

War to the Bay of Pigs, to sustain a national consensus. Unity at home, the message goes, is the best defense against the only external power Cuba still regards as a threat—the United States.

To give Cubans a stake in this tradeoff between an open society and sovereign nationhood, the revolution built social, educational, and health programs that remain the envy of the developing world. Public education became accessible to the entire population, allowing older generations of illiterate peasants to watch their children and grandchildren become doctors and scientists; by 1979, Cuba's literacy rates had risen above 90 percent. Life expectancy went from under 60 years at the time of the revolution to almost 80 today (virtually identical to life expectancy in the United States). Although infectious disease levels have been historically lower in Cuba than in many parts of Latin America, the revolutionary government's public vaccination programs completely eliminated polio, diphtheria, tetanus, meningitis, and measles. In these ways, the Cuban state truly has served the poor underclass rather than catering to the domestic elite and its American allies.

Foreign policy, meanwhile, put the island on the map geopolitically. The Cubans used the Soviets (who regarded the brash young revolutionaries as reckless) for money, weapons, and insulation from their implacable enemy to the north. Although the government's repression of dissent and tight control over the economy drove many out of the country and turned many others against the Castro regime, most Cubans came to expect the state to guarantee their welfare, deliver the international standing they regard as their cultural and historical destiny, and keep the United States at a healthy distance.

The end of the Cold War seriously threatened this status quo. The Soviet Union withdrew its \$4 billion annual subsidy, and the economy contracted by 35 percent overnight. Cuba's political elite recognized that without Soviet support, the survival of the revolutionary regime was in peril—and, with Fidel's reluctant acquiescence, fashioned a pragmatic response to save it. Cuban officials traveling abroad started using once-anathema terms, such as "civil society." Proposals were circulated to include multiple candidates (although all from the Communist Party) in National Assembly elections and to permit small private businesses. The government legalized self-employment in some 200 service trades, converted state farms to collectively owned cooperatives, and allowed the opening of small farmers' markets. At Raúl's instigation, state enterprises adopted capitalist accounting and business practices; some managers were sent to European business schools. As the notion of a "socialist enterprise" became increasingly unsustainable, words like "market," "efficiency," "ownership," "property," and "competition" began to crop up with ever more frequency in the state-controlled press and in public-policy debates. Foreign investment from Europe, Latin America, Canada, China, and Israel gave a boost to agriculture and the tourism, mining, telecommunications, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and oil industries.

These changes rendered Cuba almost unrecognizable compared with the Cuba of the Soviet era, but they also allowed Fidel's government to regain its footing. The economy began to recover, and health and educational

programs started to deliver again. By the end of the 1990s, Cuba's infant mortality rate (approximately six deaths per 100,000 births) had dropped below that of the United States, and close to 100 percent of children were enrolled in school full time through ninth grade. Housing, although deteriorating and in desperate need of modernization, remained virtually free. And a cosmopolitan society—albeit one controlled in many ways by the state—grew increasingly connected to the world through cultural exchanges, sporting events, scientific cooperation, health programs, technology, trade, and diplomacy. Moreover, by 2002, total remittance inflows reached \$1 billion, and nearly half of the Cuban population had access to dollars from family abroad.

In 2004, a process of "recentralization" began: the state replaced the dollar with a convertible currency, stepped up tax collection from the self-employed sector, and imposed stricter controls on revenue expenditures by state enterprises. But even with these controls over economic activity, the black market is everywhere. Official salaries are never enough to make ends meet, and the economy has become a hybrid of control, chaos, and free-for-all. The rules of the game are established and broken at every turn, and most Cubans have to violate some law to get by. The administrators of state enterprises steal and then sell the inputs they get from the government, forcing workers to purchase themselves the supplies they need to do their jobs—rubber for the shoemaker, drinking glasses for the bartender, cooking oil for the chef—in order to fill production quotas.

At the same time, the revolution's investment in human capital has made Cuba uniquely well positioned to take advantage of the global economy. In fact, the island faces an overcapacity of professional and scientific talent, since it lacks the industrial base and foreign investment necessary to create a large number of productive skilled jobs. With 10,000 students in its science and technology university and already successful joint pharmaceutical ventures with China and Malaysia, Cuba is poised to compete with the upper ranks of developing nations.

HONORING THE MAYOR OF GLADSTONE, DR. WILLIAM C. CROSS, FOR THE 2006 NORTHLANDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William C. Cross, a constituent of the 6th District of Missouri who recently added another prestigious award to his resume as he was named the Northlander of the Year by the Northland Chamber of Commerce at their annual banquet held January 27, 2007.

Dr. Bill Cross has lived one of the most admirable and distinguished lives any of us could hope for as he was a teacher, coach, and school administrator for 52 years. Bill Cross earned his bachelor's degree at Westminster College in Fulton, MO, while attaining his Ph.D at Kansas State University. Dr. Cross has

been a mentor and role model for over 25,000 high school students and an additional 10,000 teachers in graduate programs. He has written and published multiple articles and authored books in the area of education. Dr. Cross has served as the sponsor for over 100 college students in the classroom practicum portion of their education major. He is frequently engaged as a speaker on the topics of business and education.

But that's not all, Madam Speaker, Dr. Bill Cross has served two terms as mayor of the great city of Gladstone, MO. He serves on the board of directors of the Mid-America Regional Council, the Missouri Municipal League, the Missouri Municipal League West Gate Division, Head Start, Teaching and Reaching Youth, Clay County Coordinating Committee, Shepherds Center of Kansas City, and is a committee member of the National League of Cities. Dr. Cross was a popularly elected member of the North Kansas City School District.

One special recognition I would like to address is that Dr. Cross is a fellow Eagle Scout, the tribe of Mic-O-Say. There is so much more that this great person has done and continues to do for his fellow man. If there ever was an example of a great person and one most deserving of recognition in the United States House of Representatives, it is truly Dr. William C. Cross. Teacher, civic leader, husband to Mary and father of three daughters and seven grandchildren, active member of North Cross United Methodist Church and valued friend and advisor to so many. Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in honoring Dr. William C. Cross whose dedication and service to the people of the Sixth District of Missouri has been exceptional.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT RANDY J. MATHENY

### HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 8, 2007*

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, it is with a deep sense of gratitude and a profound sense of sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to the life of a brave man from McCook, NE. Sgt Randy J. Matheny died on Sunday in Iraq in Baghdad by an improvised explosive device.

With his entire life in front of him, Randy chose to risk everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

My heart goes out to Randy's family. He was known as a dedicated spirit and for his love of our country. All Nebraskans will remember him as a true American. We can take pride in the example he set, bravely fighting to make the world a better place.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Randy's family and friends during this difficult time.

May God grant them strength, peace, and comfort.