value of 1. Logically, the United States responds with an analogous move to open its borders, producing the equilibrium outcome 2, 2, which induces massive 'exit.'

If the inefficient equilibrium outcome 2, 2 ('exit') is the initial state, no actor has incentives to alter its strategy unilaterally and first. If Cuba did so, closing its borders unilaterally, it would transfer the outcome to the lower-left cell, where Cuba obtains its lowest value of 1 and the United States its highest value of 4. Repression of would-be emigrants might then induce people to raise their 'voice' against the restrictive Cuban regime. If, on the contrary, the United States closed its borders unilaterally, it would transfer the outcome to the upper-right cell, where it obtains its lowest value of 1 and Cuba its highest value of 4. Resentment among frustrated would-be emigrants might then induce 'hostility' toward the United States.

When 'exit' is induced by mutual 'open' strategies, every government thus prefers that the other government close its borders first. Only cooperation...
between the two governments can produce simultaneous, mutually beneficial moves to close off borders, transferring the outcome of the game to the efficient outcome 3, 3.

The existence of two different outcomes is a significant measure of potential instability. Yet, according to well-established findings in game-theory, higher degrees of cooperation tend to emerge with the iteration of the interaction and the actors' learning through experience. If the game is played only once or a previously known number of times, the inefficient outcome must be expected. But if the interaction is repeated and actors can expect to find themselves in the same strategic situation again and again, they will tend to cooperate in order to achieve the efficient outcome. “Under suitable circumstances, cooperation can develop even between antagonists” (Axelrod, 1984:87).

This seems to have been the case after the successive waves of ‘exit’ from Cuba to the United States that started in 1959, 1965, 1980 and 1994. The first waves of emigration were dealt with by the United States government using noncooperative strategies, as if they were single-shots of the game, probably on the basis of expecting the overthrow of Castro’s regime in the near future. Yet successive interactions led to formal agreements strongly committing the two governments to maintain closed borders.

*The Typical Cold War Game in Germany*

In order to be compared with the interaction between the United States and Cuba, the interaction between the East German and the West German governments, which was analyzed by Hirschman, is tentatively modeled in Figure 3. It can be presumed that West Germany preferred above all to encourage ‘voice’ against the East German Communist regime, but it would rather prefer to welcome fugitives from Communism (‘exit’) than close its borders. In this ordering, West Germany was more prone to accept ‘exit’ than the United States in its interaction with Cuba, a difference that is easily explained by the extremely strong historical, cultural and family links between Germans living on the two sides of the Berlin Wall. Reunification of Germans was obviously a more appealing objective for the West German government than is increasing the number of Cubans in the United States for the White House. ‘Exit’ was, in contrast, least preferred by the East German government. The German Communist regime showed a strong priority for preventing emigration of skilled workers in order to bolster the economic performance of socialism. This may be explained by the high level of competition between the two
German regimes. In this, East Germany differed from the inefficient Cuban regime, which fears 'voice' above all.

Figure 3. Migration Game between East Germany and West Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>West Germany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed</td>
<td>2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: West Germany has a dominant strategy to 'open' borders (attracting immigration) to which East Germany chooses to 'close.' Once at the outcome 2,4, no actor has an incentive to alter its strategy.

The interaction presented in Figure III has a single equilibrium outcome, symbolized by the lower-left cell of the matrix with values 2, 4. At this outcome, East Germany closes its borders while West Germany maintains its open borders. As a consequence, illegal emigration from East to West is costly and relatively low. But when the performance of the East German regime worsens and people's dissatisfaction spreads widely, pressures to emigrate feed 'voices' of protest, as finally happened in 1989.

As can be seen, in the typical Cold War German interaction, the emigrating Communist country closes its borders while the receiving West Germany maintains its borders open. In contrast, in the interaction between the Cuban Communist regime and the United States, both mutual opening and mutual closing of borders are possible outcomes, thus giving Cuban and U.S. governments some room for strategic maneuvering and cooperation to their mutual benefit.

'EXIT' WAVES FROM CUBA

Several successive waves of people's 'exit' from Cuba to the United States have developed since the 1959 revolution. As we have seen, Castro's government chose to favor emigration from the beginning. The first wave of Batista supporters and other counterrevolutionaries was openly welcomed by the U.S. government, which provided them resettlement, welfare payments, language training, help in job search, medical aid, and school assistance “well above
what was available then to the U.S. citizens and residents or to other migrants to the U.S.” (Domínguez, 1992:39). After nearly four years of continuous flow, movement of Cubans to the United States was interrupted on October 22, 1962, during the crisis provoked by the American government’s discovery of Soviet missiles in the island. The Cuban government then closed all airports to commercial traffic. But once the crisis was over, the U.S. government responded cooperatively by not resuming flights. A total of 354,963 Cubans emigrated in the period 1959–1962, mostly to the United States.

After this initial massive flight, three generational waves of emigration, approximately one every fifteen years, have been encouraged by the Cuban government. They were the Camarioca boatlift in 1965, the Mariel exodus in 1980, and the rafters’ crisis in 1994. On each of these three occasions, Castro’s government took the initiative in opening its borders to ‘exit.’ Each time the United States first responded by welcoming the emigrés but eventually sought some accommodation with the Cuban government in order to stop the flow of people to the United States.

The iteration of this interaction between the two governments through time seems to have produced a learning process in the United States, which has become less eager to respond to Cuban provocations and has moved more readily to cooperate with Castro’s government to close the borders to would-be emigrants. As a consequence of this increasing cooperation between the two governments in the successive ‘exit’ waves, the number of emigrants from Cuba has been lower at each wave and the duration of restrictive migration policies of both the United States and Cuba following each episode has been markedly longer. As the situation stands, the United States seems to have settled on a more restrictive migration policy.

Camarioca 1965

The first generational wave of emigration started in September, 1965, when the revolutionary regime was facing increasing difficulties fulfilling some of the initial expectations. Castro announced that “whoever wanted to leave should do so.” He also sent a first ‘friendly’ message to members of the Cuban exile community in the United States with the aim of inducing domestic pressures on the White House to open U.S. borders to fleeing Cubans. Castro specifically announced that as of October 10, 1965 the Cuban port of Camarioca would be open to the boats of “Cuban exiles” who wished to return to pick up relatives.

The U.S. government reacted to this move by opening its borders to Cuban refugees. But at the same time the United States was concerned about restrain-
ing such an unexpected sealift and in fact it tried to induce Castro to stop the flow of people. For a while, both the U.S. and the Cuban governments attempted to induce each other to close off the borders, but, for the strategic reasons presented above, neither wanted to do it first. As Wayne S. Smith, the Chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana at that time, explained, “We [the United States] assumed that Castro wanted us – indeed, was trying to force us – to close off the sealift and to announce that we would accept no more refugees. The onus would then have been squarely on us, and from that point forward Castro would have crowed that not he but the U.S. refused to permit emigration.” As discussed above, a unilateral decision to close the borders would have induced ‘hostility’ toward the United States. But when the U.S. government moved to induce Castro to close off the sealift, it miscalculated the advantages of ‘exit’ for the Cuban regime. The U.S. government proposed to organize a refugee airlift with several flights a day, expecting that Castro “would reject it. Instead, he immediately accepted and pressed for discussion of the mechanics” (Smith, 1987:91).

The United States was trapped by its own initiative. The people remaining in the Camarioca compound were transported to Florida on boats chartered by the United States, and regular air transportation of Cuban refugees was organized at the expense of the U.S. government. The so-called Freedom Flights initiated by President Johnson were maintained at two flights a day, five days a week, for almost eight years. A total of 265,644 Cubans emigrated to the United States by sea and air in the period 1965–1973.

Mariel 1980

The second wave of ‘exit’ started in 1980. Cubans leaving the island by illegal means were welcomed by the Cuban exiles as heroes and given political asylum by the U.S. government. Cuban Vice-President Carlos-Rafael Rodríguez explicitly threatened the Chief of the U.S. Interest Section in Havana with “opening a new Camarioca,” warning that “if your [U.S.] government wants people in small boats, we can give you more than you bargained for.” The threat was repeated a few days later by President Castro himself in a public speech in which he urged the United States to learn from previous experience and to cooperate against exit: “We have asked them [the U.S. government] to take measures . . . and we hope they do. If not, we would then have to take our own measures. We have reminded them that we once opened Camarioca . . . . We hope we don’t have to take such measures again” (Smith, 1987:203; Larzalere, 1988:118).
The U.S. government did not yield to this threat because, as we have shown, it was reluctant to close its borders to Cuban refugees unilaterally and first. The conflict escalated in April, when up to 10,856 Cubans crowded onto the grounds of the Peruvian Embassy, requesting asylum. As the Cuban government expected, the U.S. government initially reacted by confirming that its borders were open. President Carter declared that his “heart went to the freedom-loving Cubans,” but he announced that the United States would accept only 3,500 Cubans as refugees.

Fidel Castro forced the situation again calling the “Cuban Overseas Community” to come to Cuba by boat to pick up refugees, an invitation widely repeated by radio broadcasts from Havana to Florida. High-ranking officials of the Cuban government confirmed to exile representatives in Havana that Castro had no objection to the refugees leaving Cuba. The government then opened the port of Mariel to privately owned boats of Miami exiles to bring back new emigres. The Cuban government also encouraged ‘exit’ by other means, organizing massive parades in support of Castro in which the crowd repeatedly shouted “Go away!” “Traitors!” “Scum!” “Worms!” and the like to would-be exiles.

Probably remembering the miscalculation that led the U.S. government to organize a massive and costly airlift of Cuban refugees fifteen years before, the White House this time was more reluctant to assume responsibility for organizing the flight. The U.S. State Department warned boaters that bringing illegal aliens to the United States was a felony punishable with heavy penalties and unsuccessfully asked the Cuban exile leaders to stop the uncontrolled exodus. After two Cuban jet aircraft attacked and sank a Royal Bahamian Defense Force patrol that was helping emigrant boats, President Carter announced a five-point program to end the boatlift, including a resolve to punish boaters who violated the order and to treat arriving Cubans no more as refugees but simply as “entrants.” The U.S. Coast Guard then established a blockade at sea and from June on, the flow of refugees dramatically decreased. While this movement was happening in 1980, 124,770 Cubans emigrated to the United States.

Rafters 1994

The fall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989–1991 dramatically worsened the economic situation in Cuba. In 1990, the Spanish and other embassies in Havana were occupied by crowds of would-be emigrants seeking asylum. Some Cubans began again to
hijack boats to Florida. In the summer of 1994, the tidal wave of rafters trying to leave Cuba by illegal means became massive.

On August 5, Cuban policemen tried to prevent new flights by attacking several thousand people who had gathered on the pier (Malecón) of Havana, apparently drawn by a false rumor that a flotilla of boats from Miami was on its way to pick up people seeking to leave. A spontaneous demonstration by young people then broke out. People repeatedly shouted “Liberty!,” “Down with Fidel!” and broke windows of some hotels and stores. There were 295 arrests. For the first time under Castro’s regime, a people’s movement in favor of ‘exit’ joined together with hitherto unheard ‘voices’ of protest.

There followed a new sequence of threats, moves and countermoves between the Cuban and U.S. governments, which was accelerated by the new interlacing of ‘exit’ and ‘voice’ on the Cuban side. On the night of August 5, after the demonstration at the Havana pier, Fidel Castro appeared on TV to warn that “if the United States does not take quick and sufficient measures to stop incentives for illegal exit from the country, then we will feel the duty to give instructions to the Coast Guard not to bar any vessel from leaving Cuba” (reproduced in Granma, August 25, 1994). At the same time, however, the Cuban government (through a statement by Gen. Ulises Rosales del Toro) proposed to the U.S. government “honest negotiations” to “jointly seek a solution” (Granma, August 25, 1994).

On August 12, Fidel Castro ordered the police to “make as flexible as possible the activity of the Coast Guard regarding illegal exit from the country,” not to shoot at all, not to bar any vessel but “to deliver them water and food if they are in critical condition,” to provide oil to rafters, and not to prosecute “conspiracies to leave” in order to avoid any turmoil (these confidential instructions were later published in Granma, August 26, 1994). Castro again called upon Cuban exiles in Miami to go to the island to pick up refugees.

Having learned from previous experiences and facing new domestic inducements, the U.S. government reacted this time much more quickly than on the previous occasions. President Clinton announced his intention to stop illegal immigration and ordered the Coast Guard to rescue and transport rafters to the U.S. military base at Guantánamo, Cuba. The two governments soon reached an agreement to prevent departures from Cuba and, in May 1995, it was established that Cubans would be treated like all other immigrants in the United States (Johnson, 1995).

Again, U.S. and Cuba cooperation to prevent ‘exit’ paralleled new U.S. measures indirectly favoring ‘voice.’ On the one side, military ships and air-
craft from both the United States and Cuba openly cooperated in the common purpose of preventing Miami groups from helping would-be emigrants. At the same time, President Clinton agreed to sign the Helms-Burton Act, which hardened the commercial blockade of the Cuban economy.

**COOPERATING WITH THE ENEMY**

The sequence of moves between the Cuban and the U.S. governments at every exit wave may be summarized as follows.

1) Periodic pressures for ‘exit’ from Cuba grow among its dissatisfied citizens, especially after worsening living conditions and as new generations come of age. At some point, an increasing number of Cubans emigrate illegally; they are welcomed by the United States.

2) The Cuban government warns the United States to close its borders to prevent illegal ‘exit.’ Cuba threatens the United States to allow a massive flow of emigres if it does not respond satisfactorily.

3) The U.S. government maintains its strategy of opening the borders to Cuban fugitives. As promised, the Cuban government also opens its borders, allowing an exit wave (typically with the help of Miami exiles).

4) The U.S. and the Cuban governments try to induce each other to close off their borders unilaterally and first.

5) After a time (shorter at every iteration of the interaction), the two governments agree to mutually close the borders to prevent emigration.

6) While reducing in this way incentives to ‘exit’ from the island, the U.S. government steps up external pressures on Cuba to promote internal ‘voice’ against Castro’s regime (like Radio Martí or embargo measures).

Increasing U.S. reluctance to accept flows of Cuban refugees may be noted at every wave. In 1959, the US government applied to Cuba the same Cold-War policy of openly accepting emigres that had previously been adopted in regard to East European Communist regimes. In 1965, the United States reacted to the Camarioca boatlift by organizing regular air transportation of Cuban refugees for about eight years, but this measure seems to have originated in a strategic miscalculation. In 1980, at the Mariel exodus, the United States was much more reluctant to organize massive emigration. Facing the passivity of the U.S. administration, a boatlift was maintained for more than five months by privately owned boats of Cuban exiles with the support of the Cuban government. At first, the Mariel newcomers to the United States were not given the status of refugees but the ambiguous one of “entrants.” In 1994, at the rafters crisis, the United States reacted quickly –
not to support the rafters but to put an end to the massive 'exit,' and to cooperate with the Cuban government in closing off the borders.

A parallel turn in American public opinion against immigrants made the initial foreign policy motives underlying U.S. policy toward Cuba give way to increasing concerns about domestic politics. This shift has also given a more active role to the Congress, relative to the White House, in initiating new measures both to restrict migration and to stiffen the commercial embargo and information policy.

As a consequence of this evolution, the number of Cuban fugitives welcomed in the United States has been lower at every wave. A total number of 858,905 Cubans emigrated to the United States in 1959–1995. This is more than 12 percent of Cuba's population at the beginning of the period, a very high rate comparable only to the rate of emigrants from the Dominican Republic in the same period. It is much higher than rates from Haiti and all the countries in Central America, which are around 4–5 percent (calculations are based on figures given by the sources mentioned in Table 2). On the other side, the proportion of emigrated Cubans is lower than those escaping from East Germany during the period of open borders, 1949–1961 (about 17% of the initial population in one third of the time), although it is higher than rates during the more similar period of the Berlin wall, 1962–1989 (data for Germany in Hirschman, 1995).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>'Open' Borders</th>
<th>'Closed' borders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959–62</td>
<td>215,323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963–64</td>
<td>74,992</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965–73</td>
<td>343,507</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974–79</td>
<td>26,673</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>124,770</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–93</td>
<td>42,240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994–95</td>
<td>31,400</td>
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</tbody>
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Cooperation between the U.S. and the Cuban governments on migration issues has already been commented upon, particularly by Jorge Domínguez (1992). But the analysis presented in this paper differs from previous work in establishing the conditions, ways and content of that cooperation more precisely, as well as placing it in the context of the two governments’ strategic conflict. In contrast to previous interpretations, we see now that promoting ‘exit’ by opening borders does not require cooperation, but it is an outcome.
derived from strategic decisions by the U.S. and the Cuban governments in a noncooperative, competitive interaction. It is when massive exit occurs that cooperation is induced in order to put an end to this outcome and to close off borders. Both countries wish to avoid a unilateral move to close the borders because of the risk of provoking resentment among would-be emigrants, either in form of ‘hostility’ toward the United States or ‘voice’ against the Cuban regime. In order to avoid these results, both governments are interested in making simultaneous restrictive decisions against migration. This requires communication between the U.S. and the Cuban governments, either by informal signals or at formal negotiations.

REFERENCES


