

The White House,  
October 23, 1992.

Note: H.R. 5572, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 102-450.

## Remarks on Signing the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 in Miami, Florida

October 23, 1992

*The President.* Thank you very, very much. And may I thank Armando for that warm introduction and all of you for this reception. I am very, very pleased to be here. It's great to be among so many friends. This is a very special day, and we've got one standing up here who deserves very special credit, our great Senator Connie Mack. And also a great friend, Congressman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, joined in the Congress now by Lincoln, Lincoln Diaz-Balart. And may I salute the veterans of the 2506 Brigade who are here, heroes of America and heroes in your homeland. Tomas Garcia Fuste and Armando Perez Roura, Ariel Ramos. Of course, let me recognize another old friend, Carlos Salman, and Al Cardenas and Jorge Mas. Where's Jorge? Hey, Jorge is the only guy that can take on that "60 Minutes" crowd and come out ahead. You know, that was very good. [Laughter] He did. He did just great, and he's one of the key forces, of course, as so many in this room, but he was one of the very key forces behind this Cuban Democracy Act. And let me offer a very special recognition to the representatives of La Unidad, champions of a free Cuba.

Now, we share a history, a commitment to struggle. We've worked years toward this single goal, common dream, because everyone here wants a free and democratic Cuba. Today I am delighted to take the next step toward that dream with the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992. Our policies and principles rest on a single belief: For freedom to rise in Cuba, Fidel Castro must fall.

*Audience members.* Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!

*The President.* In today's democratic world, Communist governments no longer hold sway. Cuba's special relationship with the former Soviet Union has all but ended. And we've worked to ensure that no other

government helps this, the cruelest of regimes. And the result: Literally, you look around the world and you see that Castro has literally become an outcast among dictators. He's not a leader; he's what you call a warden. His beaches are not borders but his confines of freedom. And the tide is running out. For years, this Cuban community has energized Miami. Someday freedom-loving people will change that island for the better, just like America has changed the entire world. And none of us should rest and relax until we stop those who mock the rights that we treasure, rights of speech and religion and assembly and economic freedom.

One hundred years ago, the Abraham Lincoln of Cuba, the great patriot José Martí, said simply, "To beautify life is to give it an aim." To beautify life is to give it an aim. And I agree with that. Our aim is human liberty.

*Audience members.* Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!

*The President.* People are choosing liberty all over the world by their votes. The Cuban people deserve no less. That's why this Cuban Democracy Act strengthens our embargo. It will speed the inevitable demise of the Cuban Castro dictatorship. The legislation that I sign today reflects our determination, mine and yours, that the Cuban Government will not benefit from U.S. trade or aid until the Cuban people are free. And it reflects another belief: I'm not going to let others prop up Castro with aid or some sweetheart trade deal.

All of this is not designed to hurt the Cuban people. I am saddened by their suffering and loss of freedom. Many of you in this room have families there, and I'm saddened by families that are split apart and sons and daughters lost at sea. Let's make it

clear: Cuba suffers because Castro refuses to change. Our policy and this bill allow for humanitarian donations of food and medicine to nongovernment organizations in Cuba, help that will get to the Cuban people. And it allows for improved communications between the United States and Cuba, so that all of you can maintain contact with family members.

Our policy is the only way to put it, plain and simple: Democracy, Mr. Castro, not sometime, not someday, but now. Put it this way: We simply will not provide life support to a dictatorship which is dying. There will never be normal relations with Cuba as long as Castro sustains this illegitimate regime, as long as he intimidates and does violence to a brave and courageous people.

I have challenged him before, and now I challenge him again. Mr. Castro, let a United Nations human rights representative come to your island nation.

*Audience members.* Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!

*The President.* Mr. Castro, put your leadership to the test of the ballot box, and let your people decide. Call off your secret police, and let the Cuban people choose their leaders and their future. Let your people live in freedom. That is the message to Cuba today.

You know, when Cuba is free, a million free Cuban Americans will be united with their long-suffering Cuban brothers. Nowhere has the pain and anguish of family separation been more eloquently stated than in a letter that Barbara received from Major Orestes Lorenzo, who is with us here today. Where is the major? Right here. As all of you know, he heroically escaped from Cuba when he flew his Mig to south Florida a year and a half ago, asked for political asylum. But he could not free his family. Despite humanitarian pleas from the world over, Castro keeps Vicky, Major Lorenzo's wife, and their two little sons, Alexander and Reyniel, hostage there in Cuba. I want to say to the major here today and to all of you that I will keep working until all Cuban families are united again in freedom.

You know, Castro likes to say that any person who wants to leave Cuba may go. Well, all it takes, he says, is an American visa. Well, over a year ago we issued a visa

for the major's family, and still they're barred from leaving that country. The answer is today to Mr. Castro: Do what's decent. Do what's right. You say everybody can leave; let the Lorenzo family go.

One cannot help but be emotional, looking around this room and seeing the commitment here. I get it in a very special way, obviously, through my son Jeb, who's a friend to many here, and through my dear friend Armando Codina who introduced me, who sensitizes me to this struggle that everyone in this room has been involved in.

We've been in this, and I say "we" proudly, we've been in this for a long time, and we are not going to back away from this commitment. We're not going to listen to these editorials that tell me how to run the foreign policy of this country and to change this policy.

*Audience members.* Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

*The President.* We are not going to waffle on our commitment, and we're not going to quit until—we've got a little enthusiasm over here—until that is achieved. You must remember that this administration—and I am the President who pressed the Soviets and the Russians to cut back their support and pull out their troops and send an unmistakable signal to Cuba of its complete isolation. And we're the ones, you and I together, who urged our friends in Latin America to let Castro know that he's out of things, he's a has-been. It is my firm belief, I really believe this, that during my second term as President, you will be reunited with your loved ones.

*Audience members.* Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!

*The President.* And I know, I am certain in my heart that I will be the first American President to set foot on the soil of a free and independent Cuba.

Thank you. Thank you all, and God bless you. Now I will sign the Defense Authorization Act, giving the force of law to the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

*Note: The President spoke at 5:48 p.m. at the Omni Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Armando Codina, chairman, Codina-Bush Group; Tomas Garcia Fuste, WQBA*

radio talk show host; Armando Perez Roura, WAQI radio talk show host; Ariel Ramos, newspaper reporter, *Diario Las Americas*; Carlos Salman, real estate broker; Al Cardenas, attorney; and Jorge Mas, chairman, Cuban American National Foundation. The President also referred to the 2506 Bri-

gade, the military unit which participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion. H.R. 5006, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993, approved October 23, which incorporated the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, was assigned Public Law No. 102-484.

## Statement on Signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993

October 23, 1992

Today I am signing into law H.R. 5006, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993." H.R. 5006 authorizes appropriations that provide for a national defense adequate to meet foreseeable threats to the national security. It generally supports the Administration's major defense priorities, including key elements of the Strategic Defense Initiative and the B-2 program. I am also pleased that the bill includes the Cuban Democracy Act, which will help establish a free and democratic Cuba.

I have signed this Act notwithstanding the reservations that I have regarding certain of its provisions. I am particularly concerned about provisions that purport to derogate the President's authority under the Constitution to conduct U.S. foreign policy, including negotiations with other countries. A number of provisions purport to establish foreign policy by providing that it shall be "the policy of the United States" or "the goal of the United States" to undertake specific diplomatic initiatives. Consistent with my responsibility under the Constitution for the conduct of diplomatic negotiations, and with established practice, I will construe these provisions to be precatory rather than mandatory. Other provisions purport to require reports to the Congress concerning diplomatic negotiations. I sign this bill with the understanding that these provisions do not detract from my constitutional authority to protect sensitive national security information.

In addition, H.R. 5006 would assign new domestic, civil functions of government to

the Department of Defense and the Armed Forces. These roles include community medical care; local school funding; training of civilian children; establishing new government data bases on U.S. defense businesses; establishing plans for U.S. industries; assisting and funding Federal, State, local, and private nonprofit industrial support efforts; and providing broad adjustment grants to communities. For the most part, the objectives of these provisions are laudable. The functions prescribed are not, however, appropriate roles for the military. Accordingly, I direct the Secretary of Defense to implement these provisions in a manner that will do the least damage possible to the traditional role of the military. Where particular provisions of H.R. 5006 cannot be implemented consistent with the traditional role of the military, I direct the Secretary of Defense to draft and propose to the Congress remedial legislation.

I am also concerned that two provisions of H.R. 5006 might be construed to impinge on the President's authority as Commander in Chief and as head of the executive branch. Section 1303 purports to prohibit the use of appropriations to support a level of U.S. troops in Europe greater than 100,000 after October 1, 1995, and section 1302 purports to require a 40 percent cut in U.S. forces overseas after September 30, 1996, absent a war or national emergency. American forces abroad are a stabilizing influence in a volatile world and provide a ready means to protect American interests. Ill-considered cuts to America's forward presence diminish America's ability to help