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Subject: **Fidel Castro Blasts H-1B Program**

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Fidel Castro recently complained that the H-1B program is a brain drain on countries like his. Many of the things he says about H-1B are true - In fact he seems more knowledgeable about the issue than our entire Congress and 99% of the American public. Castro's complaints about brain drains caused by H-1B are valid but also very short sighted. Some companies in India, for example, have had similar complaints about H-1B and it's not uncommon for African countries to complain that the U.S. is stealing their nurses. Despite the complaints countries like India spend enormous amounts of money lobbying for expanding the H-1B program and they do everything they can to encourage kids to get educations so that they can get jobs in the USA.

Why do they do it?

Countries such as India and the Philippines understand that third world Countries come out ahead in the long run by sending us their programmers, engineers and scientists.

Castro made this interesting statement about Cuban doctors and medical professionals. My guess is that the exodus from Cuba was facilitated by Cubans coming here as refugees than programs such as H-1B or EB green cards. He's got the wrong bogeyman. Between 1959 and 2004, Cuba has graduated 805,902 professionals, including medical doctors. The United States' unjust policy towards our country has deprived us of 5.16 percent of the professionals who graduated under the Revolution.

Without a doubt there is nothing Congress would love more than stealing talent from countries like Communist Cuba. Castro's complaints will probably be used by the nitwits in Washington DC to justify the H-1B program. On the surface it seems that Castro spends the money to educate high-tech workers and other types of professionals, and then they come here to work. Everyone seems to come out ahead except Castro and U.S. workers.

That's not how the game actually works though. Here are just a few ways that Cuba would benefit from sending its people to the U.S. on H-1B visas.

1) Knowledge Transfer -- Many H-1Bs end up going back to their home countries, and with it they bring the knowledge and skills they learned in the U.S. This process is very important for countries who want to get into the outsourcing game.

2) Remittances -- H-1B send back remittances. That can add valuable positive cash flow into impoverished countries.

3) Supports Infrastructure -- educating large numbers of people builds An education infrastructure. In India it's unlikely that ITT would have Seen such growth without the huge influx of Indians who go there to get technical educations so that they can get jobs in the U.S.

4) Espionage and Spying -- This is sort of like knowledge transfer Except the motives are far more sinister. We have seen many cases of H-1B and other types of foreign nationals who have engaged in spying, but there is very little evidence of espionage. Despite the lack of evidence you can bet that nations like China are doing it, and it wouldn't take long for Castro to figure out how convenient H-1B and other temporary visas are for espionage.

Castro considers the exodus of professionals a "tragedy". Between 1960 and 1990, the United States and Canada received more than one million professional immigrants and experts from Third World countries. These figures are but a pale reflection of the tragedy. Castro's figures are severe undercounts because many times more than that come here to work and live. Notice that he avoids mentioning the main reason that professionals come to the U.S. to work. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that the third world professionals can make far more money in the U.S. as compared to their home country. Third world H-1Bs can easily come to the U.S. and underbid American workers and still come out way ahead.

Let's be blunt -- Castro wouldn't have to worry about H-1B if he wasn't such a cheapskate. All he would have to do to keep his professionals in Cuba would be to pay them a salary that's comparable to what they would make in the U.S., and of course it would help if he didn't put so many of them in jail for having a mind of their own. Castro might be Communist but his whining sounds a whole lot like the corporatists in the U.S. that don't want to pay Americans a fair salary.

Why is it that capitalists and communists are so damn determined not to Pay white collar professionals what they are worth?

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http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=software_development&articleId=9027404&taxonomyId=63&intsrc=kc_top

Castro equates H-1B program with high-tech labor piracy Patrick Thibodeau July 19, 2007 (Computerworld)

Fidel Castro, Cuba's ailing leader, this week warned in a written commentary that the migration of skilled IT workers and other professionals to the U.S. and other nations will hurt developing economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Castro's commentary, published Wednesday by the Daily Granma, the Cuban Communist Party's official news publication, was written to mark the graduation of the first class from the University of Information Sciences in Havana.

The school is graduating 1,334 computer science engineers, according to Castro, who wrote that all but 200 of the graduates have been assigned to government jobs in Cuba. The remaining graduates will continue to live at the university and will serve as "a centralized reserve" of labor, Castro said. Cuban high-tech workers can't apply for H-1B visas that would let them work in the U.S., of course. But Castro views the H-1B program as a tool for importing highly skilled IT labor into the U.S. He claimed in his commentary -- titled "The Brain Drain" -- that the goal of the program is to "encourage the entry into the United States of highly qualified immigrants who could occupy positions in the high-technology sector."

Castro described the visa policies in the U.S. and other Western countries as a form of piracy. "This relentless plundering of brains in South countries dismantles and weakens programs aimed at training human capital, a resource which is needed to rise from the depths of underdevelopment," he wrote. "It is not limited to the transfer of capital; it also entails the import of gray matter, which nips a country's nascent intelligence and future at the bud."

In addition, Castro took aim at -- of all things -- SeaCode Inc., a San Diego-based company that wants to develop code aboard a former cruise ship that it would dock in a U.S. port and staff programmers recruited from India, Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

SeaCode's programmers wouldn't need visas because they would be working

under international maritime laws, and the company executives have said that the workers would be paid more than what they can earn in their home countries. But Castro said that the coders would be "highly qualified slaves" working on "a software ship factory."

Castro's comments about SeaCode indicated that the company's shipboard operations are already active. But SeaCode, which detailed its plans two years ago, has yet to raise enough money to buy and launch a ship.

Meanwhile, Castro didn't mention Cuba's nascent efforts to win some IT outsourcing work. Earlier this year, Gartner Inc. included the Communist nation on its latest list of potential offshore providers, citing Cuba's educational programs in math and computer science.

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http://www.pslweb.org/site/News2?JServSessionIdr011=qs3w9jtm83.app5b&page=NewsArticle&id=7067&news_iv_ctrl=1261

Fidel Castro: imperialism and the 'brain drain'

Sunday, July 22, 2007

By: Fidel Castro

Reflections on scientific apartheid

The following are excerpts from an essay written by Cuban President Fidel Castro on July 17 directed to graduates of Cuba's University of Information Sciences (UCI). The essay first appeared in Granma.

UCI opens its doors to young people from Cuba's 169 municipalities. It is not grounded in the model of exclusion and competition among human beings which developed capitalist countries advocate.

Our world order appears to have been designed to foster the egoism, individualism and dehumanization of humanity.

A Reuters press dispatch published on May 3, 2006, titled "African Brain drain deprives Africa of vital talent," reports that, in Africa, "it is estimated that some 20,000 skilled professionals are leaving the Continent every year, depriving Africa of the doctors, nurses, teachers and engineers it needs to break a cycle of poverty and under-development." ... "Brain drain deals a double blow to weak economies, which not only lose their best human resources and the money spent training them, but then have to pay an estimated \$5.6 billion a year to

employ expatriates." The phrase "brain drain" was coined in the 1960s, when the United States began to hoard UK doctors. In that case, one developed country dispossessed another; one emerged from the Second World War in 1944 with 80 percent of the world's gold reserve in bullions, the other had been severely hit and deprived of its empire in the course of the war.

A World Bank report titled "International migration, remittances and The brain drain," made public in October 2005, yielded the following results:

In the last 40 years, more than 1.2 million professionals from Latin America and the Caribbean have emigrated to the United States, Canada And the United Kingdom. An average of 70 scientists a day has emigrated From Latin America in the course of 40 years.

Of the 150 million people around the world involved in science and technology activities, 90 percent is concentrated in the seven most industrialized nations.

A number of countries, particularly small nations in Africa, the Caribbean and Central America, have lost over 30 percent of their population with higher education as a result of migration. ... More than 70 percent of software programmers employed by the U.S. Company Microsoft Corporation are from India and Latin America.

The intense migratory movements, from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union towards Western Europe and North America, which began following the collapse of the socialist block, are worthy of special mention.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) points out that the number Of scientists and engineers who abandon their native countries and emigrate to industrialized nations is about one third of the number of those who stay in their native countries, something which significantly depletes indispensable human resource reserves. ...

Between 1960 and 1990, the United States and Canada received more than One million professional immigrants and experts from Third World countries. These figures are but a pale reflection of the tragedy. In recent years, encouraging this type of emigration has become an official state policy in a number of North countries, which use incentives and procedures especially tailored to suit this end.

The American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act -- approved by the US Congress in 2000 -- increased the temporary work visa (H-1B) allotment, from 65 thousand to 115 thousand in the 2000 fiscal year and then to 195 thousand for fiscal years 2001 through 2003. The aim of this increase in the visa cap was to encourage the entry into the United States of highly qualified immigrants who could occupy positions in the high-technology sector. ...

This relentless plundering of brains in South countries dismantles and weakens programs aimed at training human capital, a resource which is needed to rise from the depths of underdevelopment. It is not limited to the transfer of capital; it also entails the import of grey matter, which nips a country's nascent intelligence and future at the bud.

Between 1959 and 2004, Cuba has graduated 805,902 professionals, including medical doctors. The United States' unjust policy towards our country has deprived us of 5.16 percent of the professionals who graduated under the Revolution.

However, not even the elite of immigrant workers enjoy work conditions and salaries like those of U.S. nationals. In order to avoid the complicated paperwork which U.S. labor legislation requires and reduce the costs of immigration procedures, the United States has gone as far as creating a software ship-factory which keeps highly-qualified slaves anchored in international waters, in a kind of assembly plant which produces all manner of digital devices. Project SeaCode consists of a ship, anchored more than three miles off the coast of California (international waters), with 600 Indian computer scientists on board, who work an uninterrupted 12 hour daily shift for four months out at sea.

The trend towards the privatization of knowledge and the internalization of scientific research companies subordinated to big capital has been creating a kind of "scientific apartheid," which affects the vast majority of the world's population. ...

More and more people have access to the Internet each day -- in July 9, 2007, the figure was almost 1.4 billion users. However, in many countries, including numerous developed ones, the people with no access to this service continue to be the majority. The digital gap spells dramatic differences, whereby part of humanity, fortunate and connected, has more information at its disposal than any generation before it ever had.

To have an idea of what this means, suffice it to compare two realities: while more than 70 percent of the population of the United States has access to the Internet, only 3 percent of Africa's entire population has such access. Internet service providers are based in high-income countries, where a mere 16 percent of the world's population lives. ...

A society in which millions of human beings are considered superfluous, The brain drain of South countries constitutes a common practice and Economic power and new technologies are wielded by only a handful of nations cannot be called human, not by a long shot. Overcoming this dilemma is as important for the destiny of humanity as mitigating the climate change crisis which scourges the planet, two problems which are completely interrelated.

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