

In major concession to Trump, Cuban government opens island to investment by Miami exile capitalists

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The Cuban government is openly courting US corporations and Cuban-American exile capital, marking a decisive step toward transforming the island into a semi-protectorate of American imperialism, with catastrophic consequences for Cuban workers.

In an exclusive interview with NBC News published Monday, Cuba's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Trade Minister Oscar Pérez-Oliva Fraga announced that "Cuba is open to having a fluid commercial relationship with US companies and also with Cubans residing in the United States and their descendants."

"This goes beyond the commercial sphere," Pérez-Oliva, the grandnephew of Fidel and Raúl Castro added. "It also applies to investments—not only small investments, but also large investments, particularly in infrastructure."

This is the first time a Cuban official of Pérez-Oliva's stature—widely described as Cuba's "economic czar"—has used a major US network to directly woo corporations and the Miami exile layer.

Beyond the symbolism of a Castro relative inviting the exiled bourgeoisie, whom Fidel dubbed as "*gusanos*" or "worms," to return as investors and potential owners, provides a base of support and operations for mafioso elements that are intent on radical regime change and a vindictive bloodbath.

Fidel Castro repeatedly said barring Cuban-American capital was a necessary defense against US imperialism and the blockade, denouncing the exiles as instruments of CIA-backed terrorism who sought to restore the semi-colonial order personified by the US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista. In January 1961, he mocked them:

They have come to believe that someday their imperial masters will put them here again with a little flag that pretends to be a national standard ... and with a little color on the map to sustain the fiction that the worms govern and command. And worms can only live off putrefaction.

These fascistic forces, who organized bombings of airliners, schools and hotels and launched the Bay of Pigs invasion under CIA protection, are now being invited back as "strategic partners" in ports, tourism, energy, mining and infrastructure, as specified by Pérez-Oliva.

The worms are now poised to fester in the corpse of the 1959 revolution, burrowing into its rotten nationalist foundations—which never truly abolished private property or capitalism.

Pérez-Oliva's announcement comes as the Trump administration is implementing the so-called "Trump corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine as a blueprint for direct US control over the hemisphere.

That strategy has included:

• The kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores after a bombing campaign in Caracas, opening the country to the US Southern Command and CIA operatives, along with Wall Street and big oil's wholesale plunder of its petroleum and mineral resources.

• Direct US troop deployments and FBI office openings in Ecuador, under the guise of fighting "narco-terrorism," while joint "kinetic operations" burn peasant homes and torture workers.

• Argentina's fascistic Milei regime ceding the southern Atlantic to Pentagon operations aimed at countering Chinese shipping.

In Cuba's case, Washington's weapon is not (yet) saturation bombing but a genocidal fuel blockade enforced through threats of tariffs on suppliers and a naval siege. Cuban officials admit that not a single tanker of fuel has docked in three months.

Energy expert Jorge Piñón of the University of Texas has warned that if no tanker arrives by mid-March, Cuba will hit "zero hour": "There will be no stockpiles, no strategic reserves; they will be out of operation." He notes he has "never seen ... a country where 100 percent of the fuel disappears," pointing out that even the sugar harvest has been canceled.

Underscoring the depth of the crisis, Cuba suffered an island-wide blackout on Monday, depriving the entire population of power.

Trump has gloated over this breakdown as a lever for regime change. After earlier promising a “friendly takeover” of Cuba, he now says: “It may be a friendly takeover; it may not be a friendly takeover. It wouldn’t matter because ... they’re down to, as they say, fumes.”?

On Sunday he told reporters: “Cuba also wants to make a deal. And I think we will pretty soon make a deal or do whatever we have to do... We’re talking to Cuba, but we’re going to do Iran before Cuba.”

USA Today, citing administration sources, reports that discussions have included “an off-ramp for President Miguel Díaz-Canel, the Castro family remaining on the island and deals on ports, energy and tourism.” In plain English: Washington is negotiating with the Cuban ruling elite over how to share out profits from the island’s assets while preserving a section of the ruling elite as local overseers.

Pérez-Oliva’s interview follows Díaz-Canel’s confirmation Friday in a televised address that Havana and Washington are engaged in ongoing talks about the embargo and “areas of cooperation” including security.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio’s aides met Raúl Castro’s grandson Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro in St. Kitts, with the grandson, who holds no public office, later prominently seated at Díaz-Canel’s announcement last week.

In that same context, Díaz-Canel announced that Cuba is awaiting a visit by FBI “experts” to work with the Interior Ministry on investigating the recent armed speedboat incursion by 10 Cuban-Americans, five of whom were killed in a shootout with border guards.

The opening to exile capital is part of the same logic. As Pérez-Oliva told NBC, Cuba is now willing to allow nationals abroad to invest. Economist Ricardo Torres, a former researcher at Havana University, warned in remarks to *El País*: “If you have an actor that builds up money and resources and gains influence, that actor can eventually begin to challenge you politically.”

The regime calculates that by tying this layer’s interests to its own, it can manage a controlled “transition” into a cheap labor platform for Wall Street without losing its privileges and, at least formally, power.

As Mexico’s former foreign minister Jorge Castañeda recently told the *Los Angeles Times*: “The only way [Cuba’s government] can save itself is by doing everything on the economic front that Trump and the Miami people want them to do, in exchange for holding on to political power.”

A 1996 law, the Helms Burton Act, formally bars a US president from fully lifting the embargo until there is a “democratically elected government” in Cuba, but it gives the White House wide latitude to loosen sanctions.

Cuban-American businessmen told the *Miami Herald* they are also demanding changes to Cuba’s legal system and constitution to guarantee investor protections and private

property rights.

The regime’s capitulation to Trump takes place amid the worst social crisis since the 1990s “Special Period” that followed the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy’s dissolution of the Soviet Union. In many respects, the current crisis is far worse. In the past five years, Cuba has lost nearly a quarter of its population to emigration, with the resident population now around 8 million, according to demographer Juan Carlos Albizu Campos.

Power outages of 15 or more hours a day have become routine in much of the country. Basic foodstuffs are scarce or unaffordable, and the waiting list for “non-urgent” medical procedures is nearing 100,000, including more than 11,000 children. Many preventable deaths are occurring.

Small protests and *cacerolazos* (pot-banging) have broken out in Havana and towns like Morón in central Cuba, where a group of protesters last weekend set furniture alight in a Communist Party office reception area and threw stones before being dispersed by police, with at least five arrested.

For the first time in nearly 70 years, Havana has authorized public-private partnerships, when roughly a third of Cubans already work in private businesses. Now, large private firms are being allowed by Washington and Havana to import 25,000-liter tanks of fuel from Miami and Texas via convoluted schemes through social media and WhatsApp groups, according to *El País*.

In other words, even as the state claims that “no fuel is entering Cuba,” a limited dollar-denominated fuel circuit is being created for private capital—especially that linked to the exile community—while the impoverished workers who have already braved seven decades of aggression endure unprecedented blackouts and hunger.

The Cuban leadership’s course is not a matter of “reluctant pragmatism” under duress from Trump. It flows from the organic limits of its nationalist program. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of subsidized trade, the regime has oscillated between tightening and loosening pro-business “reforms” and seeking new patrons—first in Venezuela, and now attempting to market itself as a reliable manager for US imperialism.

The invitation to capitalist “*gusanos*” and the FBI expose to millions of workers and youth that the Castroite leadership is not a bulwark against imperialism but a bourgeois layer ready to become partners in Trump’s recolonization scheme in exchange for its own survival.



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