

[Cuba Libre](#) [1]

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Fidel Castro's retirement seems to offer a 'once in a dictator's lifetime' opportunity for Cuba to escape the injustices of Communism. However, with reports that brother Raul is of equal mind to Fidel, freedom could be as far away as ever. With the internal strangleholds over internal revolution, this may be a good time for the US government to change their policy towards Cuba, undermining the new leadership through trade and engagement.

If life is to improve for the people of Cuba, the US should consider ending its long-term trade embargo. It could be the necessary catalyst to move the country from the dead-end limitations of Venezuelan oil money to the limitless wonders of free and varied trade. However, President Bush (like those before him) is in a tight corner. The Cuban-American lobby puts strong pressure on the US to continue its embargo, a valid position in view of the many freedoms taken for granted in the US but routinely trampled upon by the Cuban government.

However, efforts like the Condozeela Rice led *United States Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba* (CAFC) have failed. The best way to put pressure on the inadequacies of the Cuban system is to trade with them. Such a position was [argued convincingly](#) [3] in the *Financial Times* last month. Cuba's future may not come from the withered seeds of its home grown kleptocracy, the passing of power from dictator to dictator. Instead it could come with the inauguration of a new President and a change of US policy: from the energised democracy, ninety miles across the Straights of Florida.

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