IMPACT OF THE BLOCKADE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON CUBAN LIBRARIES: 2001-2005

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1. Introduction

a.) Antecedents

Any study that is conducted based on scientific grounds in social sciences is always difficult. Most of them generate new knowledge based on registered facts. The selection of these facts in such a way that it may describe the current behavior of the human being and the reality surrounding us constitutes the core of any historical research work.

The history of a nation is made up of countless facts. When it comes to Cuba, what we may find in documents that historians have left us is amazing. This attitude is multiplied when it comes to the relations between Cuba and the United States of America. Relations that since their very beginnings were based on trade exchange and that, during centuries the approach was conditioned by a strong obsession of conquest and possession by the United States towards the island. History recounts it to us since the 18th century, when the power is born with the liberation of the 13 colonies, where the danger that this entailed for Spanish colonies was foreseen and that is over in a death duel in the summer of 1898, when Montojo´s and Cervera´s squadrons sink in the bays of Manila and Santiago de Cuba.

Since independence conflicts initially broke out in the Thirteen Colonies, witnesses from that time predicted the future aspirations of domination and conquest. An example of
that are the words by the Marquis of Vegennes, State Minister of the King of France, the ones by the Count of Aranda, negotiator by the Spanish side in the peace treaty between Spain and Great Britain, and the Scotch William Patterson, famous in the foundation of the Bank of England.¹

Trade relations between both countries have been conditioned by socio-historical facts that have marked the development of both nations. When they started they were limited by the amount of laws of the colony that banned free trade and entry of foreign ships into Havana. In the first stage, this is how the exchange was conducted based on piracy and privateering. There is a second opening moment with the slave trade, where the island’s economic dependency gradually begins. It is when annexation ideas began to be heard, having Thomas Jefferson² among their pioneers, and that materialized with the letter by John Quince Adams, Secretary of State, addressed to Mr. Hugo Nelson, Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the United States of America, James Monroe being the President, in which, he mentions the word “annexation” for the first time.³ There is a third moment after the first North American intervention and the establishment of the Republic, where the sale of the Cuban economy is almost total to this market and a fourth moment, where everything that history had been describing, with its ebbs and flows but in an upward curve, is totally paralyzed upon the triumph of the Revolution and the parable is inverted, from the absolute interest for the economic rule and control, to the most brutal and exaggerated economic, financial and commercial blockade, that cancels every possibility of development with the North American market at first, and

¹ See the book by José Ignacio Rodríguez, *Estudio histórico sobre el origen, desenvolvimiento y manifestaciones prácticas de la ideal de la Anexión de la Isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos de América. La Habana: Imprenta La propaganda literaria, 1900. pp 16-17*, words by William Patterson about the need of taking hold of the port of Havana as a strategic objective in the future development of the English power. pp 19-20, words by the Marquis of Vegennes, State Minister of the King of France, Luis XVI, letter written to Lord Stomont, English ambassador to France, about the disturbances of the colonies of England in America. pp 23-25, letter of the Duke of Aranda to his sovereign once the peace treaty had been signed in which he refers to the danger that the independence of the English colonies of America means for the Spanish empire.

² It refers to the first American expressions in favor of the Annexation of Cuba on April 27, 1809 in a letter by Thomas Jefferson to President Madison where he writes: “…to conciliate the good will of the United States of America…it could not be doubted that it would give them the Floridas’… “Although with some difficulties, I will also consent to have Cuba added to our Union, so as not to help Mexico and the other provinces”. In: Rodríguez, José Ignacio. Ob cit. (1) p. 51

³ It refers to the letter by Mr. John Quince Adams, Secretary of State to Mr. Hugo Nelson, from Virginia, Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of the United States of America, being James Monroe President of the United States. Something from its text is: “From the war that now begins between France and Spain certain interests will likely be compromised that exclusively and peculiarly belong to us…The annexation of Cuba to our Federal Republic will be indispensable for the continuity of the Union and the maintaenance of its integrity” In: Rodríguez, José Ignacio. Idem. pp 57-59
that is extended to the application of extraterritorial laws affecting other countries. Why does this happen and what impacts does it bring about? These plus other questions are the premises of this research that tries to expose what this event has meant for the history of Cuban libraries and librarians.

Cuban library science is full of facts that show the strong North American link and influence on its formation. The continuous exchanges between Cuban and American librarians during the Republic, their active participation in the first library science events held in the country, such as the First National Conference of Librarians in 1949, and the reediting of professional literature produced by North Americans for the training in the profession, taking on certain thematic diversification after the 30’s last century. Events such as the creation of the Cuban Association of Librarians in 1948, at a meeting held in the Lyceum to honor Miss Marieta Daniela, from the Library of Congress, as well as the rushed creation of its professional board for its president to travel to the United States, to draft the statutes of the organization during the Annual Convention of the American Library Association in New Jersey, show the close relation that Cuban and American librarians used to have in this noble profession.

Renowned personalities in Cuban Library Science have conducted studies in the United States and, it is unquestionable that the training of Cuban librarians has a strong Anglo-Saxon influence. These close links were similarly broken up after hostilities started between the North American government and the new revolutionary government in the year 1959. The economic war unleashed by the United States, materially affected all spheres of the cultural and social life of the island, and among them, library practice. This sector that was immersed in the revolutionary transformations, did not take a long time to realize about the need for training a new type of professional, objective that has been achieved at present in the midst of the most basic shortages of materials and inputs.

Just 9 days before the triumph, discrepancies broke out between the United States and Cuba. The daily *The New York Times* asserted that there were stains from former opponents in the so-called “war crimes”. The Cuban newspaper *Hoy* replied: “We do not have to be surprised, it is just natural that the New York Times, that was not concerned when North American bombs and planes were killing seniors, women and children in the
villages of the Sierra Maestra…now deems as a “stain” the summary execution and the trial with war crimes of monstrous murderers and torturers without human dimension.”

The issue of the blockade of the United States on Cuba has been widely addressed in different publications. Currently, there are websites specialized on this issue, as the one created by MINREX (Foreign Ministry) with abundant information and interaction possibility through the fora. The one held on October 22, 2004 was precisely with the Minister of Culture, Abel Prieto, and was entitled The Blockade against the Cuban Culture, where different people from all over the world sent their reflections on this issue.

The studies about the impacts of the blockade of the United States on Cuba are multiple, taking place basically in the economic branch, although there are research works addressing specific links such as health, education, and culture itself. However, the deep analyses of these consequences in the biotechnological branch are non-existent, with the exception of a number of articles published in magazines or in digital format by historian Eliades Acosta Matos, director of the National Library, and pieces of news that demonstrate the limitations or slanders that Cuban libraries and librarians are submitted to.

b.) Justification

The blockade imposed on Cuba by the different United States governments since the Revolution triumphed, has had serious consequences for the Cuban people. All along

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These years, this unjust, illegal and genocidal measure has brought about countless negative impacts in the economic, social and cultural spheres of the country.

Since the year 2001, moment in which George W. Bush undertakes the presidency of the United States, the blockade actions have been intensified, aimed at destroying the Cuban Revolution. The present Head of State, committed with the most reactionary sectors of the Cuban exile, and following the traditional policy of the North American ultra right wing, conditions the cancellation of this measure even more strongly, upon the leaving of power of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro. This stand shows the arrogance of this government and its mad interest to take hold of Cuba; as well as its lack of knowledge about deep historical anti-imperialist and independentist roots that exist in the Cuban people that go beyond the performance of their political leaders.

The increase of the aggressiveness and dehumanization of the blockade on Cuba, through new laws and regulations, has been joined by actions of the US Interests Section in Havana, to become the center for organizing and financing the internal counterrevolution, violating like this, the laws that rule diplomatic behavior.

From the legal perspective, the blockade does not have any grounds, because there is no standard in International Law that may justify it at a time of peace. This violates many rights of the Cuban and the North American people, because the Yankee government, in its despair, has approved sanctions whose negative impacts reach itself.

At present, it is quite obvious that the measures of the United States government against the Island generate serious obstacles in the development of the free flow or circulation of information towards Cuba, and between the North American and the Cuban peoples. However, there are laws such as the Berman Amendment (1988) or Law for Free Trade of Ideas that establishes that the restrictive measures imposed by the government of that country to certain nations, should not interfere in the information exchange. Despite of this, today Cubans are the victims of numerous denials of access to databases and other on-line services, among other hardships. On the other hand, denials of visas to specialists and librarians, both Cubans and North Americans interested on the academic exchange, are now more frequent.
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

Everything that has been previously expressed motivates to answer the following research questions:

**c.) Research Problem**

- How have relations between the United States and Cuba along history affected the bonds developed between libraries and librarians from both countries?
- Which have been the major actions and impacts brought about by the blockade imposed by the government of the United States on Cuba in Cuban libraries?

**d.) Variables**

The following variables derive from the previous research questions:

- Relations between the United States and Cuba.
- Links between librarians and libraries from both countries.
- Legislative structure of the economic blockade on Cuba.
- Blockade actions against Cuban libraries.
- Blockade impacts upon Cuban libraries.

**Relations between the United States and Cuba**

They are the sets of events enabling to establish time periods in the historical development process of trade exchanges between the United States and Cuba.

**Links between librarians and libraries from both countries**

Elements describing professional relations in the library world of both countries, marking an impact on the Cuban librarian professional training.

**Legislative structure of the economic blockade on Cuba**

They are the set of laws and regulations that controls the economic exchange of the two countries.
Blockade actions against Cuban libraries
They are the arrangements derived from the blockade laws implemented by he North American government, individuals and institutions from this or any other country, that support this policy and that have affected Cuban librarians and libraries professionally and materially in the 2001-2005 period.

Blockade impacts upon Cuban libraries
Consequences of the arrangements derived from the blockade laws for Cuban librarians and libraries in the 2001-2005 period. The impact of this measure is analyzed on human resources, buildings, technological means, bibliographic and document collections.

e.) Sample Definition

Description of the historical period that the research comprises:

The research presents a historical study comprising from the first trade relations established between Cuba and Florida, before the independence of the Thirteen Colonies, up until the present; a second part of this work offers concrete pieces of evidence of the actions of the economic blockade on Cuba, in the library branch and its consequences in the period from 2001 to 2005.

f.) Objectives

General Goal

➢ To analyze the impact of relations between the United States and Cuba along history, in the bonds developed between librarians and libraries from both countries.

➢ To show denials and limitations as well as the consequences caused by the blockade of the United States government on Cuba, in Cuban libraries in the period from 2001 to 2005.

Specific Objectives
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

- To analyze historical relations between both countries, as well as links that have existed between Cuban librarians and the North American ones.
- To compile information about the laws establishing the blockade imposed by the government of the United States on Cuba.
- To inquire about the blockade actions which have affected Cuban libraries.
- To determine the consequences of the implementation of the blockade measures on the development of libraries and librarians in the period that is studied.
- To denounce the false information about Cuban librarians and libraries that is spread by the United States government.
- To analyze the repercussion that the blockade has for North American libraries and librarians.

**g.) Stages**

Simultaneous research works:

**First Stage**

- Documental research about relations between both countries since their origins, major characteristics these relations were established upon.
- Compilation of all existing documentation about limitations and denials that respond to the blockade of the United States on Cuba, that are related with the library and information universe in the period studied.

**Second Stage**

- Documental research about historical, social and economic conditions within which, the first information institutions of the country emerged, and the influence trade relations between Cuba and the United States had on their creation, as well as historical conditions under which, connections between North American and Cuban librarians and libraries started out.
- Interviews to leading professionals in the information bibliological branch, that are either witnesses or victims of the blockade derived actions, and the determination of their impact level. Devising of surveys and their sending to North American librarians and to the Cuban system of public libraries.
Third Stage:

- Studying of the legislative structure existing at present, that sustains the economic blockade on Cuba, and of the impact of these laws on the information world of the country.
- Assessing damages caused by such legislations or regulations. Refuting false information that is spread about Cuban libraries and librarians.
- Showing damages that the blockade causes to North American libraries and librarians.

Fourth Stage:

- Drafting of the report

h.) Major bibliographic sources used.

There is a wide quoted and consulted bibliography accompanying historical reflections and sustaining the outlined facts; however, there was a source that turned out to be a must in terms of consultation and that is a detailed preliminary research, the book by Herminio Portell Vilá, “Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y España”, La Habana, Jesús Montero editor, 1st edition, 1941, 4 volumes, where the major characteristics with which these relations are set up, are widely described. Other sources were the works about the blockade on Cuba by Nicanor León Cotayo, which turned out to be of absolute interest in the first approach to the historical research, and the consultation of the available information about the issue in Internet. Similarly, it became necessary, to examine the special collections of the Documentation Center at the International Relations Higher Institute, which has specialized literature about this matter. Nevertheless, it was difficult to compile concrete evidence of the blockade action in the library world. That is why; this chapter was developed based on interviews or personal contributions.
1. Theoretical Foundation.

Social knowledge from a historical perspective started out since peoples’ happenings were told, the way of life, their customs and traditions, providing a first initial stage of history as a creation. Social practice resulted in the emergence of certain regulations of social phenomena and processes, among them, the relation between men and the State, education, production and trade, population characteristics, among others. All that contributed to the emergence of social sciences, as independent knowledge from different activities of social life. The study of social phenomena was conducted primarily in the theoretical and historical aspects, although both would not reach the scientific character but rather, are seen jointly.

The current research rests on laws and phenomena describing historical sciences, particularly political history, in charge of the political class struggle, historical social movements and above all, international relations. History constitutes the major methodological instrument for the research of historical-social phenomena, and as a science, it studies development subordinated to society laws in their concrete multiple varieties. In this regard, this research is a critical quest for truth, which based on past events, sustains the current social reality stemming from different events, describing and characterizing it, under specific social and economic circumstances.

2. Techniques and procedures used in the research.

Different methods were combined in this study such as the logical–historical and the analytical–synthetic one. Among techniques, the semi-standardized interview was used for leading professionals in the bibliological information branch, who have been either witnesses or victims of the blockade derived legislations, and leaders of the organizations ASCUBI and SOCICT; as well as sending a survey to provincial public libraries and other to different debate lists, addressed to North American librarians.

In order to fulfill the purposes of the research, contact was also established with some North American librarians, which have contributed with arguments about the negative effects of the blockade for their professional exchange with Cuban librarians.
Other centers that provided information for the sake of this study were: the José Martí National Library, the Library of the Literature and Linguistics Institute, the Library of Casa de las Américas, the Rubén Martínez Villena Central Library of Havana University, the Culture Department of the National Association of the Blind (ANCI) and the Medical Information Network (INFOMED).

3. Limitations of the process

The development of this study had as its major difficulty, the non-existence of the habit of keeping proofs of denials and other blockade derived actions by librarians, which have affected them over the years. This brought about the fact that some examples were left unexposed, but having no evidence of them, they were not submitted in this work.

Other inconvenience was related to the fact that, since libraries are not the ones in charge of buying their technological equipment and other required inputs, but other commercializing agencies are doing this for them, the difference between the present prices of these products, which must often be purchased in third countries, and what they would cost if directly acquired from North American companies, was unknown.

4. Report Structure

The present report has the following structure:

1. Introduction
   a. Antecedents
   b. Justification
   c. Problem
   d. Hypothesis
   e. Variables
   f. Definition of samples
   g. Objectives
   h. Stages
   i. Comment about major sources used
2. Theoretical foundation
3. Used procedures
4. Process limitations and outcomes
5. Report structure
6. Explanation of elements having a theoretical significance that specify the newness of achieved results
7. Practical usefulness of outcomes
8. Comment about the way in which the bibliography is presented
9. Development
Chapter 1: Historical relations between Cuba and the United States and their impact upon Cuban libraries and librarians.

Chapter 2: Legislative structure of the economic blockade on Cuba and its impact on the information setting.

Chapter 3: Blockade actions against Cuban libraries and their damaging effects.

Chapter 4: Dissemination of false information that goes against the prestige of Cuban librarians.

Chapter 5: Repercussions of the blockade on Cuba in North American libraries and librarians.

10. Conclusions
11. Recommendations
12. Notes
13. Bibliography
14. Annexes

5. Explanation of the elements with a theoretical relevance that specify the newness of the achieved outcomes

- For the first time a study is conducted, where the impact of concrete economic and political problems in the general activity of libraries is analyzed.

- A specific identification is achieved in terms of the concrete impact of obstacles caused by the blockade both, in the development of professional techniques, and the use of available technology, as well as in aspects of inter-professional relations limiting the insertion of Cuban library science within the context of information sciences at international level.

6. Practical usefulness of results

The research constitutes a denouncing tool of Cuban librarians at different international fora, about the blockade damaging effects, apart from being a deep and documented reflection in the issue of libraries, that should be used in the nonstop denunciation that Cuba makes before the bodies of the United Nations.

7. Comment about the way in which the bibliography is presented

The research shows a quoted bibliography as footnotes for a better understanding of the text, and a consulted bibliography, listed in alphabetical order at the end of the
development of the report. The bibliographical style used is the Modern Language Association.\(^8\)

8. Development

Chapter 1: Historical relations between Cuba and the United States and their impact upon Cuban libraries and librarians.

From the beginnings up to the 18th century

In order to talk about antecedents in trade relations between Cuba and the United States, we would have to go back centuries ago. Different historians coincide in starting these relations since pre-Columbian times. Fernando Ortiz in his book *Historia de la arqueología indocubana*\(^9\) issues reliable proofs of the cultural exchange between Cuba and Florida. The author states that there existed confirmed relations based on beliefs, customs, artistic motives, housing construction, procedures for the manufacturing of ceramics and artifacts, as well as for food preparation of both Cuban and American Indians. Pezuela comments that in 1698, trade between Indians from Florida and Havana achieved a value of one hundred and eighty thousand pesos\(^10\). On the other hand, Portell Vilá asserts that these relations were established before the European colonization and conquest, justified by the evident navigation with small canoes that existed between Key West and Cuba.\(^11\)

The description of Cuba as the “Key to the Gulf of Mexico” constitutes a phrase in the midst of one of the first texts of the history, where the meaning of the geographical location of the island is clear, in the political and economic interests of the world powers back then. All along the history of the nation, this location constitutes the major strategic element to justify the need for taking hold of the island. Many years before (José Ignacio Rodríguez mentions about 80 years) the English colonies of Northern America started their independence wars that ended on July 4, 1776, the Scotch William Patterson (1665-1719), known as the founder of the Bank of England, and for his contributions in the growth of the English colonies, advised his King about the need of getting hold of the Island of Cuba; otherwise, others would do it.

\(^9\) Ortiz, Fernando. *Historia de la arqueología indocubana*. La Habana, 1936
\(^10\) Pezuela, Jacobo de la. *Historia de la Isla de Cuba*. Madrid, 1868, vol1 p.242
“If Great Britain all by itself or in combination with other maritime powers of Europe, does not work in favor of Darien, the day is not far away, in which America, tired of the traffic slowness, will take hold first of all, of that isthmus and later on, of the islands of Sandwich. And from here, it will turn out that the Anglo-Americans placed at an intermediate position, between the east and the west of the New World, will be able to build the most powerful and extended empire that has been seen so far in the world, for it will rule not only over one part of the land of the globe, but over the seas of India and the South, and they will gather by means of trade, wherever they pass by, the greatest wealth ever. And when the States of Europe are engaged in any war, the entire traffic will be done through them. If God favors them with the knowledge of letters and arts, they will spread civilization blessings all over the Universe. Then England, despite its glory and its liberties, will only be known in the world, by the memory of its history, just the way Egypt is today”…

“The addition of the Port of Havana to the ports and paths of the isthmus will duly complete the project. Havana can easily be defended with five or six thousand acclimatized men; and their situation in an island, such as Cuba, that is one of the best and most extensive, not just of America, but maybe of the world, and that being at almost equal distance from the two large continents of America, the northern and the southern one, is like the natural key to the Gulf of Mexico, and very respectable sentry or warden of the navigation of those waters, will turn it into a spot of unique importance for the case.”

Spain was the owner of Cuba and Florida; England ruled in Virginia, New England and other North American territories; however, the geographical location so close to Cuba and North America and the remoteness of their colonizers, made Cubans and North Americans communicate independently from their mother countries. Cuba, having no other wealth but the advantage of its geographical position, became in the first years of the colony, a passing station of Spanish squadrons in their trade and smuggling through the West Indies. Portell Vila describes this stage between both countries as follows: “the relations of Cuba and Florida with the Thirteen Colonies would have as the only concrete expressions during long years: contraband, Corsican, piracy, the exchange of prisoners,

12 Rodríguez, José Ignacio. Estudio histórico sobre el origen, desenvolvimiento y manifestaciones prácticas del ideal de la Anexión de la Isla de Cuba a los Estados Unidos de América. La Habana: Imprenta La propaganda literaria, 1900. pp. 16-17
military and naval expeditions, and the poorest knowledge of the resources and the importance of each of them by the other possessions”. The same author states that during the government of Captain General Pedro Valdés, an investigation related with contraband revealed that the judge in charge of it and with enough proofs, had to arrest almost the total population of Bayamo; among them, prominent families and religious people, all of them linked to smuggling.

After 1720, modifications in the system of fleets are produced and expeditions of loose loaded ships are accepted to go to American ports from Spanish ports. This allowed for certain freedoms in trade to such an extent that in 1740, the Real Compañía de Comercio de La Habana was founded in Cuba, made up of Spanish and Cuban merchants which were granted the monopoly of the colony traffic. Martín Aróstegui, a Creole, whose mediocre work in it is kept in the news, was one of its founders.

The taking of Havana by the English provided a turning point though short-lived, in the relations between Cubans and Americans. If with the Spanish, about 6 ships used to call on the Port of Havana every year, Pezuela describes that over 1 000 ships arrived at the bay during the 11 months of occupation. On the other hand, García de León states: “The Taking of Havana was thus, a key moment and encouraged an intense commercial activity: while normally there arrived some 15 ships a year at its dock, during the British occupation (between August 1762 and July 1763) it was visited at least by 700 British and Anglo-American merchant ships... In Cuba, that had thrived during the war as a Spanish trade center due to its privileged position in the “return trip” from New Spain, since 1740 the Havana Company had been authorized to promote the royal tobacco monopoly and to trade with Spain. The Company, controlled by Cubans and Spanish, was in charge of supplying San Agustín de la Florida with products coming from New Spain many times – primarily flour– and silver from the Mexican allocation that was redistributed from Havana to prisons in Florida and to Galveston, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo and Cunamá. ... The coasting trade contraband carried in small boats flourished and included the illegal large scale transfer of “human merchandise” of an African origin, as a result of the increase of the labor force demand. This smuggling used

13 Ob cit (11) p. 32
14 Ob cit (10)
to run basically between Florida and Cuba and was increased during the English occupation.”

Juan de Miralles was the first Cuban charged by the Marquis de la Torre, to establish relations with the Philadelphia Congress and with General Washington himself. Miralles was an outstanding slave smuggler between colonies. In 1777 the Marquis de la Torre orders secret agents to get information about the happenings in the British colonies, some of which were in the struggle for their liberation. This is how Miralles performs his mission, departing from Havana on December 31, 1777 on board of the ship “Nuestra Señora del Carmen” bound to Cádiz, landing in Charleston with certain justifications to achieve his real objectives. Later on, Captain General Diego José Navarro authorizes George Abbot Hall to trade with Havana, whenever the ship was carrying mail for Miralles16. In this way, trade between Cuba and the United States is started in a systematic and authorized fashion which, with ebbs and flows, was only stopped completely with the laws of the economic blockade on Cuba after the triumph of the Revolution.

Miralles’s relations with the colonies at war became so committed that he grew to really like the cause of the United States to such an extent, that several times he sent pictures of Washington and letters to Captain General Navarro, describing the success he was reaching in his actions. His diplomatic mission was shortened by a rapidly fatal pneumonia, which led him to death at Washington’s Camp itself, in Morristown, on April 28, 1780, where he was buried with honors and his burial ceremony was presided over by Washington and other high American officers.

By the American side, it was Oliver Pollock one of the pioneers in encouraging these relations to such an extent, that in 1778 he addresses the Captain General of the Island with the request of being considered as consular agent between the United States and Cuba, which Marshal Navarro refused to do. The interest for the relations was so big that later on, on April 20, 1781 Mr. Spyers Singleton was appointed as trade agent in Havana by the president of North Carolina, what Navarro himself did not accept either.

16 Ob cit. (11) p.79
Other proof of collaboration between both nations favored by trade at crucial historical moments that marked the independence of the United States, is the expedition that departs from Havana commanded by the Marquis of las Amarillas, intended to assist Bernardo Gálvez in the siege and taking of Mobila in which about three hundred blacks, mulattos from Havana among other Cuban military took part. The trade favored in the time of the independence war of the Thirteen Colonies, and about which Spain kept an encouraging attitude, took on relations of a social, political nature that contributed with the Cuban support to the independentist ideals of the Americans of that time, and with the active participation and assistance to its desired final triumph. This is the way in which the first political relations between Cubans and Americans elapsed, which benefited by trade and the nearness of both countries, were not the only ones that described the struggle of both nations united by the same cause historically.

One of the happenings that incredibly marked the trade development in Cuba was the **Regulations for Free Trade of October 12, 1778**. The major motivation of the document, according to its preamble, was the desire of the King to guarantee “the happiness of my beloved Vassals of these Kingdoms and those from the Indies”, and his conviction that “only a free and protected Trade between European Spanish and Americans, can reestablish in my Domains, Agriculture, Industry, and Population back to their former vigor”\(^1\). These regulations left thirteen ports open for straight trade with America: Alicante, Alfaques de Tortosa, Almería, Barcelona, Cádiz, Cartagena, Gijón, La Coruña, Málaga, Palma de Mallorca, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Santander and Seville. However, the requests from Bilbao, El Ferrol and Port of Santa María to join the system were rejected by the State Board and Venezuelan ports were left out until 1788. In Cuba, besides Havana, the ports of Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad and Batabanó were authorized. This regulation favored colonial traffic and with the independence war of the United States and the assistance of Spain to the revolting colonies, a free trade is opened between the United States and Cuba. American ships enter to load sugar and other goods and fundamentally bring wheat flour, industrial items and slaves.

The liberation war itself brought about such a big trade boom that American ships touched Cuban ports constantly. Navarro estimated the entry of six American ships loaded with groceries to return with Cuban goods in six weeks from December 20, 1780 up to January 31, 1781.\(^\text{18}\) This strengthening brought about the fact that Custom rents were doubled in less than two or three years, and the money accumulation in the island enabled a collection of jewels from ladies in Havana, for the libertarian cause of American colonists. They managed to raise 1 200 000 pounds that would end up at the Yorktown march with which the war would be over.\(^\text{19}\)

Trade relations between both were kept in such a way that Portell Vilá states: “the first North Americans that settled in Cuba were not military, priests, philosophers, educators, economists, liberators or scientists, but merchants that, coming from a country in full agricultural-industrial evolution, were coming to break up the obstacles of a trade monopoly under which Cuba was, only and exclusively, a colony whose economy was built upon the exploitation of two or three non-basic products for the feeding of its people, and the importing of everything needed for the subsistence of that very people”.\(^\text{20}\)

On June 27, 1781, Robert Smith was appointed as trade agent of the United States who did not get the acknowledgement of the Spanish authorities in Cuba.

Once the war was over, the United States tried to keep trade relations with a legal nature; that is why, they proposed a trade treaty. This constitutes the first reportedly trade treaty between both countries. The substitute of Miralles, Francisco Rendón, has among his first functions, finding out requests and offers from the United States and Mr. Robert R. Livingstone, Secretary of Foreign Affairs is submitted a questionnaire about the issue, to which the representative replies: “The trade connection between Spain and the United States will be mutual in all its length and, if these inhabitants find that they are encouraged in the Spanish Islands, they will certainly provide them very easily with supplies at such prices that they will get great advantages; and in order to increase the


\(^{20}\) Ob cit. (11) p. 85
crop of sugars in those parts… they will make the return trips with such sugar and salt, if duties were moderate and permitted when withdrawing those imports”. 21 However, as to the point referring to measures that should be adopted to avoid the underground trade, the official himself indicated that they would do nothing about it.

It is interesting that since these dates, as far as known trade treaties are concerned, the American purposes with the island have not varied a lot. Cuba built its economy under the same precepts of profitable adjustments which have been based on the fake mutual assistance where basically, there prevailed the import of staple products and the export of sugar as raw material. However, in the point of trade legality the reality is quite different. If in the 18th century, when the United States just gets its independence is not accountable for trade illegalities between both countries, at present the world is submitted to the most extraordinary repressive measures against the entire trade established with Cuba, not just by North Americans, but by any representative, institution, enterprise or organization anywhere in the world, which somehow sets up trade relations with Cuba in the same way, as it is the case of the current blockade laws having a totally extraterritorial nature. The explanation is quite simple. At that time interests were no others than to pursue the direction of the island towards an economic dependency under certain trade justifications, as it was achieved once the Republic was in power. And such were their interests, that they stated right then and there, that they would do nothing to avoid any type of trade rapprochement. These trade relations with Cuba have always been the support and justification elements in their annexation policy with the island, that once unsustainable, are split into total isolation and the most terrible blockade.

Once independence was obtained, that very year, 1783, 22 ships with North American goods departed from Philadelphia bound to Havana, and 18 merchant ships with Cuban fruits coming from Havana arrived in Philadelphia. However, Spanish authorities did not take long in banning trade relations between both countries. Their nonstop measures overlooked in multiple occasions, split up into orders. Thus, on February 18, 1784 a royal order is adopted by means of which, the introduction of American flours in Cuba is prohibited. Later on, North American citizens who had businesses in the island were

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21 Johnson, Emily R. History of Domestic and Foreign Commerce of the United States. Washington, 1915 T. 1 p. 83
expelled and the country found itself in a new economic crisis in which, everybody missed the opulence from the independence war days.

The calls for certain commercial opening were not left only in the hands of Cuban merchants. In 1787 the treasurer of the Treasury himself, Antonio Paz, in a memorandum addressed to the captain general, numbers the advances obtained over the last five years within which restrictions had been contained. José Pablo Valiente appointed as Treasury Quartermaster General, was another character devoted to struggling for the sake of free trade. Nevertheless, the most representative figure at the time in terms of economic reforms was Francisco de Arango y Parreño. Considered as the first and major Cuban reformism ideologist, his ideas based on the slave treaty and the plantation regime, constitute an unquestionable contribution in the consolidation of the Cuban slave bourgeoisie. His economic project is clearly explained in his speech about “Agriculture in Havana and Ways to Foster it.”

The government of Don Luis de las Casas in 1790 and the Haitian revolution a few months later, condition a boom on this initial stage of trade between both countries. Cuba develops the sugar industry based on slave labor and the Captain General authorizes the slave trade. The War between France and Great Britain in 1793 constitutes another fact that favors trade between both countries; the Captain General authorizes American ships to carry groceries to the ports of Havana and Santiago. Once again trade relations are benefited and imports and exports witness a great increase.*

**What was happening at the same time with libraries in Cuba?**

To study the foundation of the first information institutions is somehow, to link them with education, communication, the role of book and the dissemination of knowledge as a

* Graphic data obtained from Portell Vilá, Herminio. Ob cit (11) p. 116
whole. During the first two centuries of the colony, “the smallest trace of a teaching institution is not found”\textsuperscript{22}. Nevertheless, in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and the beginnings of the 17\textsuperscript{th}, the Church played a key role in different spheres of society, particularly in education. Franciscans, Jesuits and Dominicans, as religious orders, used to centralize teaching and to control the printed production: books.

The first piece of news about a library in Cuba was found in the testament of Presbyter Nicolás Estebes Borges, general vicar of Havana Bishopric, passed way in early 1665, in one of whose clauses it reads: “I declare that I have a library of approximately one thousand books. I want and it is my will that this should be placed at the Parish Church of this City in the part and place where Their Grace Lordships and such Sir Field Master Governor, see it fit, delivering it rationally to any clergyman that may take care of it, so as to be available for the required and beloved preachers and theologians, and if there were a Cathedral Church in this city, it should be moved into it for such a goal.”\textsuperscript{23}.

These first libraries in the country appear in the midst of the backwardness and the intellective poverty of its dwellers, even within the scholarly stage of library activity in the world, and the Golden Century of the Spanish culture. They constituted private libraries named “bookstores” by their owners and lacked social use, with the religious topic prevailing in their volumes. On the other hand, they were foreign books, mostly Spanish, and in other cases in Latin language, because there did not exist a printing press in Cuba back then. Despite of all these characteristics that conditioned the almost non-existent library activity in the 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} centuries, there are documents expressing the interest of Spain to keep the ancient documents of the Island.

So far, the oldest piece of information that we have about certain legislation on information activity (library or archive), that involves Cuba as a Spanish colony, is registered by the Liberation Army Captain and Chief of the Government and Correspondence Section of the National Archives, Mr. Joaquín Llaverías, in his book \textit{Historia de los archivos de Cuba}, when he states that in the ordinances of King Don Felipe II, year 1569, it was ordered to take good care of books and other papers and that a sworn inventory of the Accounting should be made with a list of book authors, their

\textsuperscript{22} Guerra y Sánchez, Ramiro. “Descuido de la enseñanza y bajo nivel moral de la colonia” \textit{Historia de la Nación Cubana}. La Habana: Editorial Historia de la Nación Cubana, 1952. t1. p.331
\textsuperscript{23} Le Roy y Casá, Jorge. \textit{Historia del Hospital San Francisco de Paula}. La Habana, 1958 pp.30-31
matters (content) and the list of the new books that arrived, as well as certain numbering of each of them.  

In 1693 and 1764 the norms for not drawing documents, under any pretext whatsoever from the office archives, were dictated through royal document, granting authority to do so only to viceroy, presidents and governors, by means of a Court Minister of the District or the Notary Public of the government in order to draw what they needed, with a previous certification. This would be the antecedent and origin of our archives and the first steps for the further library work.

However, despite of this interest, described in the mentioned government ordinances, the situation of Cuban documents was calamitous, particularly in terms of their preservation. Historian Jacobo de la Pezuela describes that “up until the end of Ricla’s government, the inquiry of historical facts about Cuba was difficult and pitiful; because there were no other archives in the island, but books and minutes from city halls and notebooks from the ancient government notary’s office of its capita. And even that scarce documentation, devoured by worms, was interrupted in many stages, having disappeared for the most part after the siege and taking of Havana, in 1792”.  

During the passing of the 18th century an incipient archive and library activity was witnessed in Cuba, that was primarily the result of the creation of some archives in different government buildings integrated by the government ordinances themselves, and the existence of a very few private libraries in the hands of religious people, with a few volumes, all of them foreign and addressing religious issues. On the other hand, the editorial movement of the Island was emerging with printed materials by Cuban authors in other countries or about issues related with Cuba. The bibliographic work by Trelles from the 17th and 18th centuries, registers the work in Latin entitled Disertaciones improvisadas sobre temas sacados a la suerte con motivo de cátedras en la Universidad Salmantina, by Juan Aréchaga and Casas of 1662, as the first book of his work. From the 18th century, he numbers about fourteen documents that are for the most part, funeral prayers, sermons, or historical documents, as the one published by Diego

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Varona, whom Trelles acknowledges as the first Cuban historian, entitled *Historia de las invasiones piráticas, especialmente de las de Morgan*, of 1668.\textsuperscript{26}

However, several events took place in this century, which marked the national identity in the editorial and educational fields. The introduction of the printing press in Cuba is acknowledged, with the test of the first printed matter in 1723, of the *Tarifa general de precios de medicina*, edited in Havana by Carlos Habré. As to the introduction of the printing press, there is a diversity of criteria among bibliographers and historians. Trelles himself agrees with what was recorded by Bachiller y Morales, that the first typographical production of Cuba is the booklet by González Alamo\textsuperscript{♦}, printed in Havana in 1707, and quoted by Beristai, a Mexican bibliographer. Regretfully, such document has not been found. Its title is *Disertación médica sobre que las carnes de cerdo son saludables en la isla de Barlovento*. The printed matter of the General Tariff on Prices… does not appear registered in the bibliography by Trelles of that time. Trelles himself also refers to the work by the Chilean bibliographer José Toribio Medina, entitled *La imprenta en La Habana (1707-1810)*, published in Santiago de Chile in 1904, which, as its years indicate, recognizes just like other bibliographers of that time, the appearance of the printing press in Cuba at the beginning of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. A summarized chronological synthesis of Trelles’s work about the 18\textsuperscript{th} century editorial activity and its relation with the printing press would be the following:

1707: Introduction of the printing press
1720: News about the introduction of the printing press
1723: Bishop Valdés’s novena is published in Mexico as if there wasn’t a typographical establishment in Cuba
1724: Sossa’s booklet, discovered by Bachiller and reprinted in 1732
1735: Francisco de Paula’s Printing Press is opened
1735-1760: No publication at all is found
1753: There are no typographical workshops in Havana
1760: The existence of those workshops is affirmed once again

\textsuperscript{26} Trelles y Govín, Carlos Manuel. *Ensayo de Bibliografía Cubana de los siglos XVII y XVIII seguidos de unos apuntes para la Bibliografía Dominicana y Portorriqueña*. La Habana: Imprenta El Escritorio, Constitución 42, 1907.

\textsuperscript{♦} Trelles mentions Dr. González Alamo as the first phisiologist in Cuba and one of the first Cuban physicians. He taught Medicine at the Convent of San Juan de Letrán.
1791: The bibliographic movement is emphasized
1799: One hundred booklets are published, the same amount that is produced from 1707 to 1790

The editorial boost and the new bibliographical movement that were observed overlap with the appearance of the first publication having a literary and informative nature, the *Papel Periódico de la Habana*, founded by the distinguished governor Don Luis de las Casas on October 24, 1790. When this publication emerged he had already edited the first newspaper of the Island, the *Gaceta de La Habana*, which Trelles registers in his bibliography from the 17th and 18th centuries. It was founded by the Count of Ricala in May 1764 and went out on Mondays. It had some political news, commercials and several government arrangements.

Other events in the field of education in Cuba, are the foundation of the *Universidad de San Jerónimo de La Habana* in 1728, which undoubtedly, in its doings, would have to be supported by a library in order to fulfill the objectives of teaching, and the foundation of the *Seminario de San Carlos y San Ambrosio* on August 14, 1763, that extended the totally ecclesiastic training to other scientific and humanistic matters. One of the students from this seminary was Presbyter Félix Varela.

It can be affirmed that until 1793 there was hardly elementary schooling in our country, and the University was above all, at the service of the interests of Spain. However, about the impact it had upon the national culture and identity, Trilles states: “The fact that up until the present times, it has been believed that the age of civilization started in Cuba in 1790 or 1793 with the government of Don Luis de las Casas, the publication of the Newspaper and the creation of the Patriotic Society, continuous to be curious. The way I see it, the Cuban civilization began to be stressed in 1734, that is, the year the Pontifical University opened its doors, that despite of its old-fashioned curriculum, it became a kind of beacon that partially dispelled the deep darkness into which, higher education was plunged in the Island of Cuba in the 18th century”. 27

Up to that point, Cuba counted on four printing presses, a periodical publication, the University, the Seminary of San Carlos and a certain economic wealth due to the boom

27 Ob. cit. (26) p. VI
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of sugar prices in Europe after 1755 and the sugar growth of the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century. All this brought along the emergence of institutions in which economic problems about trade and production were addressed. Julio Le Riverend affirms that they were renewed institutions and this renovation was due primarily, to the progress that took place between 1780 and 1795. \textsuperscript{28} As something new, those institutions included the participation of citizens as individuals in their creation and maintenance, and representatives from the new social groups were part of them, even more so than representatives from the traditional aristocracy of the colony. The two basic institutions in the economic aspect that emerged in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century were the Real Sociedad Económica or Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País and the Real Consulado de Agricultura y Comercio de La Habana.

The Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País emerges after an article that appeared in the Papel Periódico de La Habana on September 4, 1791 and after a request to Governor de las Casas about it. Its intentions were the promotion of trade, agriculture, industries and economic production as a whole, apart from the education and the instruction of the youth. In June 1793, it dedicated its library that is the first public library founded in Cuba. José Arango was its first director for a short time, followed by Antonio Robredo, who donated his own house for the rising library. The first collections contained seventy-seven volumes purchased with the funds from the Papel Periódico de la Habana and others donated by Don Luis de las Casas. Initially services were provided to the members of the Society, and it is in June 1794 when its president, Captain General Don Luis de las Casas, proposed to open the library doors to every interested individual.\textsuperscript{29}

On the other hand, upon the foundation of the Royal Consulate of Agriculture and Trade of Havana, the setting up of an archive is proposed for the preservation of the documents of this center, being the obligation of the archivist to order them, to make cards of the papers expressing their content briefly. By Royal Order issued on May 9, 1797, payment was set for searching in the archives. Three reales for the first ten papers searched from years prior to the current one and two reales for each of the ones after

this number. These payments were not fulfilled occasionally, but contributed to the order of the archive itself because it limited the entrance of the “curious ones” and the people who did not really care much about what they had requested.\(^{30}\)

Both societies represented an antecedent to study the beginnings of information activity in Cuba, both the library and the archive. Although the work was just incipient and very rudimentary, the fact that the origin of these activities is primarily linked to economic societies provides it with a very peculiar feature. The 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) centuries were characterized by the creation of national libraries all over Europe. Library institutions were benefited, one way or another, for they were increased and their collections were benefited with the information from different societies. The interesting thing about the first public library in Cuba is that its emergence came about at a time in which the mother country was being developed in the same direction. The Island was placing itself as one of the most advanced colonies in that regard. At the beginning of the 18\(^{th}\) century, in the year 1712, Felipe V created the Royal Library, which was the origin of the National Library of Spain.

Nevertheless, it should be remarked that the formation of the first information institutions in Cuba was conditioned by a certain economic development that was not provided by the mother country but by trade relations between the United States and Cuba.

**19th Century**

Portell Vilá maintains that in 1800 and 1801, the last years of the war between Spain and Great Britain, exports to Cuba from the United States, reached $9,070,022 in the first year and $6,047,688 in the second one. The Amiens Peace Treaty in 1801 contributed to new limitations by the colony in terms of trade between both countries. Consul Blakely in Santiago de Cuba was incarcerated for smuggling. The Marquis of Someruelos, Captain General back then, tried not to give full credits to trade limitations and left the regulation in such a way that, American goods did not enter as long as there were Spanish ones available. Quartermaster General Viguri, enemy of trading with the United States, dictates a trade ban on January 9, 1802, having at that point, 59

\(^{30}\) Ob. cit (24) p. 55
American ships waiting to be unloaded and 16 waiting for the sugar cargo in the Bay of Havana.\(^{31}\)

This was the situation when, after hostilities between the English and Napoleon broke up, Carlos IV, compelled by the British aggressions, due to Spain’s submission to France, declares the war on Great Britain on December 12, 1804. This brought about a certain crisis in trade and businesses in general for Cuba. Jefferson, one of the founders of the American State, in 1807 implements an **embargo law** that paralyzes foreign trade.

The figure of Thomas Jefferson was the most reliable representation of the idea of the annexation to Cuba. The first documented pieces of news about this regard are several letters addressed to the US presidents that came after him in the early 19\(^{th}\) century.

On April 27, 1809 he writes to President Madison: “To gain the good will of the United States would surely give them Florida…Though with certain difficulty I would also consent to have Cuba added to our Union, so as for us not to help Mexico and the remaining provinces\(^{32}\).” All along the 19th century, the US policy was either to take hold of Cuba or to keep it under the Spanish colonial rule. This second position, once endangered by whatever reason, under security pretexts, justified its incursions and interventions in the nation during all the colonial and republican period.

In the same year a great part of troops concentrated in the South of the United States, having no other intention but to intervene at any time, whereas General James Wilkinson was sent twice to Havana in annexation managements. The American trade from 1807 to 1809 had declined by 50%. If US exports from 1806 to 1807 amounted to some $13,025,579, from 1808 to 1809 were dropped to $6,685,617\(^{33}\), and sugar imports decreased in those years from some 44 000 tons to 17 000, all these consequences of the Napoleonic wars not just on the Cuban colony, but on the independent American state.\(^{33}\)

\(^{31}\) Ob cit (11) p. 133
\(^{32}\) Ob cit (12) p. 51
\(^{33}\) Ob cit (11) p. 157
Together with the return of Fernando VI back to the Spanish reign, the absolutism that did not bring big changes in Cuba came back. In 1817, under English pressure, the King would sign the treaty for the abolition of slavery, which should come into force on May 30, 1820. The figure of Arango y Parreño was key in these episodes proposing that changes should take place a step at a time, beginning with the suppression of the slave trade.

On June 23, 1823 Jefferson writes to President Monroe: “the truth is that the addition of Cuba to our Union is exactly what is needed to make our power as a nation reach the greatest grade of interest”. 34 On October 24, he reaffirms on another letter to the President: “I frankly confess that I have always looked at Cuba as the most interesting addition that could ever be made to our system of States. The domination that this island together with the Point of Florida might give us, over the Gulf of Mexico and the countries and the isthmus bathed by its waters would fill the measure of our political welfare”. 35

These two letters by Jefferson (1809, 1823) constitute the first American expressions in favor of the Annexation of Cuba.

In the first half of the 19th century the colonial society contradictions are given in Cuba. Carlos Alzugaray splits them up into two stages. Until 1840 the Island breathed the airs of freedom unleashed in the independence wars of Latin America. The figure of Félix Varela unfolds the revolutionary patriotism; however, the economic stability, plunged into the weakness of the ruling class that was trapped by the limitations of the slave economy and the internal lack of union, thwarted actions having an independentist character, whereas annexation ideas were strengthened. After 1840 annexationism takes on a higher boom in Cuba.36

Not much time elapses for Spain to be perceived in a completely secondary stage in the Cuban market. In 1829, 39% of the total amount of Cuban imports is American and 26%
from Spain. In 1860 the United States takes in 62% of Cuban exports, Great Britain gets 22% and Spain 3%.  

The data expressing the trade boom between both countries are different and overwhelming. For instance, in 1832 Havana was a city larger than Boston and Baltimore and its population was almost equal to that of New York and Philadelphia. There existed the Promotion Board that replaced the Royal Consulate of Agriculture and Trade, which among its initiatives for the sake of trade, included the creation of the railroad, planned since 1832 and established in 1837. Some historians acknowledge it as a work of Americans with English capital, others attribute the initiative to Cubans conducting preliminary studies through the Board appointed by the Economic Society of Friends of the Country and in which, engineer Félix Lamour was involved. 

The American attitude in front of the Ten Year War was contradictory. Although within large layers of the American society the war was undertaken with sympathy, the then President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, influenced by Hamilton Fish, his State Secretary, did not give it the value and importance that this struggle deserved. It is expressed that way in a message by the President to the Congress on June 14, 1870. The independence of Cuba constituted a threat to the expansionistic interests of the United States back then.

At the time in which preparations were conceived for the next struggle that was started on February 24, 1895, being José Martí one of the major leaders of the war with an anti-imperialist thought, a number of events conditioning the appearance of Yankee imperialism took place in the United States in the same period, approximately between 1878 and 1898. Lenin was one of the scholars of the imperialism emergence. In his analyses he pointed out something of unique importance, related with the way in which relations inside Cuba were developed, being a Spanish colony economically dependent on the United States: “When talking about the colonial policy of capitalist imperialism times, it is necessary to point out that financial capital and the corresponding international policy, which is translated into the struggle of the big powers for the
economic and political sharing of the world, bring about plenty of temporary forms of state dependency. By this time it is typical to see not only two major groups of countries—those which own colonies and colonies themselves —, but also the varied forms of dependent countries that from a formal, political perspective, enjoy independence. But as a matter of fact, they find themselves enveloped in the networks of financial and diplomatic dependency”.  

During the wars, trade relations were deepened. In 1881, the North American consul in Cuba is already able to affirm in his consular report: “Commercially, Cuba has become a dependency of the United States, although politically it continues depending on Spain”. In 1884, the United States used to take in 85% of the total production of Cuba.  

On December 7, 1896, the day when Antonio Maceo fell while in combat, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the government of the United States, Mr. Olney, estimated that at that moment, North American investments amounted to 50 million dollars. On the other hand, Scout Nearing and Joseph Freeman in their book “The Dollar Diplomacy”, comment that from 50 millions in 1898 they went up to 141 millions in 1909, and then to 1250 millions in the decade of the 20’s.  

Libraries in the 19th Century  

For the library related universe, the 19th century was a time of great renovations. Many authors consider year 1850 as the beginning of modern cataloging principle. Antonio Panizzi’s ninety-one rules emerged (1839), Charles A. Cutter creates the rules for the dictionary catalog (1876), Melvil Dewey elaborates the Decimal Classification (1876), and large classifications like the one of the British Museum appear. While the library related world was already undertaking conferences and different airs of technical renovation were breathed, people still lived under a full colonial regime in Cuba. In this ambience, although breakthroughs of information activity were given a certain boost as it was formerly expressed, they were slow if compared with the advances they got in other latitudes. The economic life had gradually started to depend on the prosperity of the...
sugar industry. Vilá described that in 1844 “in Cuba there were only 286 schools attended by 11,053 students or, ten percent of the school age population of the country in which, illiterate grown-ups ratio was also terrifying”. 44

In this century, the concept of library for all, that is, the library conceived to increase culture and education, as well as entertainment, is developed basically in the Anglo-Saxon area. This concept, according to Carmen Rovira, is born in England and is disseminated in the United States. She says that at the beginning the instruction of librarians was conducted in the libraries themselves until, in 1887 the first school for librarians is founded at Columbia University, by Melvyn Dewey. Originally, teaching was based on practice, but a few years later university resources were allocated to extend the syllabuses and their length. 45 Previously, it is known that the first school specifically intended for the education of both, librarians and archivists, was founded in the second decade of the 19th century, in the Ecole de Chartes in France.

In Cuba, in the dawns of the century, there were not many changes in the information work. The Library of the Economic Society during the first four decades was fed primarily on donations although it made efforts to increase its collection by means of purchasing. In 1838, José de la Luz y Caballero takes the direction of the Society and offers a great assistance to the library collection. The work of librarians back then, based on the experiences of this institution, consisted basically in the organization and representation of documents. The librarian should make the general catalog, in a consecutive numeric order and in an alphabetic order by authors.

Other libraries were also opened that boosted the Cuban library movement. Among them:
1835: Matanzas Public Library (later on called Gener y del Monte)
1844: Havana Lyceum Library
1846: Library of the Universidad Pontificia de San Jerónimo de La Habana
1855: Library of the General Preparatory School
1863: Library of Professional Schools

44 Ob cit. (12) p.352
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

1871: Library of the Colegio de Segunda Enseñanza San Anacleto
1885: Library of the Association and Salesclerks
1899: Elvira Cape Library in Santiago de Cuba

The work unfolded in all of them was essentially empirical, in the organization of their collections and their enlargement through donations and purchases. A major concern of that time was the lodging of the collections that were growing a step at a time, and which required new premises, as a result of which, the Economic Society Library was transferred a couple of times, in 1842 to a part of the extinct Convent of San Felipe and in 1856 to a house at 308 Dragones Street. Likewise, there existed a special interest for library work rules. The Economic Society Library sets up regulations for its work that varied, particularly with the changes of address. The Library of the Universidad Pontificia de San Jerónimo de La Habana, in early 1859, publishes its regulations, very similar to those published by the Library of the Society a year before.

The development of editorial production in Cuba in the 19th century keeps a gradual increase that specialist Ambrosio Fornet describes in his work El libro en Cuba. The statistics themselves that are shown confirm it:

Table 1: Distribution of books and booklets

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<td>1830-39</td>
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<td>1840-49</td>
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<td>1850-59</td>
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<td>1860-69</td>
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<td>1870-79</td>
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<td>1880-89</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>135</td>
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<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>104</td>
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Graph 1: 19th Century Literary Production

It is true that the library movement advances in this century, with the foundation of several libraries that manage to spread to the remaining provinces. The Cuban editorial production is developed similarly in a gradual way with the creation of new printing presses, the appearance of the editor figure, and the technological transformation of the

workshops. This brought about a crisis from the aesthetic viewpoint, that is, when the possibility of publishing becomes relatively accessible, the image of the writer suffers before criticism, whereas the artistic quality decreases. Fornet states that many authors blame the newspaper explosion of that time for this crisis. The emergence of newspaper serials contributed to the fact that everybody wrote about anything. 47 This editorial boom conditioned the development of a bibliographic movement that boosted the history of our intellectual production. Different cultural personalities, both Cubans and foreigners, devoted themselves to the bibliographic compilation of the book in Cuba. It should be noted that among such personalities, North American bibliographers with thematic catalogs about Cuba are outstanding:

- **Antonio Bachiller y Morales** with his “Apuntes para la historia de las letras y de la ilustración pública en la Isla de Cuba (1859-1861)”.

- **Eusebio Valdés Domínguez** publishes in 1879 in Revista de Cuba his “Bibliografía cubana: colección de apuntes bibliográficos de obras y periódicos para la historia de la tipografía, de las ciencias y de la literatura de Cuba”.

- **Francisco Jimeno** publishes in volume 8 of Revista de Cuba his “Bibliografía cubana” as an appendix of Bachiller’s works in 1880.

- **Domingo del Monte** publishes a chronological list of unpublished books and printed matters that have been written in Cuba in 1882. It used to have 170 titles and appeared in volume 2 of Revista de Cuba.

- **Manuel Pérez Beato** publishes in Curioso Americano, “Tipografía Cubana: noticia de las imprentas hasta el año 1840”, in 1892-93, thus completing Bachiller’s work. He is attributed to have found the first Cuban printed book known as Tarifa general de precios.

- **Appleton P. Griffin** publishes his work “List of Books Relating to Cuba” in 1896.

- That very year “Finding List of the Books Relating to Spain and her Colonies” and “Reading List of the Books in Cuba and the Present War with Spain” are published, **Anne S. Woodcock**, being the author of the latter.

- **Charles Chadenat** publishes the bibliography “Cuba y Puerto Rico” in France in 1898.

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47 Idem
Gradually, the development of editorial production became an increase of library activities particularly in terms of book treatment. At the same time, science in Cuba takes on other airs because up that point, it was very weak if not practically null. As to scientific editorial production, in the *Catálogo de libros y folletos publicados en Cuba desde la introducción de la imprenta hasta 1840* by Bachiller y Morales, we find that the first publication of that nature appears in the form of a booklet in 1797, under the title of *Disertación sobre la fiebre maligna llamada vómito negro, enfermedad epidémica de las Indias occidentales leída en junta de la Sociedad Patriótica de La Habana el 5 de abril de 1797 por el Sr. D. Tomás Romay, Dr. en Medicina, Maestro de Filosofía, Catedrático que fue del texto Aristótico, La Habana, Imprenta de la Capitanía General, 49 p.*48 In 1805 the *Memoria sobre la introducción y progreso de la vacuna* by Dr. D. Tomás Romay appears, published in Havana, at the Captaincy General Printing Press. Despite of these two documents considered among the first scientific publications in Cuba, it is not until May 19, 1861 that the first constituent session of the Royal Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Havana is held, whose approval was dealt with since 1826 by the initiative from a group of Cuban scientists of the time.

The socio-economic conditions of Cuba during the colony did not enable a greater scientific-technical progress. In the second half of the 19th century, as a result of the shaping up of a highly prestigious scientific community, the religious and scholastic stands that prevailed in education and culture up to that point began to lose ground before the introduction of scientific ideas in the island, coming from countries with a higher development level. These causes conditioned the creation of the Royal Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Havana, today’s Academy of Sciences of Cuba. Likewise, libraries proliferate within the university setting. Specialist Margarita Sánchez concludes, after having read the documents belonging to the public instruction collection of the National Archive * about the functioning of the University Library, that it is inferred that given the development reached by different specialties in its faculties, libraries by schools were created in the 19th century itself. This fact should be considered as the emergence of the first network of libraries (in this case, university libraries)

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* She refers to the documents from the Nacional Archive of Cuba entitled “Instrucción Pública”, the following files: 166/10333, 1864; 406/23680, 1880; 494/29569, 1885; 533/32104, 1887; 556/33598, 1888; 562/33963, 1889; 562/33962, 1889.
created in Cuba and which unquestionably constituted, a step in the progress of the Cuban library movement.\(^{49}\)

20\(^{th}\) Century: Economic Dependency and Library Science

The Cuban victory in the independence wars found itself sabotaged by the American intervention. The interest of the United States for Cuba, declared since the very beginnings of the colony, found spaces to adopt a number of measures that gave rise to the well-known Platt Amendment. Signed on February 25, 1901 by the Committee on Cuban Affairs of the American Senate, inserted into the Army Expenses Act, and approved by the North American Congress on March 2, the amendment in its 8 articles mirrored the North American intentions of intervening in all issues related with the Island, to thwart its independence and to finally turn the Island into a North American colony once and for all.

In this regard, Leonardo Wood himself states: “Of course, Cuba has been left with little or no independence at all with the Platt Amendment, and the only right thing to do now is to get the annexation. This, however, will require some time and during the period in which Cuba keeps its own government, it is highly desirable that it should have one leading it to its own progress and betterment. It cannot sign certain treaties without our consent, nor can it borrow beyond given limits, and it must also keep the sanitary conditions that have been rule;, that is why, it is so obvious that it is absolutely in our hands and I think that there is no European government considering it at a given point, as something else but what it is, a real dependency of the United States, and as such, worthy of our consideration. With the control under which it will undoubtedly become a possession soon; we will practically control the sugar trade in the world shortly. The island will be gradually North Americanized and in due time, we will have one of the richest and most desired possessions in the world...\(^{50}\)

From December 1899 through May 1902, Leonardo Wood delivered 223 concessions to US companies, for the exploitation of the natural resources from the island. The ambition and the need of power over Cuba reached such an extent that the North American

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\(^{49}\) Sánchez Prieto, Margarita. Reseña histórica acerca de las fundaciones de las primeras bibliotecas en La Habana. Typed document. Rubén Martínez Villena Public Library.

\(^{50}\) Enmienda Platt. 15 junio 2004 <http://www.uh.cu/infogral/areasuh/defensa/>
President McKinley himself, used to have more powers over Cuba than in his own country. McKinley could modify Cuban tariffs however; he could not do it with the ones of the United States since that is a capacity of the Congress, which brought about the bankruptcy of Cuban independentist producers and the loss of their properties.  

Jointly, the Platt Amendment in 1901, the establishment of the Republic on May 20, 1902 and the Trade Reciprocity Treaty in 1903 were the three events that marked the new forms, both politically and economically, that Cuban American relations would be based on.

The Trade Reciprocity Treaty was signed by the governments from both countries on December 11, 1902 and approved by the US Senate on March 19, and by the Cuban Senate on March 11 and 28, 1903. It was approved by the US Congress on November 19, 1903 with 355 votes in favor and 21 against it. In articles X and XI it reflects its temporary nature, signed only for five years of validity that would be extended year after year as long as one of the parties requested it:

“Article XI: The present Treaty will be ratified by competent authorities from the respective countries, and ratifications will be exchanged in Washington, District of Columbia, United States of America, as soon as possible, before January thirty-first, one thousand nine hundred and three; starting to be in force on the tenth day after the exchange of ratifications and will continue to be in force for the term of (5) years to be counted since the day it begins to be in force, and afterwards year after year until one of the contract parties notifies the other its purpose of putting an end to it; in this case the Treaty will only be in force after a whole year has elapsed since the date of such notification. This Convention will not be in force until it has not been passed by Congress.”

Despite of everything that took place on the Island, a group of intellectuals and patriots who had been in exile for years on end, set up the Organizing Board of the National Library and Museum of the Island of Cuba. There are several works which have studied the causes for the emergence of the National Library of Cuba. Although there existed the

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51 Ob. cit (37)
Library of the Economic Society of Friends of the Country, that served as the core for National Libraries in Latin America for the most part, in 1901 the National Library of Cuba was founded having an independent character. Its first director was the Cuban patriot and bibliographer Domingo Figarola Caneda.

The creation of this institution, apart from what it represented and represents for identity and national culture, meant one more link in the Cuban library development. Its history places it at different times. After almost twenty years working as its director, Figarola Caneda was succeeded by Francisco de Paula Coronado for other twenty and six years. However, the National Library found itself in bad conditions. In this regard Roig states: “its most competent director, Dr. Francisco de Paula Coronado, is alien to all this disastrous state of our Library and not to be blamed for it at all [...] within his functions and with the scarce resources he counts with [...] he cannot do more than what he does; neither placing the books adequately, because there is no place where to put them; nor having them already catalogued, because he does not have employees to do it; nor getting all the new necessary works, or binding the existing ones and the newspaper collections because the credit is not enough.” 53

Although it is true that the economic development was increasingly more dependent on the North American market, these dependency conditions were deepened and created by means of legal concepts and political justifications. The emergence of the National Library of Cuba during the first intervention is the work of Cubans who were concerned for culture, who marched quite away from North American cunning ruses and government favors.

A statistical balance sheet in terms of imports and exports of Cuba and the United States is supplied by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FISCAL YEARS</th>
<th>IMPORTS ($)</th>
<th>EXPORTS ($)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>47 763 688</td>
<td>84 979 831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>49 305 274</td>
<td>97 441 690</td>
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The expressions of North American capital and investments in the Cuban economy are diverse in the first half of the century. “Oscar Pino Santos… states that in 1928 the North American capital reached its maximum figure with 1 505 millions. Rubén Martínez Villena quoting Carlos M. Trelles as a source, states that in 1925 the North American capital in Cuba was 1 400 million dollars which corresponded to the 17.5% of the Cuban wealth. At the same time, the outstanding Cuban economist, Felipe Pazos, in an article from 1957 published in the Diario de la Marina and quoting the US Commerce Department as a source, states that in 1929 it was just 919 millions (other authors state that in the year 1929 the North American capital in Cuba was slightly over 1200 millions)."\(^{54}\)

While the country was increasingly becoming an American colony of almost total economic dependency, the major information activities: library activity, archive activity and bibliographic activity were being developed gradually conditioned by the economic movement that was being conceived in the Island. It is known that in the 19\(^{th}\) century, particularly at the end of the century, the editorial production itself in Cuba led to a bibliographic movement that was dissociated from library work as such, just like it happened in former times in other latitudes, because the bibliographic activity has its own identity. On the other hand, libraries continued fostering recovery techniques and focused on problems addressing library buildings and the storage of a large bulk of documents.

It is not until the 30’s and 40’s of the 20\(^{th}\) century that the theoretical treatment for library science problems in Cuba is started, and this has to do with two major factors: the former is the emergence of the first magazines and books about the specialty and the latter are isolated efforts in terms of the professional training of librarians that responded

\(^{54}\) Ob. cit (52)
to the development of the activity and this in return, was derived from the progress and the economic changes of the nation. In both aspects relations between Cuban and North American librarians were fundamental.

The theoretical treatment of the library discipline finds a space with the appearance of literature. Specialty texts are started in totally bibliographical issues in books and booklets at the beginning of the century and responded to the bibliographical stage information activity used to experience back then. For example, the Bibliografía de Rafael M. Merchán by Domingo Figarola Caneda in its second edition, 1905; the Bibliografía de la Revolución de Yara by Luis Marino Pérez, 1908; the Bibliografía de Luz y Caballero by Domingo Figarola Caneda, 1915; Trelles’s work, Bibliografía cubana del siglo XX, and so forth. After the 30’s certain literature began to be published in booklets about different activities from information institutions with didactic intentions, advertisement of their experiences, tributes, and regulations. Thus, we find, Notas sobre un plan de fomento, reforma y organización de las bibliotecas, museos y archivos cubanos, by Fermín Peraza in 1934; La Biblioteca y el libro cubano, by Herminio Portell Vilá in 1934; Memoria de los trabajos realizados por la Biblioteca Municipal de la Habana, by Luis Mariano Rodríguez Rivero in 1935; and El centenario de la biblioteca pública de Matanzas, ensayo histórico bibliográfico, in 1935 among others.

An example of one of the booklets of the time showing the exchange between Cuban and North American librarians was the Reglamento de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios, 1948. The creation of the Cuban Association of Librarians in 1948, by the initiative of María Teresa Freyre de Andrade, is held at a meeting in the Lyceum in honor of Miss Marietta Daniels, from the Congress Library, during the Annual Convention of the American Library Association in New Jersey, as it was already mentioned in the antecedents of the current report. This brought about the acceleration of the provisional board so that its president could travel to the United States, to be able to draft the statutes of such organization, what led to the emergence of the booklet.

On the other hand, in 1947, during the First Assembly of Librarians of America, gathered in Washington from May 12 to June 6, it was agreed to create the Latin American Library Science Bibliography. This enterprise was carried out on the Cuban side by Fermín Peraza and Elena Vérez who compiled the Bibliografía bibliotecológica cubana and
collected, both in books and booklets and in journal articles, everything that was published in Cuba about Library Science from 1948 to 1955.

The specialized magazines that appeared in the republican stage, after 1930 were: the *Anuario Bibliográfico Cubano* (1937-1958), the *Boletín Bibliotecónico* (1938-1941), the *Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios* (1949-1959), and *Cuba Bibliotecológica* (1953-1960).

There are many examples where somehow in all of them, there appear pieces of evidence demonstrating the wide link between librarians from both nations. Their grounds were mostly the professional exchange and free access to information.

From the perspective of professional exchange the following examples can be mentioned:

**Trips of Cuban and North American Librarians**

1955 *Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios* March No 1 p.31: Mr. Lee Ash, president of the Hospitality Committee of the Club of New York Public Library, addressed a setter to the direction of the bulletin in order to let know his willingness to take care of every Cuban librarian visiting New York and to offer them visits to libraries, interviews with archivists, documentarians and bibliographers.

- 1956 *Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios* June No 2: On June 14 Guillermina Castillo, Berta Becerra, Isis Bermúdez, Nieves Menéndez and Ana Guerra, left for Miami Beach, accompanied by the secretary of the María Adelaida de León Cuban School of Librarians, to attend the 75th Annual Conference of the American Library Association.

- 1949 *Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios* September No 2 p. 71. Berta Becerra travels to the United States sponsored by the Library of Congress, for the study of different library services and her training in Library Economy within the General Program of the State Department about cultural exchange between the United States and American countries.
Scholarships for Cuban Professionals in the United States

- 1938 Boletín Bibliotécnico March No 2 p 7: José María Zayas, a Cuban librarian, was promoted to a scholarship of the Rockefeller Foundation and took studies (1936/37) in the Librarians College of Columbia University in New York.

- 1949 Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios March No 1: For the first time scholarships are granted by the government of the United States fulfilling the agreement signed in Buenos Aires in 1936 at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace and they are awarded to Inés M. José Llorcas Guiteras and Marta Hilda Fechrmann Guiteras, both in Library Economy studies for year at the Library School of Columbia University of New York.

Relations with the American Professional Associations

- 1938 Boletín Bibliotécnico July No 4: The fifth agreement signed in the first library event that was held in Cuba known by the name of Pro Libraries National Assembly and that found a space in the Bulletin for its organization and dissemination, consisted in communicating to the American Library Association that the Assembly was proposing the holding of the next convention in Havana and suggested that it should be in the year 1940, because that year the centennial of the National Archive, one of the oldest of America, would be commemorated. The first session dedicated to the Board of Trustees, led by Dr. Rafael Pérez Lobo, presented a sketch of the library reality and finished with the lecture by Herminio Portell Vilá entitled “Organization and Functioning of the Library of Congress in Washington”.

- 1956 Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios. June No 2: The ALA held its Annual Convention in Miami Beach, Florida in 1956. The Collage and Referente Library Association organized a two-day excursion to Havana in which 50 librarians took part during June 23 and 24. It is the first visit of that nature that is performed in Havana.
Like-minded Institutions

- **1938 Boletín Bibliotécnico** March No 2 p.7: The Cuban and American Historical Library is founded by the idea of Dr. Emilio Roig de Leuchsering, who in 1938 installed himself in the ground floor of the Municipal Palace with donations from Enrique Gay Galbó, Mario Guiral Moreno, Emeterio Santovenia, Gerardo Castellanos, Elías Entralgo, Julio Villalobo, Fermín Peraza, Joaquín LLaverías, Félix Lizaso, Manuel Bisbé, and José Antonio Ramos, among others. The speech was in charge of Dr. Enrique Gay Galbó where he clearly expresses the social function that any library must have: “Private libraries are like cemeteries in which the ideas of humanity rest buried, almost lost”.

- **1949 Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios** March No. 1 p.36: The Cuban-North American Cultural Institute created by the initiative of Dr. Herminio Portell Vilá counted with a public library of over 14 000 books and 2 000 records, apart from a hundred of collections and important magazines, taking care of a total of 100 readers approximately. Among its works we can find: “Scholarships granted by the United States to Cuban students”; “The North American book at the Book National Fair”; “Cuban emigrants in the United States during the 19th Century”; “Cubans among the US immortals”; “Trade Foundation between Cuba and the US”; “North American Journalists and Newspapers in Cuba”; “Cuban Journalists and Newspapers in the United States”; “Miralles, a Havana man friend of George Washington”; “Thomas Jordan, a North American General in Chief of the Cuban Liberation Army”; etc.

As to access to information, among others, the following examples are mentioned:

**Acknowledgement of Cuban Publications in American Reference Works**

Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

- 1938 Boletín Bibliotécnico. March No 2 p.7: The Boletín Bibliotécnico, in its first year, was indexed in “Library Literature”, bibliographic enterprise published by The H. W. Wilson Company. At present Cuban scientific journals are scarcely reflected in the big American Databases that compile and index the world scientific production like the Science Citation Index.

Bibliographic References of North American Specialty Texts

- Boletín Bibliotécnico. March No 2 p.1-4: In the article “The Training of the Librarian” of March 1938, vital consultation texts are mentioned in the professional training, all by North American professionals such as: the journal The library quarterly of April 1937, dedicated to celebrate the 50th establishment of the first university school of librarianship founded by Melvil Dewey; the book by Dr. Charles C. Williamson entitled Training for library service, a must when consulting to understand the American organization in terms of librarian training; the book by Mr. Leon Carnovsky, Why graduate study in librarianship? And the one by Ernest J. Reece The curriculum in library schools, recommended for syllabuses, these among other examples.

- 1938 Boletín Bibliotécnico. July No 4 p.7-9: In the article “The Adult and the Library. The Lost Generation”, the reading of the work by Mr. Alvin Johnson, director of the New School for Social Research “The Public Library - A People’s University” is recommended and the one by Chancellor and William entitled “Printed Page and The Public Platform”.

- 1953 Cuba Bibliotecológica. January-March 1953, No 1, Vol 1 p.7: María Teresa Freyre de Andrade published her known article “Library Work in Republican Cuba” where she remarks the importance of the first meeting of Cuban librarians at the national level, called Pro Libraries National Assembly, out of which the first association of librarians emerges, called Library Association of Cuba, that manages to prepare in turn two schools of professional training, The School of the Economic Society of Friends of the Country and the one of Havana University assigned to the School of Philosophy and Letters. In such an article, whose consultation is of vital importance when documenting Cuban Library Science and
responding to a new library time in the nation aimed at services, social work and information dissemination, she quotes the work by Leon Carnovski, a North American librarian, entitled *The Library in the Community*, published by the University of Chicago which states: “There exists a very damaging trend for the better development of libraries. It is the fact of thinking of them taking into account, preferably, the building that lodges them and relegating the function they are expected to fulfill to a background.”

Another aspect that introduces some variety into the professional exchange between Cuban and North American librarians are relations in the training of the Cuban librarian which, having one of the most interesting polemics between a Cuban professional and a North American one, are described with certain details as follows:

First of all, the oldest antecedents that existed in Cuba about the librarian professional were two bills. The first dates back to 1919 submitted before the Senate by Dr. Cosme de la Torriente, then Senator of the Republic. The bill pursued three objectives: “First: To endow the National Library, the Library of Matanzas and the National Archive with adequate buildings for these institutions for them to be able to duly fulfill their highly educational and social mission; Secondly: To promote the creation of Public Libraries all over the Republic being their establishment an absolute necessity for the people’s education and culture and; Thirdly: To qualify the technical staff, duly trained for the service of these Public Libraries and all others depending on the Government, for which goal the creation of a School of Librarians and Archivists is proposed.”

The second bill was submitted in 1927 about a reform of the syllabus of the School of Philosophy and Letters of Havana University, a project that was never implemented, by means of which the Institute of Library Technicians in such School, would have issued a Librarian Diploma to its future graduates.

After these two thwarted attempts; in 1936 the first course on library science in Cuba is started, organized by María Villar Buceta. The Course of Librarianship Initiation, that is

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56 “Primer Proyecto de una Escuela de Bibliotecarios en Cuba”, Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios 4(1): 13-16; marzo, 1952
how it was called, was offered at the Havana Lyceum with two one hour long classes per week, in 24 oral and practical lessons from June to August. Technical subjects were taught such as: classification, cataloguing and so forth, even reader psychology, book binding, language and writing, music library, map library and others; all of which counted with a wide bibliography from North American librarians.  

Lectures and short courses were also dictated, and there were publications which somehow were addressing professional upgrading. For instance, on January 31, 1937, Dr. Homero Serís provided a lecture at the Hispanic Cuban Institution of Culture entitled *The Art of Handling Books*, which was edited as a booklet by Havana Municipal Library and the author himself made a minimum librarianship bibliography that was published in the first issue of the *Boletín Bibliotécnico*. It similarly includes works by North American librarians.

Although there were sporadic attempts and bills since the beginnings of the 20th century, it is not until the first assemblies of librarians are held in Cuba and the Association representing them is created, as it was commented upon already, that its members decided to undertake the creation of a School of Librarians having a permanent character. The first course of the Library Service School was the outcome of all these concerns. It taught its first classes from May to March, 1940.

In 1946 the Library Science courses started at the Summer School of Havana University. These courses kind of bridged the gap and the lack of continuity with which library science teaching had been kept up to that point in Cuba. Nevertheless, they did not turn out to be the ideal intended by the professionals devoted to these teaching affairs. It was not the first time that such school cared about this type of studies. In 1943 special educational courses had been offered by the initiative from the Cuban Association of Librarians. The subjects Bibliography and Reference, by Dr. María Teresa Freyre de Andrade, Cataloguing and Organization of School Libraries by Dr. Jorge Aguayo, among others were taught.

To achieve a systematic school was the objective of the professionals who all along the 20th century tried to create it somehow. At the end of 1944 and beginning of 1945 there

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57 Ob cit (45): 1-II-21
were efforts to get the government of Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín interested on the project of opening an official school. It was not until May 29, 1947 that the School of Philosophy and Letters approves the plan for the creation of a School of Librarians attached to this Faculty, and in June 1950 it is finally approved. On the other hand, on September 13, 1950 the course of the Cuban School of Librarians was started which operated at the Economic Society of Friends of the Country. Present at the dedication ceremony were the President of the Society, Dr. Antonio M. Eligio de la Puente, Dr. Cosme de la Torriente, author of the first project to create an aforementioned similar school, and the President of the Board of Trustees of the Emeterio S. Santovenia National Library, among others. In the capacity of advisor, Dr. Jerrold Orne, Director of the Washington University libraries from the city of Saint Louis visited Cuba. His appraisals were published in the Bulletin of the Cuban Association of Librarians in June 1950 bringing about the famous polemic between Dr. Orne and Dr. Jorge Aguayo, a well-known Cuban librarian from the Library of the University, founder of the first professional training courses in Cuba.

The article by Dr. Orne entitled “The Future of the Library in Cuba” 58 begins with the following phrase: “Exactly one hundred years ago a great Cuban patriot gave his life trying to get Cuba free. His last words before dying in the scaffold became prophetic: My death – he said – won’t change Cuba’s destinies”. These words chosen by Dr. Orne turned out to belong to Narciso López, and his quotation is interesting because the history of Cuba is full of illustrious thinkers with patriotic ideas, and being a North American librarian, his choice fell upon that who would be one of the major Cuban annexationist leaders.

In such article Orne quotes Fermín Peraza and María Villar Buceta. He also mentions the two training courses that were taught, the one at the Lyceum and the one at the Summer School of Havana University. Referring to the latter, Orne states that it contained admission requirements that make “their program inaccessible for the 90% of potential students” 59, providing as the outcome of this comment the figure that the number of graduates after their fourth year of training were only 6 students. Without trying to transfer the library teaching from the North American programs to Cuba,

59 Idem p. 35
because he states that they would be a failure; Orne reflects that the major need of Cuba back then was to have more staff. That is why; his first proposal was that of modifying the school admission requirements, providing a dual program for both High School graduates and non-graduates alike. Likewise, he proposes that it should be available in one year, having the possibility of enrolment in independent courses, to teach the subject of cataloguing attached to the “minimum of essentials”. Among its subject matters, the selection of documents should be included and due to their little level of demand, introduction to librarianship and organization of libraries. He finishes with certain personal characteristics that everyone getting enrolled in the specialty should have, and refers to the problem of the shortage of existing Spanish literature about this subject in the area.

Dr. Jorge Aguayo in March 1951 responds to these suggestions in his article “Refuting Doctor Orne” starting his speech based on the consultation of Orne’s article in English, published in the Library of Congress Information Bulletin, in order to have the two versions without translation limiting his analysis. Aguayo stated that first of all, he had not had an approach to the people who had been working for decades in library science teaching in Cuba. He shows him his total disagreement in terms of the opinion about admission and states: “admission to Havana University, an institution of over 200 years, is just like in all other universities, by submitting the degree as a High School graduate and that is the case in the United States, where library science studies are conducted in higher institutions and demand High School certificate and in addition, the one from Junior College or the full College”.

He stated that the university profession should not demand admission requirements lower than 9th grade level of High School or certified schoolteacher, just as it was understood by the Assembly of Librarians of America in its Committee for Professional Education. The reason for the scarce graduation was not to be found in the admission requirements, but in a problem having an official character due to the fact that the system, out of political reasons, used to give the librarian jobs of official establishments to individuals designated by the interested organizations, and the reason to study the

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60 Aguayo, Jorge. “Refutando al Doctor Orne”. Boletín de la Asociación Cubana de Bibliotecarios. 1(1951) 8-12
61 Idem p.8
profession did not constitute a necessary value, apart from the fact that legally it was very poorly paid. Aguayo conducts other reflections about the subject matters of the course, the importance of cataloguing, the scarce literature in Spanish and he finishes as follows: “Finally I am going to briefly refer to what was said by Dr. Orne, when addressing our fellow citizens in the final clause of his report, he improvised a very Cuban flavored speech: “People of Cuba, librarians of this land, have these thoughts: Nothing will be able to change the destinations of this land…” Dr. Orne may relax. No Cuban librarian will ever forget the phrase by Narciso López, nor will he forget his: “the first step to understand a people and to know its needs consists in listening very much and to many people and to observe very much and many people”. It is just regretful that he has not wanted to ask in order to listen to those who could have reported something about the future of the library in Cuba”.

Unquestionably, the history of the nation itself has provided examples of the North American arrogance in many occasions, trying to take actions before a given event, not just in the military and political fields, but also in the scientific and cultural ones. This constitutes a fact where the Cuban librarian knew how to defend his own efforts to achieve the librarian professional training in Cuba, with the demands and the level of knowledge that has characterized this profession all along its performance.

In 1958 the trade of the United States with Cuba amounted to over one billion dollars. The United States used to average 72% of the total of Cuban exports and 64% of its imports. In their turn, relations between Cuban and North American librarians were established primarily in the field of professional exchange and of free access to information of both nations. Besides, there was a North American influence on the first professional training courses that emerged in Cuba, either based on the consultation of North American specialized publications, or the involvement of specialists themselves in the organization of the Cuban library school, during the first half of the century. Everything faded away after the North American economic laws were imposed with the commercial and economic blockade on Cuba.

Chapter 2: Legislative structure of the economic blockade on Cuba and its impact on the information setting

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62 Ob cit (60) p. 12
A simple chronology of the first happenings that took place upon the triumph of the Revolution and that ended up with the total blockade by the United States on Cuba may be this one:

- May 17, 1959. The Agrarian Reform Law aggravates relations. In the article published in the financial section of the Sunday publication of *Times* signed by George Averbach, it was affirmed: “The Cuban Agrarian Reform Law will apparently have an adverse impact on North American investments in Cuba”.
- August 27, 1959. The American Foreign Power Company, subsidiary of the powerful North American monopoly Electric Bond and Share and parent company of the Cuban Electric Company, cancels the financing of 15 million dollars. The measure was adopted due to the 30% reduction of electricity tariffs decreed by the revolutionary government.
- September 8, 1959. Che returns from a tour and mentions the campaign directed by US capitalists limiting sales in Cuba.
- September 9, 1959. An officer from the White House insinuates the possibility of implementing a gradual blockade.
- February, 1960. An article by James Reston appears in the *The New York Times* revealing a number of meetings that were being held in Washington aimed at hitting the Cuban economy. The objectives of the plan were to get the influence of the other Latin American governments to hold back Fidel’s impulses to draft a new sugar law, to search for compensation for the North Americans whose properties haven been seized, and to set up a short and medium wave radio station for the campaign against Castro.
- March 4, 1960. Sabotage to the steamship *La Coubre*. After this moment the United States prohibits the sales of helicopters to Cuba and diminishes the number of ships providing mercantile services to the Island.
- May, 1960. The North American Embassy in Havana announces that assistance will not be given to Cuba, unless the President determines that it is of national interest for Washington, in virtue of the Mutual Security Act of 1960.
- June 28, 1960. Resolution 188 is passed in which the Cuban government urged The Texas Oil Company of Cuba (Texaco) to refine crude oil that the State was
getting at the USRR; otherwise, the refinery would be confiscated. On October 29 the Texaco company was seized as well as the Esso Standard Oil of Havana.

- July 8, 1960. Fidel makes an analysis of the blockade the island of Cuba found itself in, based primarily on:
  1. Slanderous campaign
  2. Threatening tourists
  3. Campaign to isolate us from the rest of Latin America
  4. Oil struggle

- August 27, 1960. San José Declaration.


- September 30, 1960. *Prensa Latina* cable saying that Francis Tully, State Department official, had said that the North American Foreign Ministry had advised US citizens not to travel to Cuba.

- On October 19, the Department of Commerce of the United States prohibited the shipments of a large variety of goods to Cuba.

- January 3, 1959. Diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba are broken up.

- February, 1961. The Department of Commerce amended the Exports Regulations and ordered that exports to Cuba could not be made under a general license.

- March, 1961. The Department of Commerce amended the Exports Regulations, including a list of foodstuffs and medicines requiring a general license to be exported to Cuba.

- April, 1961. Invasion by the Bay of Pigs.

- April, 1961. The Foreign Assistance Act is approved in 1961 in which all types of assistance to Cuba were banned, and as a means to implement and carry out such policy, the US President authorized setting up and keeping a total embargo over all trade between the United States and the Island.

- February, 1962. President Kennedy decreed Presidential Proclamation 3447 that formally imposed the trade blockade between The United States and Cuba. The ordinance came into force on February 7.*

The blockade imposed up until our days, began since the beginnings of the Revolution by means of slanderous campaigns, threats, the war against oil, the partial and later total suppression of the sugar quota, the exports prohibition and the stoppage of the Cuban industry. All along these years it has had a gradual tightening based on a number of regulations and laws marking its structure and which, year after year has been increasingly tightened ending up in what it is today, a genocidal act and a vulgar terrorism against the Cuban people.

Laws and Regulations Supporting the Blockade

a. THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is applied on September 4, 1961 and constitutes the first legal instrument against the blockade. Section 2370 established the refusal to all assistance to the government of Cuba and the authorization for the President of the United States to set and keep the total trade embargo between Cuba and the USA.\(^\text{63}\)

Epigraph 2 of section 2370 (a) states that, except when the President deems it necessary for the interest of the United States, "any Cuban government" will not be provided with assistance, nor will the allocation of any type of quota for Cuban sugar imports be permitted. This clause also bans the Island being benefited from any privilege granted by US laws, and this, aimed at eliminating any privileged consideration whatsoever in commercial treatment, may be also applied to preferential tariffs and policies for export credits.

Section 2370 (f) itself justifies measures when defining Cuba as a "communist" country, therefore all assistance could be refused to it, unless the President would state and report before Congress that:

- Assistance is vital for the national security of the United States.
- The country receiving the assistance is not controlled by the international communist conspiracy.

The assistance will provide the independence of the receiver country from international communism.

The tender is important for the national interest of the United States. 64

Before the discrepancy of the possible list of countries the law states the following: “No assistance shall be provided under this Act to the government of any country unless the President determines that such country is not dominated or controlled by the international Communist movement.” 65

In the case of Cuba, such prohibitions would be kept until the President verified that his government had taken the right steps, in keeping with International Law, in order to return to North American citizens and entities the assets confiscated after January 1st, 1959 or the equitable compensation for them.

b. PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION 3447

The Presidential Proclamation 3447 (27 F.R. 1085), of February 7, 1962, constitutes the second legal instrument, although it is occasionally acknowledged as the provision that started the economic blockade on Cuba. It imposed the so-called “embargo” upon trade with Cuba and entrusted the Treasury Department with the administration of commercial prohibitions about imports from the Island, and the Secretary of Commerce the ones related with exports towards that destination.

It was issued by President John Kennedy on February 6, 1962, in virtue of the legal authority bestowed by Section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Its essence was to include all measures adopted against Cuba since 1959 within a presidential action.

The President orders the Secretary of Treasury to apply new prohibitions about imports that were made from Cuba and the Secretary of Commerce to continue with the blockade previously imposed on exports towards Cuba.

64 Idem
Proclamation 3447 came into force on February 7, 1962.

c. TRADING WITH THE ENEMY ACT OF 1917

The Government of the United States has imposed these economic, commercial and financial measures against Cuba in virtue of the authority bestowed upon the President by Congress in the Trading with the Enemy Act “TWEA”), 50 U.S.C. App. § 5(b).

Put into force as a war time measure in 1917, the Trading with the Enemy Act was adopted to authorize the President to regulate transactions of properties involving a foreign country or national during a war period or during any other period of national emergency declared by the President.

When imposing the economic, commercial and financial blockade measures against Cuba, without having a state of warfare between both countries, the different US administrations have been based on the declaration of national emergency issued by President Harry Truman in 1950 during the war of Korea. 64 Stat. A454C (December 16, 1950).

In 1977 the Congress of the United States removed the validity of Truman’s emergency declaration and restricted the President’s powers under the Trading with the Enemy Act to war times, but at the same time, it passed a separate law to control situations at times of peace, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act “IEEPA”) 50 U.S.C. §1701 et seq.

Under this new International Emergency Economic Powers Act that came into force that very year, the President can impose emergency economic measures, including the prohibitions of transactions involving properties of foreign governments or their nationals. 50 U.S.C. §1701(a).

In 1979 Public Act 95-223, § 101 (b), 91 Stat. 1626 et seq., came into force, which ordered that from then on, it would not be required to have a national emergency situation or a threat to the national security, foreign policy or the economy of the United States, to impose or to continue the application of economic measures against foreign countries. After the moment in which this act came into force, in the case of Cuba, the
President of the United States has only required to declare that to continue applying the measures of economic, commercial and financial blockade against the island constitutes a national interest, what has been enough to understand its validity year after year.

The Trading with the Enemy Act bestows the President with the authority to apply all prohibitions against Cuba, to ban financial transactions, to freeze Cuban assets, to prohibit the granting of services and to regulate the behavior of people about Cuba, as long as they are either US nationals or individuals subject to its jurisdiction. The banning of US citizens to travel to Cuba and most of the extraterritorial measures applied by the United States have been adopted based on the Trading with the Enemy Act and the President’s statement claiming that they are of “national interest”.

In the case of Cuba, since there is not a state of warfare between the two countries, it was invoked by the John F. Kennedy Administration in virtue of the extension that was made for that law in 1950, by means of which the presidential authority was extended not just in the event of a war but also “during any other period of national emergency as declared by the President”.

The power bestowed by this law to impose economic and commercial restrictions on countries considered as “enemies” of the United States, was used by President Kennedy to prohibit in 1992 the imports of every single good that was either totally or partially made with Cuban products, even though it might have been manufactured in a third country, arguing the “danger” that it represented for the national security of the United States. (27 FR 2765)

**d. REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF CUBAN ASSETS (28 FR 6974; 31CFR PART. 515)**

They were issued on June 3, 1963. They replaced the Regulations for Cuban Imports of February 6, 1962.

The economic, commercial and financial measures of the United States against Cuba are established basically in the Regulations for the Control of Cuban Assets of the
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

Treasury Department 31 C.F.R. Part 515, and in the Regulations for Exports Administration of the Department of Commerce, 15 C.F.R. Parts 770 a 785.

Any transfer of property conducted in violation of these regulations is prohibited in keeping with laws of the United States. The Treasury Department is empowered to impose civil penalties for any violation of these regulations, which are considered criminal offenses with imprisonment terms up to 10 years, substantial fines, or both. Additionally, properties involved in violations are subject to confiscation. 50 U.S.C. App. § 16.

These Regulations – currently in force – established:

- the regime applicable to all commercial and financial operations related with Cuba, including those which involve US citizens or firms based abroad or firms that are owned or controlled by US citizens or US firms;
- the freezing of all Cuban assets in the United States;
- the banning of all transactions carried out by the Cuban government, its representatives or citizens;
- the prohibition of payment transfers or credits;
- the prohibition of transactions in hard currency by Cuba;
- the prohibition for individuals subject to the US jurisdiction to participate in financial or commercial transactions of all types with Cuba or with its citizens;
- the prohibition of traveling to, from or inside Cuba, with the exception of those authorized by the US Government;
- the prohibition of importing Cuban merchandise;
- the prohibitions of exporting merchandise to Cuba, which were included in the Regulations about the Control of Exports (28 FR 6983; Sec. 515.533) under the control of the Department of Commerce.

Since their establishment in June 1963 up to the present, these Regulations have been modified in countless occasions to add new restrictions against Cuba.
e. PUBLIC ACT 88-205

Passed on December 16, 1963, to amend Section 620 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (77 Stat. 386) and to reinforce the blockade against Cuba.

This Act ordered among other prohibitions, the allocation of any quota for sugar imports and the extension to Cuba of whatever benefit under any law of the United States, as long as the President determined that Cuba had taken the corresponding measures in order to return to or compensate US citizens for the nationalized properties.

It also prohibited the allocation of funds to any country which had not taken the appropriate measures so as to keep ships or airplanes under their registration, from transporting items of economic assistance, equipment, materials or goods to Cuba.

f. EXPORTS ADMINISTRATION ACT OF 1979

It granted the President authority to extend the controls of exports out of foreign policy reasons and ordered that from then on, the existence of a national emergency situation or a threat to the national security, the foreign policy or the economy of the United States would not be required, in order to impose or to go on applying economic measures against foreign countries.

In the case of Cuba, after the moment of the coming into force of this Act, the President of the United States has only needed to declare that to continue applying the measures of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against the island constitutes a national interest, what has been enough to understand its validity all along these years.

Despite of the fact that it does not pose a threat for the national security of the United States, in virtue of this act, Cuba was included by the Department of Commerce, in the list of countries identified as those which provide support to acts of international terrorism which are subject to exports controls by a special foreign policy.

g. PUBLIC ACT 99-198 OF 1985 (STAT. 1354, 1444 (1985))
It stipulates to eliminate the sugar quota to any country unless it certifies that it does not import Cuban sugar to be re-exported to the United States. In virtue of this Act, any export to the United States of products containing sugar has to be accompanied by a certification addressed to the President, claiming that it does not have Cuban sugar.

**h. DIRE EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 1990**

Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1990. Public L. 101-302, 104 Stat. 213,244 (1990). It establishes the allocation of funds for foreign operations, economic assistance and bilateral and multilateral exports, and includes the prohibition of allocating funds to any country supplying economic or military assistance to Cuba.

**c. CUBAN DEMOCRACY ACT (TORRICELLI ACT )**

Enacted by former president George Bush on October 23, 1992, in the midst of the electoral campaign, it was pursuing among its (personal) objectives, finding votes in Florida. It emerges at critical times within history, that Torricelli himself describes: “The collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, the now universal recognition in Latin America and the Caribbean that Cuba constitutes a failed model of government and development, and the evident incapacity of the Cuban economy to survive the current trends, provide the USA and the democratic community with the unprecedented opportunity to promote a peaceful transition towards democracy in Cuba”  

The Torricelli Act has its antecedent in the Mack Amendment, by Senator Connie Mack, a Republican from Florida. The amendment would define the total prohibitions for companies of third countries, subsidiaries of North American parent companies, to establish businesses or economic operations with Cuba. It was introduced in 1989 and although it does not become a law, it is introduced in the year 1990 in two bills and in this way, it arrives directly to President Bush who vetoes it for its extraterritorial nature and for the problems that it might cause him in trade relations with third countries.

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The Torricelli Act or the Cuban Democracy Act was submitted in two bills in the first period of sessions of the 102 Congress by representatives Robert Torricelli from New Jersey and Senator Bob Graham from the State of Florida. It is comprised of the following sections:

Section 1702. Determinations. It tries to demonstrate the alleged lack of democracy and the dishonoring of human rights in Cuba, when 11 million Cubans live under the most basic economic shortages as a result of a pointless blockade.

Section 1703. Political Statement. 11 actions to take into account once the government collapses are carried out.

Section 1704. International Cooperation. It reflects the extraterritorial nature of the Act and numbers the sanctions for the states that do not abide by what is prescribed in it.

Section 1705. Support to the Cuban People. It stipulates everything about the "assistance " to the Cuban people.

Section 1706. Sanctions. It enumerates the sanctions for countries granting assistance not admitted by the USA, to Cuba.

Among sanctions it dictates the following:

- It prohibited the trade of subsidiaries of US companies established in third countries with Cuba, closing like this the possibility of getting foodstuffs, medicines or any other manufactured good in any country of the world, if in the enterprise producing them any North American citizen participates or if products have any component from that country. 90.6% of this Cuban trade with North American subsidiaries was in foodstuffs and medicines.

- It prohibited ships of any flag entering Cuban ports to touch ports of the United States or those of its possessions during the 180 following days after having left the Cuban port.
It authorized the President to apply sanctions against countries supplying assistance to Cuba, declaring them ineligible to get assistance from the United States based on the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; ineligible for assistance or sales under the Weapons Exports Control Act; and ineligible under any program for reduction or cancellation of their debts.

It stipulated that third countries would be subject to these sanctions if the President considers that they supply assistance for the benefit of the Cuban Government through credits, allowance sales, guarantees or insurance, or “by any other means or in more favorable terms than the ones available at the market” including subsidies for exports to Cuba and favorable treatment of tariffs for products of Cuban origin.

d. THE CUBAN DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY AND FREEDOM ACT (HELMS-BURTON).*

The Cuban Democratic Solidarity and Freedom Act or Helms-Burton Act, is signed by President Clinton on March 12, 1996. Its fundamental content is carried out in four chapters strengthening sanctions, meddling in internal political affairs, sanctioning the trade of foreign investors with Cuba, and limiting travels even more. This law codifies all previous economic, commercial and financial measures adopted against Cuba by the Executive Branch of the Government turning them into a Law, modifying by so doing, the whole legal structure of the blockade.

In this law, two major axes can be identified:

1. Cutting the flow of foreign investments towards Cuba and compelling the rest of the countries of the world to join the blockade against the island.

2. Accurately establishing an annexation plan for the liquidation of the Cuban nation.

The content of its chapters can be summarized as follows:

* The whole text may be consulted at [http://www.uh.cu/infogral/areasuh/defensa/TextoLeyHB.htm](http://www.uh.cu/infogral/areasuh/defensa/TextoLeyHB.htm)
Title I

- It establishes to increase and to strengthen the blockade, by means of the extension of sanctions against Cuba, reinforcing its extraterritorial nature.
- It codifies the blockade, turning all previous administrative provisions and executive decisions into a law.
- It requests a confidential annual report about the trade of other countries with Cuba, identification of potential trade partners, joint ventures, either established or under way, description of terms of agreements or other economic espionage measures.
- In its articles 109 and 115, it devotes financing to the “opposition” organized by the United States and to intelligence activities in Cuba.

Title II. It consists in a program for the future government of Cuba after the restoration of the previous regime, which clearly orders that the blockade will continue until the completion of the devolution process or the payment for all properties to their former owners.

Title III. It allows for the filing of trials at the US courts against investors in Cuba who operate in properties nationalized or expropriated by the Cuban government.

Title IV. It orders the denial of entry visas into the US territory to investors, shareholders, and their families who the US government considers to be “trafficking” with nationalized or expropriated properties in Cuba.

Up until 1996, the complex legal framework of the blockade was based also on a whole set of administrative provisions and presidential executive decisions that with the passing of the Helms-Burton Act were codified, that is, became a law.

e. BUDGET ALLOCATIONS ACT OF 1999

It ordered a greater Congress control over the fulfillment of Title IV of the Helms-Burton Act and widened its reach to apply it to “confiscators” of North American properties all over the world. It prohibited to spend or to commit funds allocated in the Budget to directly finance any assistance or repairs to Cuba through international credit institutions.
It put Section 211 into force which established that no court of the United States will be able to recognize, comply with, or validate claims of rights of foreign individuals or entities over commercial names or trademarks that overlap or are similar to trademarks or commercial names of nationalized businesses or properties, declaring their use as illegal. That allows for the appropriation of Cuban trademarks as it is now the case with the Bacardi Company that tries to get hold of the trademark of the Cuban rum Havana Club.

It also stipulated that payments or transactions about such trademarks would not be authorized.

f. TRADE SANCTIONS REFORM ACT OF 2000

It ratified the validity of all the blockade previous provisions and although it allowed the limited food sales to Cuba, it ordered

- the removal of unilateral economic sanctions against all countries but Cuba;
- the application of new limitations for food and medicine sales to Cuba that consisted of: issuing of individual licenses for sales and transportation, prohibition of governmental or private credits, anticipated cash payments, one way trade;
- the codification of travel regulations to Cuba, the only exception of the Helms-Burton Act;
- the impossibility of extending the categories of authorized travels to Cuba.

g. VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND TERRORISM VICTIMS ACT OF 2000

It bestows authority upon the President of the United States to make use of the Cuban properties within North American territory and the Cuban frozen funds so as to pay to people considered as victims of terrorist actions and favored by US Courts decisions against the government of Cuba.
In addition to these legislations, there is a remarkable number of statutes approved by the US Congress regulating the presidential authority in areas of trade policy and economic and financial assistance. 67

**Necessary Reflection**

The laws that stipulated the blockade were started since the first days of the revolutionary triumph and responded as they have up to the present, to economic interests and provisions over the island that date back to previous centuries and opposed the revolutionary policy. During the decade of the 60’s, legislations began totally ungrounded, responding just to their expansionist policy and began to be increasingly more tightened with each law that was passed.

How do these laws impact the information setting? If it is true that relations between Cuban and North American libraries and librarians in the first half of the 20th century were based on professional exchange and free access to information of both nations, those two elements are precisely the ones that are neutralized all along the decade of the 60’s. With the travel ban, the removal of transactions and the freezing of assets, professional contacts are practically reduced to zero, informational exchange diminishes being non-existent for long periods of time, a certain wall of silence is raised in the library science profession between both nations, and the economic situation itself compels the Cuban library activity to have an overturn, as it is the case in the next few decades.

67 All the information about the laws was obtained at: <http://www.tribunalbenitojuarez.org/acusaciones/07.htm>
The Cuban economic structure radically changed in a few years. Miguel Alejandro Figueras represents it as follows:
The first exports heading (sugar, tobacco, minerals and seafood products) reached new markets in the socialist field. During a short period there were tobacco commercialization problems because its market was totally North American. Sales were extended to the Spanish market and the European countries; so, sales of this product were restored. However, the remaining Cuban products were considerably reduced.

In the decades of the 70’s and the 80’s, the Cuban economy was sustained almost entirely, on the Socialist market, and in the meantime the blockade legislations were kept, now with facilities for its perdurability without indulgence.

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69 Idem
It did not take long to witness the upset of the Cuban economy in the library activity. This is how in the 70’s and 80’s we get to the known approach of the Soviet information technology, having among its major transmitters, Soviet theoreticians Mijailov, Chernii and Guiliarevsky. The information psychology treatment is started by Yu Novikov and Information Sciences occupy a governing place in those years in the information activity of the nation, with the creation of a space first in Actualidades de la Documentación, and later on in Actualidades de la Información Científico-Técnica. At present, under the title Ciencias de la Información, it constitutes one of the publications with a great prestige in the region.

Decades of the 70’s and 80’s: Second Stage

At the end of the 80’s and beginnings of the 90’s the collapse of the Socialist bloc and the disappearance of the USSR took place. This meant a hard blow for to the Cuban economy due to the strong links existing between Cuba and those countries. By that
time, Cuba used to keep relations with subsidiaries of North American interests in third countries. At this point the level of operations with these companies had reached 705 million dollars, out of which, 533 million dollars corresponded to Cuban imports and in 1991 the exchange level amounted to 718 millions. Although in 1992 the trade volume diminished, Cuban imports reached a level of 407 million dollars, out of which, about 90% corresponded to foodstuffs.  

In 1993, The Torricelli Act managed to deprive Cuba of this financing, making the economic crisis that the Island faced really acute. The North American government expected that with the tightening of the blockade the fall of the government would be unavoidable as a result of the collapse of the economy and popular unrest. Simultaneously, since the beginnings of the decade a smear campaign against the Cuban Revolution was unleashed and the on-going ideological warfare based on television and radio media. It is during this time that the already mentioned Torricelli Act and later on the Helms Burton, include the political plan for the transitional change of “Castro’s “ government into the (according to them) democratic one.

If at the beginning of the revolutionary triumph the blockade laws marked relations between Cuban and North American libraries and librarians, mainly in the field of professional exchange and information access, the laws themselves that followed it, at while they were tightening the blockade and compelling new markets as the ones obtained in the Socialist field, continued to have an impact upon these relations and to condition information activity as a whole. By the 90’s, new characteristics describing these relations emerge already, based on the new legislative structure.

The 90’s were characterized by the hindrance in the acquisition of new technologies, an indispensable element for the current information activity, and the non-existent commercial link that information technologies and communications themselves now impose. However, by the late 80’s and early 90’s, being 1994 the year of the greatest exchange, relations between professionals are resumed.

Why are relations resumed despite of the blockade? Several events marked this new

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stage declining one more time after 2001 as it will be seen later on:

- New North American regulations which get librarians involved somehow, and whose fulfillment failure by the United States Government itself has unleashed a whole polemic between North American book professionals and countries with an economic embargo such as Cuba. We are referring to the Berman Amendment of 1988 and its later specification in the Free Trade in Ideas Amendment, 1994. Both emerged at strategic moments.

The Berman Amendment “exempts the importation or exportation of information or informational materials, whether commercial or otherwise, regardless of format or medium of transmission, including, but not limited to, publications, from being regulated or prohibited by the President”. The Free Trade in Ideas Amendment, “expanded the limitation on the President's authority to include new media, such as compact discs and CD-ROMS, and clarified that the exemption applied to "importation and exportation in any format or medium of transmission" in response to overly narrow and restrictive interpretations by the Treasury Department.”

The former emerges in the midst of the Soviet glasnot and the latter is conceived in 1994, in the middle of the special period in Cuba. Both intended to provide an “ideological opening” to overthrow the Cuban government once and for all. Instead of fulfilling their objectives, such regulations have contributed to a reflection by the information world professionals from both countries, about the lies of the North American government in terms of freedom of expression, finding support in intellectuals the world over.  

- The 60th IFLA General Conference held in Havana. “For the first time ever, a

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country from Latin America and the Caribbean was the site of a general conference, participating in it 940 foreign delegates, out of which 150 were coming from the region, who together with 400 Cuban librarians have constituted a wide Latin American and Caribbean presence at an IFLA meeting. Seventy papers and 30 posters were presented by different delegates from the region". 72

➢ The emergence of the “independent libraries” movement. Its objectives were to pretend a growing opposition against the government and, as a direct political maneuver of the United States; they just tried to manipulate the island’s reality based on propaganda at the service of Washington. These independent librarians in their long maneuver of lies and supported by the organization “Friends of the Cuban Libraries” that appeared in 1999 by Robert Kent, a librarian from the New York Public Library, and Jorge Sanguinetti, an economist and former Cuban government official, attracted the attention of US professional associations, several North American librarians visiting Cuba after 2000 and unmasking their fraud. Chapter 4 elaborates this issue further.

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The legislative structure and its impact upon library activity since 1960 up to 2000 can be observed in Annex 1.

**Chapter 3: Blockade actions against Cuban libraries and their damaging effects.**

In the year 2001, time in which George W. Bush undertakes the Presidency of the United States, measures and statements against Cuba were tightened even more, as well as persecutions and sanctions to people violating these laws, what shows the origin
of a fourth stage of the blockade impact on the relations between Cuban and North American libraries and librarians, that is extended up until the present times.

George W. Bush, since the first months of his term of office, publicly assured that he was not interested in softening economic restrictions against Cuba, and that a change in this policy would only be conditioned by the withdrawal from power of President Fidel Castro. This idea has been repeated in numerous opportunities by Vice-president Richard Cheney and the State Secretaries Madeleine Albright and her substitute, Collin Powell.

Over these years, the managements by the North American government trying to veto the Cuban proposal of blockade condemnation at the United Nations have been shameful. Nevertheless, the outcome has always been favorable to Cuba.\textsuperscript{73} More recently, in the month of October 2005, in the city of Salamanca, Spain, countries participating at the XV Spanish American Summit approved, despite of the pressures exerted the US Administration, a resolution in which they demanded the end of the blockade.\textsuperscript{74}

The material shortages brought about by this unjust measure affect the whole Cuban nation intensively. Librarians, as part of it, suffer due to these problems, both in their everyday life and in the job they carry out; because libraries have undergone damages in their collections and premises that end up being irreversible. Such a situation has perceptibly damaged the quality of the services that these institutions provide.

Despite of the fact that the North American government assures that the blockade does not pervade the cultural and scientific settings, it has established regulations in the relations between Cuban and North American professionals from these spheres which

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\hline
In favor of the document submitted by Cuba & 59 & 88 & 101 & 117 & 137 & 143 & 157 & 155 & 167 & 167 & 173 & 182 \\
\hline
Against & 3 & 4 & 2 & 3 & 3 & 2 & 2 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 4 \\
\hline
Abstentions & 71 & 57 & 48 & 38 & 25 & 17 & 12 & 8 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 1 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{73} Voting at the United Nations about the document submitted by Cuba that denounces the blockade of the United States on its people has had the following outcomes:

\textsuperscript{74} Amplia repercusión de apoyo a Cuba en Cumbre Iberoamericana. \textit{Granma} 17 oct. 2005: 1
can be witnessed in the limitations ruling the signing of any collaboration agreement. An example of this, is the agreement approved in December, 1997, that works with the funds obtained from the Ford Foundation and based on the initiative by the Archives and Libraries of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Sciences Research Council, in coordination with the Academy of Sciences of Cuba, that is aimed at supporting initiatives intended to spread and to favor links between communities of researchers from Cuba and countries such as Canada, the United States and Mexico.  

This exchange has to adjust itself to the fulfillment of the following requirements:

1. What is authorized by a specific license of the Treasury Department of the United States.
2. The information material exchange in paper support (with the exception of commeriable works of art)
3. What is financed by a private source that is not linked to funds of the United States Government.
4. The publishing, editing and distribution of original literary works, articles or books (whose content may set limitations).
5. The holding of meetings having a technical or scientific nature corresponding to international organizations. (It is not enough if they are sponsored by them).
6. The holding of workshops in disciplines or specialties that can only be carried out exclusively by the participants involved.

What was previously expressed serves as the preamble for the outcomes that are presented next, in this chapter about the impact of the blockade measures on the Cuban library world, particularly on the José Martí National Library and the System of Public Libraries. It is also extended to other institutions such as: The Library of the Literature and Linguistics Institute, The Library of Casa de las Américas, The Rubén Martínez

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75 Memorándum de Entendimiento Entre la Academia de Ciencias de Cuba y el Grupo de Trabajo sobre Cuba de la ACLS/SSRC. 18 de diciembre de 1997
76 Information provided by Sergio Jorge Pastrana, Foreign Relations Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of Cuba. November, 2005
77 A survey was made to be filled out by the management of the libraries making up the System of Public Libraries of Cuba.
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

Villena Central Library of Havana University, libraries for people with visual disabilities and the Medical Information Network (INFOMED). (Annex 2. Questionnaire)

The obtained data were separated by aspects for their better understanding.

- **Visa denials to librarians and leaders of this sector.**

  The practice of not granting or denying visas to the Cuban staff to visit the United States has become a habit of the present US Administration. These decisions are endorsed by the blockade legislation, among which are found Regulations for the Control of Cuban Assets that would ban travels towards or from Cuba, with the exception of those authorized by the US Government, and later on, the Cuban Democratic Solidarity and Freedom Act (Freedom Act) as the Helms-Burton Act.

  In Section 4 of this last act, the term “economic embargo” is defined, where restrictions to travel to Cuba and from that country are included among other prohibitions.\(^\text{78}\) Besides, in chapter 1: “Strengthening of the international sanctions against Castro’s government”, in section 102: “Application of the economic embargo against Cuba”, it is stipulated in subsection (E) the following:

  “VISA DENIAL TO CERTAIN CUBAN NATIONALS. It is the opinion of the Congress that the President should give instructions to the State Secretary and to the Attorney General for them to take care of the thorough fulfillment of the regulations in force on visa denials to Cuban nationals that the State Secretary considers to be officials or employees of the Cuban government or the Communist Party of Cuba.”\(^\text{79}\)

  As a result of this measure in the period from 2001 to 2005 a total of 8 librarians and library science sector leaders could not travel to the United States, and 2 to Puerto Rico. These people had different travel objectives: namely, to attend Annual Conferences of organizations such as IFLA (International Federation of Librarians Associations), ACURIL (Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries), and

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\(^{78}\) Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996 (Enrolled as agreed to or Passed by Both House and Senate). 20 febrero 2006. <thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/queryz?c104:H.R.927.enr>

\(^{79}\) Ob. cit. (74)
ALA (American Librarians Association); besides, they wanted to conduct exchanges of experiences, to take part at cultural meetings, to foster collaboration, to take or to teach courses and trainings. Likewise, it is deplorable that the North American Government has denied entry visas for its country to Cuban professionals who occupy posts at international organizations.

In the following table more detailed information about the aforementioned issues is offered:

Professionals whose visas were either denied or not granted in the years 2001-2005:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Professional(s)</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Visa Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Eliades Acosta Matos (Director of the José Martí National Library)</td>
<td>Invited by the North Carolina University in Chapel Hill to set up collaboration programs and to promote academic bonds that would benefit both parties. The trip also had the purpose of swapping materials and organizing exchanges of experiences between researchers and librarians from both countries.</td>
<td>Visa was not granted (his passport and documents were returned in early 2005 without any remarks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dayra Matos Veloz (specialist of the Preservation Department of the José Martí National Library).</td>
<td>Invited to participate in a course on preservation of photographic collections in Andover, organized by the North East Preservation Center.</td>
<td>Visa was denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Marcia Medina Cruzata (Deputy Director of the José Martí National Library and ACURIL councilwoman)</td>
<td>ACURIL Annual Conference in Puerto Rico.</td>
<td>Visa was denied (the number 212F was added to the stamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Martha Hernández García (librarian of the Cira García clinic).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visa was denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fernando Martínez (Person in charge of the electronic publications of the National Library)</td>
<td>Invitation by a professional firm from Canada to get training as digital master.</td>
<td>Visa was denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Name(s)</td>
<td>Event / Activity</td>
<td>Result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Bárbara Susana Sánchez Vignau (Director of the Rubén Martínez Villena Central Library of the University of Havana)</td>
<td>Invited to the Cuba – Alabama Cultural Encounter.</td>
<td>Visa was denied (the number 212F was added to the stamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Marta Terry González (member of IFLA/LAC and of the FAIFE Committee)</td>
<td>As a member of the IFLA Latin America and Caribbean Section, she should have participated at a meeting to be held in El Salvador.</td>
<td>Visa was denied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mirta Botana Rodríguez, María Antonia Arús (SOCICT President and Vice-President respectively)</td>
<td>ALA Annual Conference Chicago, Illinois.</td>
<td>Visa was not granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Visa was not granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Miguel Viciedo Valdés (main specialist of the Rubén Martínez Villena Public Library and member of the ASCUBI national leadership)</td>
<td>ALA Annual Conference Chicago, Illinois. (Presentation of paper).</td>
<td>Visa was denied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These decisions by the North American government totally violate agreements signed long before, in the months of May and June, 1997, by the Academy of Sciences of Cuba and the Cuba Working Group of ACLS (American Council of Learned Societies) and SSRC (Social Sciences Research Council), in collaboration with the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation and the Christopher Reynolds Foundation. These organizations, after a number of meetings in Cuba had subscribed that:

“Aimed at facilitating the flow of information, ideas and people between Cuba and North America, this effort includes increasing the travels of intellectuals, academicians and professionals between Cuba and North America. With this end, the Working Group will make efforts to support Cuban and North American academicians requesting visas to go on professional work trips to Cuba and the countries of North America and to facilitate

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80 The underlining was done by the authors.
An aspect that has characterized the visa granting process has been its belated submission, which has brought about the late arrival of some specialists who arrived a few days after activities had started. An example of this practice took place in 1998, date when the ALA Annual Conference was being held. This event would be held between June 25th and July 2nd. Mirta Botana was trying to attend it, who at the time was occupying the vice-presidency of the SOCICT (Cuban Society of Scientific-Technical Information). Documents were submitted in due time, but her visa was granted on July 1st, just one day prior to the closing ceremony of such meeting.

In the month of August, 2001, two of the specialists whose visas had been granted in order to participate at the IFLA Annual Conference, in Boston, United States, arrived when the meeting had already started, and what is more, one of them, Dr. Marta Terry González, could attend only the closing ceremony due to the delay in the delivery of these documents.

An unprecedented situation took place in 2003 with Lic. Marcia Medina Cruzata, deputy director of the José Martí National Library, an ACURIL councilwoman since the year 2001, whose visa to attend the Annual Conference of this organization to be held in Puerto Rico was denied. This time, her passport was stamped with number “212-F”, corresponding to a section of the Immigration and Naturalization Law of the United States, in an unusual way and without any explanation at all. (Annex 3. Photocopy of Marcia Medina’s passport).

In that very year 2003, equal treatment was given to Lic. Bárbara Susana Sánchez Vignau, director of the Rubén Martínez Villena Central Library of Havana University. Despite of having conducted all the corresponding paperwork, her visa was denied, when she was trying to respond to the invitation extended to her by the Alabama University for her to participate at the “Cuba - Alabama Cultural Encounter”. The stamp 81 Memorandum of Understanding between the Academy of Sciences of Cuba and the Working Group on Cuba of the IACLS/SSRC. December 18, 1997.
82 Information offered by Mirta Botana, President of the SOCICT, at a session of the IFLA-UNESCO Regional Workshop on INTERNET held on November 18, 2005 in the City of Havana.
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printed in her passport also had the number “212-F”, but on top of that, this document was unjustifiably retained for two years by the US Interests Section.\(^{83}\)

Section “212-F” of the Immigration and Naturalization Law of the United States points out that entry to the United States should be prohibited to those foreign officials and former officials who are or have been involved in acts of corruption from the position of power and whose action has brought about serious adverse effects on the interests of this nation. By "serious adverse effects on the national interests of the United States" they mean affectations in the following spheres:\(^{84}\)

- international economic activity of North American businesses
- foreign assistance carried out by that country
- security of the United States against transnational crime and terrorism
- stability of its national and democratic institutions

The work actions of Marcia Medina and Bárbara Susana Sánchez have never been connected to the aforementioned spheres; nor have they dealt with criminal or terrorist acts; therefore, this measure constitutes an offense for them and for the Cuban library community. (Annex 4. Lic. Marcia Medina Cruzata’s letter)

Another situation took place with Dr. Marta Terry González, member of the IFLA Latin America and Caribbean Section, who in the month of March, 2004 could not take part in the meeting of that organization that was held in El Salvador. In the minutes of the meeting it was recorded as follows: “Marta Terry (Cuba) who, on arrival at El Salvador was unable to enter the country due to a visa problem.”\(^{85}\)

As a matter of fact, the Doctor was victim of ill treatments and humiliations at the airports of the two Latin American nations. First, she had been assured that upon her arrival in Panama, the consul from El Salvador to that country would place the required stamp for


her to resume her trip. This person did not show up and the professor had to stay
detained overnight, together with other individuals of the worst sort, because she did not
have a visa to be in Panama. She determined to resume her travel on the following day
bound to El Salvador, confident that she would be expected there to join the meeting.
Contrary to this idea, nobody went to meet her at the airport and once again, she was
incarcerated, until at the very end, she managed to return to Cuba without being able to
fulfill the objective of her trip.\textsuperscript{86}

Likewise, prestigious librarians occupying responsibilities at national organizations such
as Mirta Botana Rodríguez and María Antonia Arús, SOCICT president and vice-
president respectively, invited to the ALA 2005 Conference, that was held in Chicago,
Illinois, June 23 through 29, 2005, could not participate because they did not get the
approval of the United States Interests Section in Cuba to travel to that country. These
librarians had previously paid the $100.00 dollar fees to be interviewed at that entity.

An unusual measure has also been not granting visas to individuals who have been
approved to defend their papers at international meetings. In the library science setting
that happened to Miguel Viciedo Valdés, main specialist of the Rubén Martínez Villena
Public Library and member of the National Leadership of ASCUBI, who could not attend
the ALA Annual Conference aforementioned, although he had been invited by that
organization to present the outcomes of a research about the work with children and
teenagers in the System of Public Libraries in the City of Havana.

In the current analysis it must be taken in to account that as a result of the economic
blockade, Cuba cannot afford to pay for the trips of Cuban professionals, interested in
exchanging experiences with their colleagues from the United States and, in
participating at international meetings that are held in that nation. Likewise, in diverse
opportunities specialists are reluctant to carry out the travel paperwork towards the
United States because the answer that the Treasury Department has in store for Cubans
is already known beforehand.

\textsuperscript{86} Information provided by Marta Terry, member of IFLA/LAC and the FAIFE Committee. Professor of
If the dates in which visas were denied and not granted are observed, it is witnessed that it is after the year 2003 when most of the affectations are produced, which overlaps with the increase of the subversive activity of the US Interests Section in Havana, particularly of the main representative back then, Mr. James Cason, who organized several meetings with the dissidence, despite of the warnings by the Cuban government. At these meetings the mercenaries received money and contributed with distorted information for the Helms-Burton Act to be applied and the blockade on Cuba legitimized.

In the month of March of this year, the OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) issued more severe regulations, among which there was the elimination practically of the small licenses that were granted for educational exchange trips of students and intellectuals and the restriction of visas to the Cuban youths, students, intellectuals, athletes and scientists to attend events in the United States.

In the last quarter of 2003, President George W. Bush announced “several initiatives intended to expedite the arrival of a new, free and democratic Cuba.” Among them, the creation of the so-called “Presidential Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba”, presided over by the Secretary of State, Collin Powell, and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mel Martínez.

All over this context of increasing aggressiveness against the revolutionary government, it was logical that visa denials for librarians would increase, depriving them of the possibility of exchanging their knowledge with other specialists, with the subsequent affectionation from the ethical and professional perspectives.

- Hindrances in the acquisition of new technologies for the promotion of reading, document processing and service computerization.

Since the year 1962, Cuba has been banned from acquiring computing equipment from any US company or subsidiary. The passing of the Torricelli and Helms – Burton Acts
widened the repression mechanisms to the most minimum economic, commercial and financial link of North American enterprises with the Island; increased the number and the scope of the extraterritorial effect provisions aimed at chasing any transaction or business benefiting the Cuban economy, and spying on and penalizing foreign investors in Cuba. This situation enables to understand how difficult it is to purchase the latest generation technological equipment and how expensive they may get.

The Cuban enterprise CITMATEL, a computer equipment supplier to scientific centers of the Island, has to get these assets many times through third countries and to pay up to an extra 30 per cent if compared to the price at the United States market. On top of this cost, high tariffs that need to be paid for transportation were added, because as a rule, they are acquired in countries that are much further away from Cuba. What is more, occasionally a plus has to be cashed because of the seller’s fear of the losses he might have should the Treasury Department discovers that he has done business with the Island.

These facts are the major cause out of which most of the technology that libraries own at present is obsolete and has been acquired mainly through donations. The Cuban government does not have funds in hard currencies to get the necessary resources at high prices to computerize services and processes, to install networks and to create informational products. This is one more reason that makes access to some databases and on-line services available at INTERNET impossible.

A more reliable source of the present technological conditions of Cuban public libraries is provided by the following table: 87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity of Libraries</th>
<th>Quantity of Libraries with Computers</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Conducting the automated process</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87 Information from the Methodological Department of the José Martí National Library. September 2005.
The previous data show the insufficient state of technology at the system of public libraries of the country, which requires 2,231 computers, what represents a cost of 3 million dollars.

A similar situation is faced by the Library of the Literature and Linguistics Institute, a prestigious institution that has a highly trained staff. However, the previously described limitations do not allow it to be at the vanguard of computerization, not having its collections digitalized or its catalogs on-line due to the lack of enough equipment to carry out this job.  

- **Limitations for the acquisition of Braille paper and necessary technical resources in libraries for visually disabled people.**

In Cuba there are libraries or information areas for people with visual disabilities in every single province, including the special municipality of the Isle of Youth. These centers require technical resources that are highly expensive at the international market and which have to be accessed by dodging the existing hardships since US dollars cannot be used while purchasing them.

Among the required technical and computer science resources are: recorder or player, computer, tele-magnifying glass, walking scanner, Braille printer, headphones, Perkins Braille typewriter, different software programs (among them, JAWS is quite useful), and others.

A concrete example of the difficulties that exist in this field is witnessed in the price of a Braille typewriter, which has a price of 700 dollars if purchased within the United States, but since Cuba cannot trade in this market, it has been compelled to get them at a price of 1,000 dollars in other countries. The Braille paper is also a very costly material, an

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89 Rodríguez, Guillermo. Head of the Culture Department of the national headquarters of the National Association of the Blind (ANCI). Interview. February 27, 2006.

90 Águila Tejada, Cristina. Library technician at the Frank Emilio Room of the José Martí National Library. Interview. March 7, 2006.
indispensable material in libraries for the visually handicapped in order to print the books that make up their bibliographic collection.

Our country is facing another problem, the acquisition of spare parts to replace the technological equipment that deteriorate and that apart from being expensive, very often they are not available at the market because they have been replaced by more modern ones.

The last piece of information, the ANCI, National Association of the Blind, comprises 25 255 members, out of which 1 039 are blind children, all attending school. These people would be highly benefited if they had libraries adapted to their needs. On the other hand, today there is a visually challenged staff that is qualified to work in this type of rooms. If all resources were available, this might be a major source of employment for them.

- Refusal to information access, databases, on-line services and purchasing of necessary programs to continue the digitalization and the information technology development.

The Torricelli Act, approved in 1992, moment in which Cuba was expected to have a similar destiny than that of the Eastern European Socialist countries, stipulates in its section 1710 that the blockade sanctions cannot be applied to exports, imports, and the transmission of information or informational materials. The violation of this aspect of the law is self-evident, because the Island suffers from the impacts of the electronic blockade determined by the United States, the country that owns the highest technology and practically the whole software industry.

If the Submarine Cable Map for Global Communication of 2004 is observed, it is witnessed how Cuba is left out of this entire gigantic network, which is one more sample of the obstacles that our country faces to develop this sphere. Such a situation, obviously, directly affects the Cuban libraries which, apart form not counting with all the

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required equipment, are limited in terms of using INTERNET for this reason. (Annex 5 Submarine Cable Map, 2004)

The Ministry of Information Technology and Communications, Ignacio González Planas, during an interview granted in the year 2004 to the Juventud Rebelde newspaper, asserted: “Whenever Cuba tries to add a new channel to Internet, the US counterpart must get the right license from the United States Treasury Department. Likewise, if a North American company wants to open a new channel to Cuba or decides to increase the connection speed, the license must be issued”.

The current Cuban connection to the so-called network of networks does not offer the right band width to cover the demand of the country. The blockade compels Cuba to use a slow and expensive satellite connection and band width. The problem could be solved if an optic fiber cable was connected between Cuba and the state of Florida, but US authorities have not permitted it. 92

On the other hand, library centers are also affected by the frequent refusals they get when trying to access some of the free services offered by INTERNET. Thus, for example:

✓ The transnational SUN Microsystems Inc. (SUN), that offers free access to its products, establishes the prohibition of exporting and re-exporting SUN hardware, software, services and technology to countries under an embargo or commercial sanctions by the United States. (Annex 6. Refusal of free software)

This notification appears on the website: 
http://www.sun.com/sales/its/countries/Embargoed.htm with the following text:

“Policy

Unless authorized by the U.S. Government, Sun Microsystems, Inc. prohibits export and re-export of Sun hardware, software, services, and technology to destinations subject to U.S. embargoes or trade sanctions.

Government policy is to deny requests for such authorization in almost all cases.

As of March 2003, the following countries are subject to U.S. embargo or restrictive trade sanctions.

Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea (Democratic Republic of Korea)

With this measure SUN does not comply with decree 3390 and violates the “Freedom 0” or “Freedom of Use”. The same occurs with licenses SCSL, JIUL and JRL, some of which offer restrictions not just to countries subject to an “embargo” like Cuba, but also to Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia.

The validity of this provision was witnessed in the month of August, 2005 when Fernando Martínez, the person in charge of the Electronic Publications Department of the José Martí National Library, requested through INTERNET the program PLUGINS JAVA (tm) that this company offers free of charge and was given the following answer:

“Java (tm) cannot be downloaded to your equipment. Your country is not authorized.”

(Annex 7. Unloaded from Java)

✓ The PGP software, of free access, may be useful to preserve confidential information and to send safe mail. However, when the form is filled out to download it to the computer, in the section COUNTRIES Cuba does not appear. If the request is made by another nation, they detect that the request comes from the Island just the same and service is denied. There appears a text that is headed by the words: DOWNLOAD DENIED.93

In like manner, all Microsoft use licenses register that these cannot be exported to Cuba, to third countries trading with it and to people that are suspected to have them sent to the Island. The acquisitions that are made in this regard bring the increase of prices, since countries which run the risk of trading with Cuba increase the value of these products. Besides, there is a longer delay when getting them. The same restrictions

93 On December 12, 2005, a specialist from the Automation Department of the National Library tried to have access to this software and received this answer. The page address was: <http://downnload.pgp.com/cgi_bin/exportcheckfailed.cgi>
keep Cubans from paying for the licenses to use the anti-virus products that are internationally commercialized. In other cases, the updating of some of these programs is denied to Cubans. This experience was witnessed by Daniel Motola, head of the Automation Department of the National Library, when he tried to download the McAfee updating and got as an answer: “We are sorry but it appears that you are located in a country that we are unable to export to in accordance with United States law”.  

A sample of the obstacles generated by the blockade that keep Cuban libraries from having free access to information is the prohibition of using certain databases.  

In the month of May, 2003, Mr. Nicholas Cop, director of the Latin America Division of the company Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), upon the request issued by the deputy director of Technical Processes of the José Martí National Library, Nancy Hernández, in order to get the on-line cataloging services that this corporation was offering by means of the payment of cash, wrote: “I am sorry to tell you that I am not willing to offer you the OCLC services due to the embargo that the United States has upon Cuba”.  

With this answer, Mr. Cop denied the possibility for Cuban librarians to use those services, which would mean a sensitive saving in terms of bibliography processing and would allow for carrying out a work with greater bibliographic rigor. A couple of years before, on May 23, 2001, the Treasury Secretary’s Office of the United States prohibited this company to promote this bibliographic utilitarian and cataloging service in the framework of the ACURIL Conference (Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries) that was being held in Havana.  

University libraries have also been affected not having been able to directly get highly useful databases for their information management, as it is the case of the ERIC Database (containing information resources on education) and the EMERAL (about reference services). This latter, although it is produced in Great Britain, lists articles from

94 McAfee. December 28, 2005 <http://www.nai.com>
specialized journals coming from the United States and that is why Cuba was not granted the right to use it.\textsuperscript{95}

The company from the United States, Thomson ISI, manufactures several leading products at the international market, among them the Bibliographic Reference Managers: EndNote, Procite, Reference Manager and RefViz (bibliographic reference visualizer). All of them of great usefulness for the making of scientific articles in formats that may be compatible with the major journals of any scientific specialty. Recently the Information Sciences University (UCI) requested the purchase of a license for the use of RefViz and it was denied.

This very company, the Thomson ISI, that produces information contents indispensable for the doing of any scientific research such as the Current Contents and the Science Citation Index (currently available in its Web version under the name of Web of Science), does not sell these databases to Cuba either.\textsuperscript{96}

Another company, the Elsevier, does not refuse to sell the ScienceDirect to Cuba but, this has unaffordable prices for countries with few resources and does not allow its distribution to the Island through international organizations such as the INASP that manages important discounts to information prices for developing countries.

In this last regard, some changes that are produced at different INTERNET sites also make the possibilities to obtain information even more difficult for countries under similar conditions than Cuba, because although it is true that they used to offer their services for free up to shortly ago, such as the SAUR Biographic Dictionary, now they are restricted to a subscription for which a fee has to be paid.


\textsuperscript{96} Information provided by Raúl Torricella. Chief of Staff at the Information Technology and Communication National Center (CENTIC). March 2, 2006.
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

- **Limitations in the acquisition of collection updating documents and library collections.**

The elements previously provided about the restrictions offered by the blockade laws for the purchasing of any product coming from the United States and the freezing of Cuban funds in their banks, compel our libraries to basically get documents through the state purchases from the Book Institute, donations and the international exchanges with educational centers and librarians from other countries.

The work of exchanging and the reception of donations have also been affected by the blockade because after 1992 (passing of the Torricelli Act) it became necessary to reduce the financial framework in free convertible currency that the Ministry of Culture used to give to the system of public libraries. The budget for the payment of the shipment of documents to other countries was also reduced.

The National Library, as a result of this, has been seriously damaged. A sample of this assertion is witnessed in the following data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Library Exchange Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books received through exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal copies received through exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This sensitive reduction is affecting the acquisition of valuable documents that were normally received this way. In the concrete case of the exchange with the United States it is witnessed that it has not been stable in the last few years, what can be observed in the following synoptic table:
The revealed data show a meaningful decline in the extent and the range of the exchange with this country, which in previous decades had been very extensive and fruitful for both nations.

The present situation also brings about difficulties to get donations from individuals residing in the United States or Puerto Rico, due to the expenses that their transportation entails, which more often than not must be made through third countries. Likewise, there is fear to the consequences of violating what has been established by the Torricelli and the Helms-Burton Acts.

The denial of visas to the Cuban staff to participate at the San Juan International Book Fair, in Puerto Rico, in November, 2003, the very fact that Cuba cannot buy directly from any North American Editorial House or its affiliates in other countries, and that it is kept from using US currency, has a negative impact upon Cuban libraries. These institutions lack updated reference works; and besides, they do not have literary works or contemporary periodic publications from that country.

A concrete sample of what has been expressed, is the existing prohibition to buy the *British Encyclopedia*, valuable consultation document that is published on paper in 32 volumes at an approximate cost of $1 400 dollars (pretty high for the possibilities of the poorer countries). The problem is based on the fact that its editing became the property of a North American company based in Chicago, Illinois, United States. This encyclopedia is also available at INTERNET with short free access article abstracts; but

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for the whole texts to be read, it is required to pay either $10 dollars monthly or 60 yearly.

University libraries do not have any other updated reference repertoires either, that are very useful for students and faculty attending their rooms. Most of these documents are made by the Scientific Information Institute of the United States and this makes their direct acquisition impossible.

The National Bibliography, a repertoire having a prestigious bibliographic tradition since the 19th century, when it was compiled by Bachiller y Morales, Carlos M. Trelles, Fermín Peraza, and other great bibliographers, is incomplete today because, as a result of these measures, all works edited abroad dealing with Cuba or by Cuban authors cannot be acquired.

- Restrictions to acquire necessary materials and inputs to bind, preserve, restore and microfilm documents.

After the passing of the Torricelli Act that cut off the trade of medicines, foodstuffs and other products of Cuba with other subsidiaries of US companies based outside the North American territory, and, establishing severe prohibitions to maritime navigation from and towards Cuba, institutionalizing extraterritorial regulations with the force of law, the acquisition of materials and inputs required for binding, preserving, restoring and microfilming documents became more difficult. Up to that point, these materials used to be received from the former socialist countries, but after their break-up, the only choice left was to purchase them at the capitalist market.

At present the purchasing of these products is done through third countries what means that their price is much higher, in addition to the fact that they are far-off nations and that is why materials get even more expensive due to their transportation. (Annex 8. Information from the Preservation and Restoration Department of the BNJM (José Martí National Library)

On the other hand, hereditary collections are damaged by the lack of powerful air conditioning equipment. A solution could be to digitalize or to microfilm these collections,
but the limitations previously described in terms of buying any product whatsoever, do not allow for the use of this solution either.

Documents are also affected because of the impossibility of fumigating with the required products and the necessary frequency, because of their high price at the international market.

Not acquiring these materials and inputs, as well as the tools and instruments to carry out the restoration and preservation work, brought about the fact that the Rubén Martínez Villena Public Library (Havana City) had to close its restoration workshop since 1995, and therefore, its documents and those of the libraries associated to it could not be repaired or restored.

In like manner, the small preservation and restoration workshop at the Library of Casa de las Américas has practically come to a stop due to the shortage of materials such as Japanese paper and acid-free cardboard.

In the report by Cuba about Resolution 58/7 of the United Nations General Assembly of the year 2004, entitled: “Need of putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba” this critical issue was addressed:

“If necessary materials and inputs could be acquired at the US market or through North American companies based on the Caribbean, Central or South America, 3 600 documents could be restored annually. Today, the 20% of this figure is not reached. To have a clearer idea: commercialization in Cuba, by intermediary enterprises, of the 31 g tissue paper (indispensable material for document restoration), also known as Japanese paper, is to be found at 498.77 dollars a roll, whereas if it could be acquired in the United States, its price would be 280.00 dollars.”

The aforementioned hardships have brought about the loss by deterioration of priceless collections that have not been able to be restored, microfilmed, or digitalized on time. A tangible example of this painful situation is presented next:

**Most Relevant Cuban Periodic Press from the 19th and 20th Centuries that is Impossible to Recover due to its Preservation State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Bad conditions</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Very bad conditions</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it may be witnessed, 78% of these valuable documents stored in libraries and information centers all over the Island will exist no more as a result of not having had the necessary materials for their preservation or digitalization.

- **Hindrances for the commercialization development of library services.**

Cuba cannot make on-line purchases due to the blockade measures. Nor is it allowed to exchange information and products with customers and specialists residing in the United States, or to carry out commercial managements through North American banks and financial institutions using checks issued by them. These restrictions are highly damaging for the Island if the magnitude of the North American market is taken into account.

Individuals living in the United States interested on a library service provided by Cuban entities, provided the blockade did not exist, could pay at any bank as it is internationally customary; however, they have to carry out their purchase through a bank in another country, other than a North American one, with credit cards not issued by US banks or checks from that country. As a result of this situation, many interested people give up in their request before the countless obstacles they are faced with.

This service, being carried out through third countries, costs approximately an 8% more than what is normally paid for bank paperwork. In addition to this money, shipment
expenses are to be paid. Facing this situation, Cuba in some cases, is compelled to lower the prices and in others, to raise them. Both decisions have their known impact for library institutions and place them in disadvantage over the rest of the libraries of the world. Besides, several times, customers have given up their purposes due to the aforementioned causes. That was the case of Mr. Joaquín Gil del Real, resident in California, who was interested in getting copies of some documents from the José Martí National Library in order to make up a biography of his great-grandfather, José Triay. The user suggested performing the bank paperwork through Panama where his daughter lived, but he faced another problem. Cuba does not accept checks from the United States. This work which originally cost $36.00 dollars became more expensive up to $40.00 dollars, plus shipping expenses, amounted to a total of $46.50 dollars. Finally, Mr. Gil del Real gave up acquiring the documents.

➢ Institutions, organizations and people based in the United States (and in other countries) are kept from making donations to Cuban libraries.

The blockade laws in their intention to annihilate the Cuban Revolution leave increasingly less survival possibilities to the Island. In this way, not only do they obstacle trade exchanges, but also prohibit all North American institutions to make donations or to have collaborations with Cuban centers. The violation of these regulations entails a sanction that may be up to $50 000 USD, plus the seizure of collections, documents, or other articles, considered as violation means.

In section 109 of the Helms – Burton Act, subsection (c) it is pointed out: “DENIAL OF FUNDS TO THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. — In the fulfillment of this section the President will adopt all necessary measures to make sure that neither funds nor any other assistance are granted to the Cuban government.”

These regulations have brought about the cancellation of important collaboration agreements between libraries. An example of that, was the suspension in the year 1996 of the Atlantea Project, established by the Río Piedra University in Puerto Rico, aimed at the assistance to Latin American countries and by means of which, it was possible to publish the Cuban National Bibliography from the year 1992 through 1996. After this year this important and necessary collaboration was suspended.
Despite of threats and sanctions, many institutions, organizations and individuals have expressed their interest either to donate or facilitate the purchase of documents to our country; however, this has been quite difficult for the existence of the North American legal regulations. A sample of this was what happened to the Christian schoolteacher, Mrs. Joni Scott, resident of the State of Indiana, who visited Cuba in order to distribute Bibles to the population. Upon her return to the United States she was warned that she would get a government fine of $10,000 dollars for violating the laws of her country.

In the year 2002, a former resident from Boyeros Municipality, in Havana, currently based in the United States, tried to send economic assistance to improve the material conditions of the Library, the Parish Church and the Museum of his birthplace; however, he could not materialize this idea due to the obstacles imposed on him by the Treasury Department. 99

On June 5, 2003, the European Union announced a number of diplomatic sanctions against Cuba, among them, the reduction of bilateral visits, the review of its relations with the Island and the invitation for Cuban dissidents to the celebration of national rallies.

The leaders of this group were José María Aznar (president of Spain back then), Silvio Berlusconi (President of Italy) and Tony Blair (President of Great Britain), unconditional allies of the counterrevolutionaries living in Miami. A few days later, on July 21, the European Union openly expressed its coincidence with the Washington policy towards the Island.

As a result of this policy, in the year 2004, an Italian advertising firm that was renewing its computer equipment and that wanted to donate to the National Library of Cuba those that it was going to remove from the center, was kept from doing this action by the new regulations approved by the European Union. 100

99 Information provided by Marat Simon, retired, relative of the individual who was going to make the donation. June 2005
100 Information provided by Rosa Báez, specialist from the Electronic Publications Department of the José Martí National Library. March 2005.
A few years ago, the INFOMED Network (Medical Information) generated a movement within the United States that became a non-governmental organization called USA/Cuba-Infomed, based in California, whose mission was to support the Cuban network of diagnosis and medical information. The organization managed to be granted a license to donate computers, but it was demanded that these could not be new equipments. After 2001, with the George W. Bush government, this license was denied and it was no longer allowed to carry out these actions. 101

More recently, on July 21, 2005, the North American Costumes at the border point of McAllen, Texas, confiscated by direct order from the government of the United States, hundreds of books in English language allocated to the Havana University Library, among them The Little Prince, by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, Lady Chaterley’s Lover, by the British writer David Herbert Lawrence, Memories of Sir Winston Churchill, The Great Inquisitor, The Karamazov Brothers, by Fedor Dostoievski, How Green my Valley Was, by Richard Llewellyn, The Age of Reason, by the French Jean-Paul Sartre, Twenty Thousand Leagues of Submarine Travel, by the French Julio Verne and works by Ernest Hemingway, among others; as well as tens of computers. The seized books were part of the objects that were taken away from the Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan. 102

Despite of the multiple existing restrictions for the academic exchange between the United States and Cuba, for several years the financings for the preservation workshops taught in Cuba by specialists from the Social Science Research Council have been kept, which have always contributed with the necessary materials for this work. In the year 2005, during the preparations of the Ancient Books Preservations and Identification Workshop, that was going to be held at the Havana Literature and Linguistics Institute, the Treasury Department prohibited taking the customary donations and materials to the Island. With this measure it would deprive Cuban library centers, participating at the

101 Information shared by Pedro Urra, Director of INFOMED, at a session of the IFLA-UNESCO Regional Workshop on INTERNET held on November 17 and 18, 2005 in the City of Havana.
workshop, of the possibility of getting necessary (and very expensive) inputs that are used in the preservation process of hereditary documents.  

- Refusals for publishing articles and books.

On November 30, 2003, the OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) prohibited the publication of scientific articles coming from countries subject to embargo sanctions by the United States, among them, Cuba. The OFAC adopted this measure using the pretext that the reviewing process was a service that would add value to such articles and therefore, it would be a violation of the Trading with the Enemy Act. The violation of this act could lead to the payment of a fine of $50,000 dollars and imprisonment of up to 10 years. The pressures by the international scientific community managed to revoke this regulation on April 5, 2004.

So far, we have not known if any member from the library sector was affected by such measure; nevertheless, it is pointed out because of its obvious discriminatory and reprehensible nature.

- Illegal retention of monetary funds belonging to Cuban libraries.

The Regulations for the Control of Cuban Assets issued by the Treasury Department in 1963 established the freezing of all Cuban assets in the United States. This unjust measure directly affected the Ramón Guiteras Public Library in Matanzas, which has not been able to make use of an inheritance that has been retained in that country.

This institution was dedicated in 1995 thanks to the economic contribution left by Mrs. Gertrude Guiteras Wardwell, action that was done to honor her father’s memory, Ramón Guiteras y Font.

There were many favorable expectations about the future of this library, to such an extent, that at the time of its opening, Dr. Joseph L. Wheeler, a library consultant and technical advisor from the United States, predicted that: “The Guiteras Library will exert

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a great influence in the library science progress of the United States and of Latin America”. In this assertion he took into account the conditions of the building and the collections treasured by the center.

Mrs. Gertrude Guiteras in her will drafted in Bristol County, State of Rhode Island, United States, on May 18, 1932, favored “the library or the free public libraries” existing back then “or to be set up from now on in the City of Matanzas, in the Republic of Cuba”. The amount of such legacy in the 60’s was $450,000 dollars, figure which has been increased all over these years with the corresponding bank interest rates. (Annex 9: Testament Copy. DEED 457)

In the year 1981, comrade Olinta Ariosa, who was acting as the National Director of Libraries, approached the management of the National Cuban Bank to carry out all the necessary procedures to validate the testament. On this occasion she was ratified that since the year 1963 all assets placed in the United States benefiting individuals or institutions in Cuba were frozen. Despite of the existence of this legal document, the libraries of the City of Matanzas have not been able to spend that money. (Annex 10. Letter)

» Reduction of scholarships for Cuban librarians.

Cuban librarians, just like those who live in underdeveloped countries, find in scholarships granted by international bodies and certain organizations of countries from the first world, the opportunity to acquire necessary state-of-the-art knowledge for the better performance of their professions. However, in the last few years a reduction in the submission of these quotas is witnessed, as one more aftermath of the blockade measures on Cuba.

In Los Angeles, California, the Getty Center is based, an institution having an educational nature offering cooperation in the fields of research, preservation and professional development. This support is meant for people that do not live in the United States who are taking Doctor’s Degree courses and researchers of works of art

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preservation process. The Getty Center also helps institutions with the development of academic and research programs. For several years, this entity offered its collaboration to specialists from the Cuba Literature and Linguistics Institute, but as a result of the increase of restrictions by the North American government against Cuba, the flow of scholarships granting was closed down.

In the case of grants provided by IFLA, ALA or SALALM to participate in their events, organizers reserve the right to refuse admission or not to a Cuban national. Thus, for the IFLA Congress in Buenos Aires, in 2005, the ASCUBI, the national association representing Cuban libraries, sent several candidate proposals for grants to the ALA. None of them was accepted, however, the quotas were granted to two Cubans who applied individually. 105

It is also meaningful that some of the grants to attend IFLA, like for instance, the Harry Campbell grant, although it states that it has the objective of supporting professionals from developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, it does not include Cuba on the list of nations that could be benefited.

➢ Hindrances for the holding of international events and courses in Cuba.

The making of courses and events having an international nature at library institutions or at the study or research centers where they are based, have always had a favorable impact on them. That is why; these centers have been affected whenever these activities have been cancelled as a result of the application of the blockade measures.

In this facet, there are several examples. The visa denials to travel to Cuba by the Treasury Department caused the cancellation of two courses that were planned to be held in Havana, in 2005, at the Literature and Linguistics Institute. These would address the “Current Cuban Reality” and they were supposed to be attended by North American students. The revenues from the previous courses were always used for the benefit of the library and of the prestigious research center.

105 Information provided by Miguel Viciedo, researcher and member of the ASCUBI national leadership. February 2006.
For the same reason about 15 specialists from the United States and Puerto Rico could not attend the event “Linguistics 2005” organized by such institute. Some of them did not even get a reply to their visa request. All professionals, usually, whenever they attend these meetings, donate their own publications and others from their respective research or study institutions to the Library, what enables us to have updated specialized documentation available. With this measure the Library was deprived of the possibility of increasing its collections with such contributions.

A sample of the unfair exclusions affecting Cuba was the denial received from the United States Treasury Department to hold the meeting of the SALALM in the Island during 2006. This professional association has the mission of facilitating access to all types of Latin American documents, the development of collections, promoting the betterment of library services and information availability to facilitate the study about Latin America and Pan American issues. The SALALM Conference is held every year in different sites through an invitation issued by an institution or body.

In 2001 Cuba submitted the request to sponsor the SALALM annual meeting in 2006, which was enthusiastically embraced by the members of that organization legally registered in the United States. Its Board of Directors had to ask for the OFAC authorization. In the digital publication Librínsula, issued on October 1st, 2004, there appears a dossier related to this event. Among the materials that are shown there are: the letter that Pamela Howard – Reguindin, SALALM president, sent to Eliades Acosta Matos, director of the José Martí National Library, letting him know about the denial from the Treasury Department; Acosta’s reply to such letter, and the letter of the State Department, dated June 17, 2004, where the license to hold the meeting in Cuba is denied. ¹⁰⁶ (Annex 11. Letter from the State Department)

This unjustified decision damages the members of the organization who are interested in having direct contact with Cuban editors and authors. The holding of such an event in Cuba would have contributed to improve the relations between booksellers and librarians from other countries and Cuban specialists. Likewise, it would be an adequate means for a real flow of ideas and information, without the barriers that have historically

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existed in these international meetings. During many years in SALALM, the representation of Cuban works was in the hands of the Cuban Collection at Miami University, which is mainly made up of books by Cuban authors living in the exile.

- **Obstacles for Cuban participation at international organizations related to the spheres of books and libraries.**

The blockade measures also affect Cuba’s participation at international organizations such as ABINIA, SALALM and IFLA in different ways. One of these impacts is found in the fact that Cubans are prohibited to use checks, money orders and credit cards from United States banks, that is why they must pay for the registration or for the established fees of these organizations directly. This means that such payment is in cash, what brings about serious inconveniences to the people in charge of this job, since they travel from one country to the other with a large sum of money in their luggage. Hence, although ABINIA fees are paid at banks based in Venezuela, Cuba cannot do any operation through them because they are owned by the United States.

Professionals who are going to participate at an IFLA Conference, just to cite an example, have three installments to pay for it (2 before its beginning and the other close to the date of the event). If it is paid in the first two terms, it is a given percent less than the set fee for the official registration. If the payment is made in the last deadline it must then be cashed at the site where the event is held and paying the maximum fee. Since Cuba cannot pay through an international bank, it has to do it at the site of the event and consequently, it has to pay the maximum fee. From the IFLA pages promoted by Conferences held in Argentina, Oslo and the next one that will be held in Seoul, the following information can be accessed:

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**Payment Fees for IFLA Members**

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<tr>
<td>First Installment</td>
<td>350 USD</td>
<td>350 EUR</td>
<td>365 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Installment</td>
<td>435 USD</td>
<td>425 EUR</td>
<td>445 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On site</td>
<td>495 USD</td>
<td>475 EUR</td>
<td>525 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference between</td>
<td>145 USD</td>
<td>125 EUR</td>
<td>160 EUR</td>
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<td>last fee</td>
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</table>

This registration fee, together with the airplane ticket and lodging, makes the participation of the Cuban delegation in these conferences considerably expensive.

- **Obstacles for the editing of journals, repertoires and other documents.**

During the last fifteen years, the José Martí National Library has had a significant reduction in terms of the editing of its documents. The causes are to be found in the existing difficulties to acquire the necessary raw materials at reasonable prices and with the required quality. Likewise, the leading technology is not available; so, getting spare parts for the maintenance of the existing equipment becomes a problem. This situation has impeded to carry out the necessary editing of important collections treasured in the institution.

An evident proof of how the blockade thwarts free access to information, and the spreading of knowledge in the library setting is the refusal for Cuba to be able to get the products that are used in the editing process of books and journals.

The Adobe American company, one of the most important software suppliers for the editorial market and which owes most of its success to the fact that its information presentation formats are considered standard in such market\textsuperscript{108}, records in the usage licenses of its products that Cuba does not have access to them. For example, in the

\textsuperscript{108} The PDF format allows to show on the computer screen a document exactly the same as how it World look if printed in a high quality printer. It also provided many facilities to navigate through documents when including hyperlinks, with which one can jump from a point of the text to another related one.
usage licenses by de Adobe Photoshop 7.0.1 (software enabling the image design and processing and which is very useful in the Digital Laboratory work and in the Editing Department) and Adobe Reader 7.0.1 (software that is used to read documents and electronic books that are in this format) it is expressed:

“The export and re-export of Adobe software products are controlled by the United States Export Administration Regulations and such software may not be exported or re-exported to Cuba; Iran; Iraq; Libya; North Korea; Sudan; or Syria or any country to which the United States embargoes goods. In addition; Adobe software may not be distributed to persons on the Table of Denial Orders; the Entity List; or the List of Specially Designated Nationals.

By downloading or using an Adobe software product you are certifying that you are not a national of Cuba; Iran; Iraq; Libya; North Korea; Sudan; or Syria or any country to which the United States embargoes goods and that you are not a person on the Table of Denial Orders; the Entity List; or the List of Specially Designated Nationals.”

This situation together with other hardships that have existed as a result of shortages of raw materials led to the fact that the outstanding Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, created back in 1909 with a periodicity of four volumes per year, stopped being published in the time period between 1993 and 1998. In 1999 the journal reappeared with just a couple of editions annually. Another publication, Bibliotecas, official body of the National System of Public Libraries, was born in 1963 and up until 1978 its frequency was every two months, from 1979 to 1989, every semester and from 1992 onwards, it condenses two

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issues into a yearly volume. At present, it began a new stage of its life, converted into research annals. *Bibliotecas* is the only reading and knowledge space about the scientific-informative life of our nation. The reduction in the editions of these journals has not allowed for librarians and other professionals to be able to advertise their experiences and knowledge in their entire necessary dimension.

The situation of the repertoires that are made at the Cuban Bibliography Department of the National Library is even more painful, because at present they are no longer edited. The *Bibliografía Nacional* was published between 1970 and 1989 in six issues yearly and in 1993 it was edited thanks to the collaboration with the Río Piedra University in Puerto Rico (which was mentioned before). After this date, all the work is compiled in manual catalogs and databases. The *Índice General de Publicaciones Periódicas Cubanas* was only published between 1970 and 1986. The information can be retrieved from the traditional catalogs, and part of it, in automated way. Not publishing these collections affects the service that the rest of libraries offer to their users, for these repertoires have a priceless usefulness and make work more efficient.

It should be added that in the National Library up until 1989, newsletters about Visual Arts, Literature, Music, general problems on Culture, Theater and Dance, were published. After this date it has been impossible to edit them, despite of their great demand.

- **Robbery of hereditary documents from the Cuban libraries supported by blockade laws.**

On July 17, 2001, Eliades Acosta Matos, Director of the José Martí National Library, got an e-mail from Mr. Richard Wendorf, Director of the Boston Athenaeum, Massachusetts, United States, a private institution that has a library. In such e-mail it was reported that since 1994 they had acquired the first edition of an Atlas from 1570 from Mr. David O’Neal, in which at the time of its restoration in 1999, two stamps from the National Library of Cuba had been spotted. For that reason, Mr. Wendorf requested the final declaration in 60 days about the origin of the Atlas, from the Director of this center.

On July 19, 2001, Eliades Acosta replied by e-mail that the Atlas was a property of the National Library of Cuba, which had been stolen at a date prior to 1991, the time when
its loss was detected. Eliades attended the IFLA Conference in Boston in August 2001 and took with him the proofs that the Ortelius Atlas was a property of his institution. Some data from the current cataloging were not totally coinciding with those of the Atlas because the document was processed in the decade of the 60’s, when in the library there was no experience in the cataloging process, but there were no doubts that such document belonged to the National Library of Cuba because, apart from having been only one edition, the existence of the erased stamps was undeniable.

On February 24, 2003, Mr. Richard Wendorf sent an e-mail to Eliades Acosta where he was letting him know that the Atlas should go back to its real owners: “I can now provide you with good news. We are currently making a handsome box in which you can store it. The trustees of Boston Athenaeum have voted to return the atlas to your library. We would like to return it to you in person. We have checked with our federal officials in Washington and they see no problem with this”.  

Despite of all what has been previously expressed, such Atlas at present has not returned to its original place. Not returning this document is a violation of the “The Convention on measures that should be adopted to prohibit and to impede the import, export and transfer of illegal property of cultural assets”, passed by the UNESCO General Conference at the XVI meeting held in Paris, on November 14, 1970; Law number 1 “Cultural Heritage Protection Act” and its Regulations Decree number 118.

This fact shows that Cuba’s claim in this regard is unheard when it comes to the United States, which is illegally backed by the blockade laws set up by the government of that country against the Island. The underground market and the smuggling of hereditary works from Cuba to the United States and Spain perceptibly damage the collections of Cuban libraries.

➢ Other blockade effects on Cuban libraries:

♦ All countries belonging to ISO have the commitment of sending the cataloging standards to member countries. Cuba gets them from other countries, but not from the United States. That is why; whenever it is necessary to consult an American standard, Cuban specialists must resort to their purchase because these are not sent to Cuba as it is internationally established.

♦ Closing down of 32 libraries due to total deterioration of the building.

♦ Serious limitations in the furniture facing the ever growing pressure on the services in all the system libraries.

♦ Bad conditions of the shelves to keep the documents treasured by the libraries which have caused the increasing deterioration of some collections.

♦ Limitations in transportation have affected methodological and upgrading activities. It is also difficult to hold events and visits to institutions; likewise, the library extension services have diminished in areas of difficult access.

♦ The sphere of services has been affected with the reduction of the time allocated to take care of users. In this situation the need to save energy and transportation difficulties have been determining.

Chapter 4: Dissemination of false information that goes against the prestige of Cuban librarians.

The blockade laws on Cuba during the last few decades have included within their sections the protection and support to dissidents in Cuba, which have been in charge of disseminating a whole number of false things about the Cuban people and government, with the obvious purpose of justifying any measure whatsoever that the US Administration may decide to adopt against the Island.

With the Helms–Burton Act, passed in 1996, it was stipulated to overtly organize and finance this opposition. Just as it was expressed on Section 109:

“AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPPORT TO DEMOCRATIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS AND TO INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

a) AUTHORIZATION. -- ...THE President is authorized to provide assistance and other types of support to individuals and independent non-
governmental organizations for the sake of Cuba’s democratization efforts, including the following:

1) Published materials and those having an informative nature such as books, videos and cassettes, about transitions towards democracy, human rights and market economies, so as to send them to independent democratic groups in Cuba.

2) Humanitarian aid to the victims of political repression and their families.

3) Support to human rights and democratic groups of Cuba.

4) Support to visits and to the permanent establishment of independent international human rights observers in Cuba.\(^\text{111}\)

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is the one directing this political destabilization program.

Two years after the establishment of the Helms – Burton Act, and in keeping with it, the “Independent Libraries Project” was created in Cuba under the auspices of the US Interests Section. The term “independent” tries to distinguish these libraries from those that belong to the library system of the nation. In order to justify their existence, they claim that in Cuba there is no intellectual freedom, there are censored books and that Cuban authorities have ordered the burning of books, among other slanders.

This Project was materialized with the setting up of the first Independent Library on March 13, 1998 in Las Tunas province, under the leadership of Berta Mexidor and her husband, Ramón Humberto Colás. In return for their services, “independent librarians” get an economic retribution from the North American government.

Among the works granted by the US Interests Section to these “librarians” there are reports drafted by the State Department about alleged human rights violations in Cuba,\(^\text{111}\) Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Freedom) Act of 1996 (Enrolled as agreed to or Passed by Both House and Senate) February 20, 2006 <http://www.thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/queryz?c104:H.R.927.enr>
speeches by President Bush, as well as writings on the functioning of the North American society. They are also sent the newspapers *The Miami Herald* and *The New Herald*, among other materials, many of which are drafted by members of counterrevolutionary organizations based in Miami.

In 1999, the New York librarian Robert Kent created an organization called “Friends of Cuban Libraries”, for the sake of the so-called “independent” libraries. This individual has carried out a policy of attacks, full of lies against the Cuban library system and its organizations, at international events, on-line debate lists and in other media. Kent, despite of all his attempts to achieve a condemnation of Cuba, has only managed to get the rejection from the international community at the IFLA Annual Assembly held in Boston in 2001 and the repudiation from Latin American, US, Canadian and English librarians.

“Independent librarians” have already been unmasked some time ago, by two bibliographers: Larry Oberg, a librarian from Willamette University and Rhonda L. Neugebauer, a Latin American studies bibliographer, from the Riverside University in California. They were able to witness, during their meetings with these people in the year 2000, that their motivations were purely political and not professional at all.112

Organizations such as the American Library Association (ALA), Canadian Librarian Group, Progressive Librarians Guild, Cuban Library Solidarity Group (based in London) and others, have also sent several research groups to Cuba many different times, which have verified that the so-called “independent libraries” "do not have books, or librarians or readers".113

The honest attitude of these organizations has become the target of criticism from those who follow the orders of the most reactionary sectors within the North American government. Recently, ALA leaders have been accused by Walter Skold, co-president of the organization “Freedom”, of relinquishing their principles. Skold published a work in

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four parts; after October 12, 2005, in *Front Page Magazine*, where he used offensive phrases against some North American librarians, the director of the José Martí National Library and Margarita Bellas, President of the Association of Cuban Librarians (ASCUBI).\textsuperscript{114} (Annex 12. Article (part III) by Walter Skold)

One of the legislative documents justifying the assistance of the North American government to the “independent” groups on the Island is the “Cuban Solidarity Act of 2001”. In it, the creation and consolidation of “non-governmental organizations” of this type are established, among which, those gathering “independent librarians”. The term «independent» is associated to a political-subversive plan that tries to destabilize and destroy the Cuban Revolution. On Section 6, subsection (c) it is established that these libraries are among the eligible groups to receive assistance or aid. Besides, it is pointed out in subsection (d) that the information and resources center in Havana would be the US Interests Section.\textsuperscript{115}

In June, 2004 the “Report by the Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba”, reaffirmed the financial support of the government of the United States Government to these alleged independent organizations. The purpose, according to the document, is to strengthen the civil society in the Island so as to pave the way for the transition towards a “Free Cuba”. But as a matter of fact, it means a step towards a Cuba annexed to the United States.

Among the recommendations that such document offers can be found:

“A Robust U.S. Assistance Program to Empower Cuban Civil Society:

*Work with willing third-country allies to support creation of an international fund for the protection and development of civil society in Cuba. This fund should engage, train, and*
provide resources for volunteers of different nationalities to travel to Cuba for several weeks to provide logistical and technical assistance to independent libraries, professional organizations, charity organizations, journalists, educators, nurses, and medical doctors working independently of the regime.  

Likewise, the text proposes to allocate 2 million dollars to the Independent Libraries for: “Programs to re-stock, strengthen and expand the Cuban independent library network and to promote their solidarity with national library associations in Europe and Latin America.”

All the actions of the so-called “independent librarians” and their “friends” detour toward that issue, the debates and analyses that are made in conferences and international meetings, not allowing the taking advantage of time in working matters that may be of great usefulness for the performance of the profession.

The slanders and lies of “independent librarians” and their collaborators abroad have caused damage to the prestige and the moral of the true Cuban librarians because occasionally, despite of having been unmasked, they have managed to confuse some leaders and members of international organizations from other countries. These false claims have also affected the exchange, assistance or collaboration relations between our own domestic librarians and those from other nations.

In the month of January 2004, at some international press media the news was spread that in the Island Cubans were being deprived of having access to INTERNET. This took place based on the “wrong” or ill-intended interpretation of the implementation of Resolution 180/2003. The piece of news was believed by some members of the library community. Its source was the organization “Amnesty International”, which in turn was based on what was announced by the counterrevolutionary organizations “Freedom House” and the "Friends of Cuban Library" (FCL). The fact is, as it has already been demonstrated before in this work, that the limitations for INTERNET access that the

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117 Ob. Cit.
118 Both the Freedom House and the FCL have received funds from the US government under the Torricelli Act, which is designed to foster domestic dissidence in Cuba aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government.
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

Cuban people has are the result of the blockade measures established by the North American government.

By the end of 2005, at a debate forum, a new attack to Cuban libraries was published; a statement by the Presidency of the Association of Polish Librarians, under the title of “Calling of Support to Cuban Librarians”, where the self-defined “independent librarians” were defended and a total lack of knowledge was shown about what really goes on in Cuba. This calling received the answer from Cubans through an open letter signed by the Cuban Association of Librarians (ASCUBI) and by the Cuban Society of Scientific-Technical Information (SOCICT), where Polish librarians were encouraged to search for trustworthy information and to express themselves against the unjust blockade on Cuba. (Annex 13. Cuban librarians respond. Dec. 25, 2004)

People who justify the blockade frequently submit arguments that try to minimize its damaging effects for Cuba. Thus, they point out that these measures do not obstacle the flow of information, the acquisition of books and the academic exchange. The letters sent by Michael Parmly, current head of the US Interests Office in Havana, to Eliades Acosta, director of the José Martí National Library, were on this direction. In them, Parmly questioned the real difficulties that Cuban libraries have in order to be able to get any text edited in the United States and as a proof, he sent Acosta a book by the US poet Walt Whitman edited in Barcelona, Spain. This action did not do anything but to confirm the statements by Cuban librarians, because the work, despite of belonging to a US author, cannot arrive at the libraries of the Island if it has been published in its original country. (Annex 14 Letter by Drew G. Blakeney)

The life of Cuban libraries is quite different from the image that the enemies of the Revolution try to create. A country that manages to get an illiterate rate of 0.2%, assessed by the UNESCO Education Department as the lowest in Latin America, and achieves the highest schooling rate of the continent, owns the fundamental premises to conduct an excellent job in the library sphere. Apart from these conditions, we may add the services provided free of charge, its spreading all over the Island, and above all, the professionalism and the love with which Cuban librarians work.
Chapter 5: Repercussions of the blockade on Cuba upon North American libraries and librarians.

On trips to Cuba.

The policy of the different North American governments about the travels of their citizens to Cuba has had its variations, depending on their hegemonic interests. Thus, in the late 80’s and during the Special Period, when it was thought that the Cuban Revolution would fall just like the Eastern European countries did, professional exchange visits to the Island by North Americans were permitted, for it was considered that the contact with them would make Cubans decide for the change towards the Capitalist regime. The reality demonstrated that on the contrary, visits of North Americans to Cuba would enable them to witness a social life quite different from the one offered by the communication media of their country and the Cuban people was kept firm in its determination of continuing the construction of Socialism.

In the month of July, 2001, just a few months after starting his mandate; President George W. Bush announced that blockade regulations would be strictly implemented in terms of travels and remittances. Two years later, on March 24, 2003, the OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) limited travels of North Americans to Cuba even more, when it established the prohibition for North Americans to attend seminars and conferences organized by Cuban institutions. The small licenses that had been granted for educational exchanges of students and intellectuals were practically eliminated. On the contrary, facilities to travel to Cuba for groups involved in internal subversion activities were increased.

In October that very year, President George W. Bush announced several initiatives aimed at expediting the arrival into a new, free and “democratic” Cuba, where one more time, he repeated his stand about travels to the Island. One month later, a mixed commission of senators and members from the House of Representatives rejected an amendment annulling the prohibition for North American citizens to visit Cuba. The amendment, included in a budgetary bill, had been approved by the majority of the House of Representatives and the Senate, but President Bush threatened to veto the bill if the amendment was kept.
On June 30, 2004, the blockade tightening regulations, which had been announced on May 6 and expressed on the first chapter of the report “Commission to Assist a Free Cuba”, were put into force. Among the aspects that it deals with, it states to continue limiting licenses for educational trips and academic exchange between North American and Cuban citizens and institutions, confining them to the university level. Visits longer than 10 weeks will be only for those academic projects that directly support the North American policy, in other words, the overthrowing of the Cuban Revolution.

These last few years have been characterized by the increase of the persecution and sanctions to those violating the blockade laws. The monitoring of citizens visiting Cuba is increasingly more rigorous. Just to give an example, on November 12, 2004, the president of the Cuban American Alliance for Educational Funds (CAAEF) received a letter from OFAC requesting a list of all individuals and institutions benefited by his travel license to Cuba during the last five years. Other reports indicate that OFAC between 1990 and 2003 started only 93 investigations related with international terrorism, while it unleashed 10 683 inquiries to keep North Americans from exercising their right to travel to Cuba. It is clear that the point is to impose on US citizens themselves measures violating their most basic civil rights.

In the year 2004, the government of George W. Bush imposed over one and a half million dollars in fines to North American citizens for having traveled to Cuba without the authorization of the Treasury Department. The monetary sanction is of approximately 7 500 dollars per person.\textsuperscript{119}

The previously described actions have had a damaging impact on the bonds between North American and Cuban librarians, researchers, professionals and students. These relations have been characterized by the conspicuous reduction of visits of these people to the José Martí National Library. This enclosure has historically granted its services to users coming from the United States, particularly in the summer months. However, in the years 2001 through 2005 their attendance to the Specialized Rooms has been the one pointed out next:

\textsuperscript{119} García Alfonso, Navil. “EE. UU. retira licencia a agencia de viajes a Cuba”. Granma 2 febrero 2006: 7
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of North American Users</th>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen how the number of North American users was diminishing over the years, according to the tightening of the blockade measures. A more concrete example is that of a German professor and anthropologist, specialized on the issue of Afro Cuban religions, who lives in the United States. This anthropologist has been visiting Cuba regularly since the year 1993 to carry out his field work and to consult the existing bibliography at the National Library. On these trips he could only be accompanied by his wife in the first opportunity (a German citizen who lives in the United States). Upon returning from this first trip she received the warning from the Treasury Department that she could not return to the Island because if she did, her entry back to the United States would be denied.120.

North American professionals are also bothered when they are not granted visas to participate at international events organized in Cuba. This happened to four specialists, who could not attend the INFO’ 2004 Conference due to the aforementioned causes, without any justification at all.

There are not many choices to travel to Cuba in groups and there are several limitations (some of them already commented upon). Global Exchange121 is an agency offering travel services authorized by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Treasury Department. The company offers travel opportunities only to delegations of researchers, humanitarian organizations and educational and religious institutions. It is

120 Information provided by María del Rosario Díaz., researcher of the José Martí National Library, friend of these people. June 2005.
remarkable that during 2005 no delegation from North American librarians came to the Island through this agency and visits for 2006 are not foreseen.

**On the courses they get from Cuban professors.**

In the last few years North American librarians and researchers have been compelled to cancel or to restraint from inviting their Cuban colleagues for them to teach courses at their institutions, before the threats of sanctions and reprisals of the US government.

An example of this fact took place in the summer of 2004 when the assigned researcher from the José Martí National Library, Tomás Fernández Robaina, could not answer to the request issued to him by professionals from the Jersey City State University, for him to teach a course on “Gender and Race” in that institution, because the US Interests Section demanded him to submit documents endorsing his collaboration with that center. The faculty from Jersey City University considered that it was “not wise” to submit these endorsements given the tightening situation of the blockade against Cuba.

**On the collaboration agreements between library institutions.**

The Berkeley University has kept a collaboration agreement with the José Martí National Library since 2000. The goal of such agreement is to be able to offer North American researchers, access to materials related with Cuba which have not been able to circulate for over four decades in the libraries of that country due to the established restrictions by the North American blockade.\(^\text{122}\)

This agreement on document exchanges includes the responsibility of this university to undertake transportation expenses of materials from and towards Cuba. Despite of counting with the approval of the Treasury Department, UC Berkeley cannot perform the shipments and receptions directly from Cuba, but must do it through Canada and later on to transport them to the San Francisco Bay. This measure causes greater expenses and delay in the transfer of books and other documents that are part of the agreement.

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On the services provided by North American libraries.

The census conducted in the year 2000, in the United States, revealed that 12.5% of its population is Hispanic. Within this group Mexicans are outnumbering (7.3%), Puerto Ricans (1.2%) and Cubans (0.4%). The largest concentrations of Cubans take place in the states of Florida, New Jersey, California and New York. These data indicate that there exists a Spanish speaking population sector which are potentially library users, and that they may be interested in knowing about aspects of the Cuban and Spanish American culture. Furthermore, after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, studies related with the Island were reanimated at the universities and research centers of that country.

Measures prohibiting direct trade of Cuba with the United States do not take this situation into account and have a negative impact on the services provided by North American libraries to their users. It is difficult for these centers to be able to get books and other documents published in the Island, which they manage to get from booksellers who purchase in Cuba and later on sell the texts to the US institutions at a higher price. Many times libraries buy from Spanish and Mexican editorial houses, mainly works by Cuban authors who live in the exile. That is why, usually, their collections do not reflect the editorial production created in the Island. At best, they acquire these books through donations made by Cuban individuals or institutions.

The sellers from South America and the United States have been in charge of meeting the demands of Cuban books in North American libraries, but in practice, it is impossible for them to provide the large volume of titles that are needed to keep collections updated and to meet the needs of users.

North Americans are not allowed to participate at the National Book Fair organized in Cuba every year either, which would enable them to get any book of their interest directly, apart from contacting the most outstanding authors of the time.

124 One of the best known booksellers is the Uruguayan Luis A. Retta. In the list of customers of his website it can be witnessed that he keeps trade links with many North American libraries from different States of that country. <http://www.rettalibros.com/refer.htm>
On the other hand, the US librarian who visits another country such as Canada or Mexico on his own, and buys books published in Cuba, that are sold at bookstores in those nations, runs the risk of having these documents confiscated by North American authorities and his visa cancelled when crossing the border.

In the months of September and October 2005, Célida Álvarez Armenteros, director of the library of Casa de las Américas, carried out a tour through over 25 North American libraries in the states of New York, Texas and California. She visited public, university and private institutions. Among them: Los Angeles Central Library, Stanford University Libraries, Library of the Hispanic Society of America and Public Library No 1 of New York. This director was invited by the “Friendship Foundation”, fulfilling a working project that this organization carries out with Latin America.

Célida Álvarez witnessed along that tour that the Cuban library collection of the institutions was not updated, particularly in terms of books on social sciences and technology among other issues. It happens in a lesser scale in matters of literature and arts. A problem that North American librarians are facing is about the delay of books that arrive at their collections. Frequently, information does not flow quickly. So, for instance, they receive the Casa Prizes nine months or one year after being published in Cuba. Authors that were awarded in 2004 were advertised in January 2005, but since they perform their purchases through intermediaries (who must make buying arrangements), these texts arrive at their collections at the end of 2005 or the beginning of 2006. If the action of direct purchase existed between Cuba and the United States, North American users could consult the awarded works in January or February 2005.

The situation is even more critical concerning magazines and newspapers. The greatest value of these documents is the current affairs in the information they contain. Their importance dwindles if they are obtained a while after been published. A solution to get magazines and newspapers swiftly would be downloading them from INTERNET, but

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the point is that as a result of the blockade (aspect already explained), Cuba cannot place all the magazines or journals on line.

It is not possible for North American librarians and users either, to subscribe to a journal published in Cuba overseas, because they cannot pay the fees from North American banks.

The director of Casa de las Américas Library also explained that as a result of the blockade, there is not an airline by means of which, Cuban librarians could perform their shipments to the United States. The charter flights arriving at the Island are not authorized to carry postal bundles to that country systematically.

To sum it up, Célida Álvarez, pointed out that the ones affected the most are North American users who are deprived of having updated and encompassing information. They get only those documents written outside of Cuba, so they are deprived of getting all the information diversity and deciding by themselves what they consider to be the most reliable one.

This regretful situation that Cuban collections have at the North American libraries was not always the case. Before the tightening of the blockade, these centers took pride in having their collections complete.

The North American society also loses the possibility of having access to information technological products created by Cuban specialists, such as the multimedia collections, about education or health care, so appreciated in other parts of the world that could help so many people to raise their educational level, primarily Hispanics living in the United States territory.

Another problem affecting the exchange or donation is found in the delay that takes place to materialize the shipment. The package of documents bound to Cuba may take approximately 6 months to arrive, whereas for other countries in the area, it is just 6 weeks. That is why, some North American librarians prefer to send their shipment through a third country, what causes them more disturbances and may be costly.
The hardships faced by North American librarians to know what is published in Cuba (mainly History and Social Sciences books) and to get these titles, bring about the fact that users do not request them either because they do not know about their existence or because they are aware of the existing problems to get them.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{126} This chapter was drafted based on the information provided by the outcomes of a survey sent to different debate lists to be answered by North American librarians. The questionnaire is attached to this work in Annex 15. It was also very useful to have a conversation with a North American librarian who visited Cuba within the studied period and the interview (already mentioned) to the Director of Casa de las Américas.
9. Conclusions

1. The first institutions in Cuba that emerged in the second half of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century were connected to a certain economic development due to a given “commercial opening” that the mother country grants to the United States, to the boom of the slave trade and the subsequent sugar growth. All along the historical process of development, the library issue has been conditioned, apart from the political-social factors, to the economic development of the nation which was dependent on the United States during the Republic, was characterized by professional exchange relations and free access to information between Cuban and North American librarians.

2. Since the first regulations defining the economic blockade imposed on Cuba, three fundamental stages may be established, about the impact of these laws based on relations that are established between Cuban and North American libraries and librarians:

- \textbullet{} First: Decade of the 60’s. Initial stage of relations isolation.

- \textbullet{} Second: Decades of the 70’s and 80’s. Stage of almost total isolation and socialist influence on the information activity.

- \textbullet{} Third: Decade of the 90’s and year 2000. Stage of legislative extension and resumption of relations.

3. The laws establishing the blockade on Cuba are materialized in actions that directly or indirectly, have an impact against library activity and obstacle the free flow of ideas and information. In the
time period 2001-2005 the most damaging actions derived from the blockade can be defined as follows:

- Directly: the denial or not granting of visas and the refusal of access to certain information available at Internet (programs and databases), as well as the difficulties in the delivery of donations, grants and the holding of international courses and events in the Island.

- Indirectly: limitations for the acquisition of new technologies, including those required by visually disabled people, the acquisition of documents and materials for their restoration and preservation.

4. From the academic and scientific viewpoint, the economic blockade on Cuba affects Cuban librarians as professionals not allowing them to participate permanently on the international analyses and debates and to have access to updated literature on their specialty, what constraints their insertion in the present context of their profession at the international level.

5. Cuban libraries cannot manage to offer services at the level of current demands because they are limited by the shortages of new technologies, Internet access, lack of updating, and deterioration of their documents.

6. In the last few decades the blockade laws on Cuba have included in their sections the protection and the support to “independent librarians”, which have been in charge of disseminating false information about Cuban libraries. The purpose of these groups is, first of all, to justify the measures of the US administration against the Island. The honesty and professionalism of Cuban librarians, as well as the achievements
attained by the Revolution in the spheres of education and culture, are the best rebuttal to its slanderous attacks.

7. The tightening of the blockade has a negative impact on US libraries and librarians because the difficulties to travel to Cuba out of professional reasons to establish collaboration agreements between libraries from both countries and to acquire works published in the Island after the triumph of the Revolution are greater. Anyway, the North American people is the one that is affected the most because it is deprived of directly knowing about aspects of the current Cuban culture and society.
10. Recommendations

1. It is required to monitor facts, actions and major impacts of the blockade all over the system of public libraries of our country and in other information systems, recorded on a database in such a way that it may be systematically updated as part of the history of the information sciences of Cuba.

2. Indicators as well as mechanism for the economic quantification of damages on libraries must be created with all the people in charge of these data.

3. Taking into account the importance of the obtained results, it is recommended that these should be published in a book or booklet for them to be consulted by all people interested in knowing about the issues dealt with; and also for it to be an instrument of denunciation about the impacts libraries and librarians endure due to the blockade on Cuba decreed by the North American government.

4. As part of the introduction of the outcomes we should continue with the spreading of the research based on lectures and papers at different international scientific events that may be organized.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{127} Some outcomes of this study were presented at the II Scientific Meeting organized by ASCUBI in February 2006. Such paper got an acknowledgement. They were also presented at the IFLA/UNESCO Regional Workshop on Internet for Latin America and the Caribbean. November 17-18, 2005. Last year a lecture on this issue was dictated to school librarians from Plaza de la Revolución Municipality.
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## CHRONOLOGY OF MEASURES AND STATEMENTS RELATED WITH THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA AND ITS LIBRARIES IN THE PERIOD 2001-2005.

### 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGAINST THE COUNTRY</th>
<th>AGAINST CUBAN LIBRARIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>January - March</strong> – The Secretaries of State, Madeleine Albright and her substitute, Collin Powell, as well as Vice-President, Richard Cheney and the President of the United States himself, George W. Bush, publicly expressed in different opportunities that they were not interested in softening economic restrictions against Cuba and that a change in this policy would only be conditioned by the withdrawal from power of President Fidel Castro.</td>
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<td><strong>April 9</strong> – The United States exerts diplomatic pressure at the UN to have Cuba condemned, claiming that human rights are not honored in the island.</td>
<td><strong>May 23</strong> – In the framework of the ACURIL Conference (Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries,) held in Havana, the Treasury Department of the United States prohibits the company Online Computer Library Center to promote a bibliographic and cataloging utilitarian service.</td>
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<td><strong>May 19</strong> – The President of the United States, George W. Bush, in his message on the occasion of the so-called “Day of Cuban independence from Spain” affirms that he is not going to soften sanctions against Cuba and will oppose any effort to weaken the embargo until the communist regime releases political prisoners, holds democratic elections and allows for the freedom of expression. And he added: &quot;The sanctions that our government imposes upon Castro’s regime are not only a political instrument but also a moral statement”...“our goal is not to have an embargo against Cuba but the freedom of Cuba”.</td>
<td><strong>May 23 – 30</strong> - The FAIFE for the second time (previously in 1999), considers inquiring about the situation of Cuba in terms of the fulfillment or violation of rights to freedom of expression and free access to information. This is done, due to the pressures of fake librarians and their friends overseas.</td>
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<td><strong>May</strong> – The Congress of the United States approves the “Cuba Solidarity Project” in the framework of the “Cuban Solidarity Act of 2001”, where the increase of the support to the opposition in Cuba is authorized to promote the development of the so-called “independent groups” aimed at propitiating a change of regime in the country. In section 6, subsection c, “independent libraries” are established among eligible groups to get the assistance or aid. In addition, in subsection d, it is pointed out that the center of information and resources in Havana would be the US Interests Section.</td>
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<td><strong>July</strong> – The President of the United States announces that the blockade regulations are going to be more strictly applied in terms of trips and money remittances. He promised to expand the assistance to existing counterrevolutionary groups in the island and ordered to search for new ways to counteract the interferences of illegal radio and television broadcasts towards Cuba.</td>
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<td><strong>August 19</strong> – The newspaper <em>The Washington Times</em> reports that the US citizens that traveled to Cuba not heeding the law prohibiting it, are getting letters from the</td>
<td><strong>August 16 - 25</strong> – Two of the librarians that managed to attend the IFLA Annual Conference (International Federation of Library Associations), to be held in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasury Department where they are demanded the payment of fines that may be up to 55,000 dollars.</td>
<td>Boston, United States, joined it when the event had already started due to the delay in the granting of visas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This year the North American government included Cuba on its list of states that are allegedly promoting terrorism.</td>
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**Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries**

**February 7** – The Secretary of State, Colin Powell, reiterates before the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives of the Congress that the President of the United States, George W. Bush, will keep his isolating policy against Cuba as long as President Fidel Castro stays in power.

Visa to travel to the United States is not granted to Eliades Acosta Matos. With this trip, the Director of the José Martí National Library intended to respond to the invitation issued by the Chapel-Hill University from North Carolina, in order to establish collaboration programs and to promote academic bonds that would benefit both parties. The US Interests Section in Cuba returned his passport and documents at the beginning of 2005 without providing any remarks or justification for such proceeding.

March – The government of the United States denies visas to over 60 officials of the Cuban state enterprise “ALIMPORT”, who had been invited by North American agricultural entrepreneurs.

May 6 – John Bolton, sub secretary of State for issues of weapons control, in his speech at the Heritage Foundation, accuses Cuba of having biological weapons and collaborating with other terrorist states.

May 17 – The North American government denies visas to Cuban scientists who were going to participate at a meeting about the struggle against cancer.

May 20– The President of the United States, G.W. Bush, in the rally on the occasion of the “centennial of the independence of Cuba” announces the plan Initiative for a New Cuba, conditioning the reduction of the blockade to impositions on the Cuban government to carry out alleged reforms in keeping with Yankee interests.

December – The Head of the US Interests Section in Havana, Mr. James Cason, states in Miami television that his task was now to unite dissident groups in Cuba and to offer them his total support. With his attitude he marks a moment of overt subversion of the government of the United States against the island.

A Cuban individual living in New York, native of Rancho Boyeros municipality in the City of Havana, makes arrangements out of his own initiative in order to send economic aid to Cuba aimed at improving the material conditions of the library, the parish church and the museum of his hometown. This idea could not materialize due to the obstacles placed by the Treasury Department of the United States.

During this year there was an increase in the denial of visas to Cuban high officials and specialists from different sectors: artists, researchers and scientists. Likewise, there increased the harassment and sanctions against North American citizens who traveled to Cuba or tried to do it.
### Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

**February 24** – The Head of the US Interests Section in Havana, Mr. Cason, in a rally that he himself organized, with a group of mercenaries, conducts offensive statements against the Cuban people and government, violating the basic norms for the behavior of diplomats.

**February 27** – The Cuban Adolfo Franco, manager taking care of Latin America and the Caribbean at the USAID, North American Foreign Aid Agency, states before a subcommittee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, that this agency had invested 22 million dollars since 1997 to implement the Helms – Burton Act in Cuba. It also states that, as part of the fulfillment of the act, materials and propaganda have been sent and over 7000 radio sets have been delivered to listen to “Radio Martí”, among other actions.

**February** – Visa is denied to Dayra Matos Veloz, specialist from the Preservation Department of the José Martí National Library, invited to participate at course on preservation of photographic collections in Andover, organized by the North East Preservation Center.

**March 8** – The North American government obstacles the granting of visas to over 100 Cuban academicians who should participate at the Latin American Conference on Social Sciences (LASA).

**March 12 and 14** – Mr. Cason organizes conspiracy meetings with the dissidence, despite of the warnings by the Cuban government. The mercenaries were receiving money and would contribute with distorted information for the Helms - Burton Act to be applied and the blockade on Cuba to be legitimized.

**March 24** – The Office of Foreign Assets Control (office of the US government making sure that the blockade is in force) issues new regulations that tighten it: travels by North Americans to Cuba are even more limited; the small licenses that had been granted for educational exchange trips for students and intellectuals are practically eliminated; visas for Cuban youth, students, intellectuals, athletes and scientists to attend events to which they have been invited in the United States are arbitrarily restricted; possibilities to travel to Cuba to supply groups doing internal subversion activities are increased; North Americans are banned to attend seminars and conferences organized by Cuban institutions.

**March 28** – The deputy director of the José Martí National Library, Marcia Medina Cruzata, Councilwoman since the year 2001 of ACURIL (Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries), is denied her visa to attend the Annual Conference of this organization that was going to be held in Puerto Rico. For this same reason, Martha Hernández García, librarian from the Cira García International Clinic, could not go to this meeting. In Marcia Medina’s passport, the US Interests Section in Cuba stamped the number 212-F, used to single out those individuals considered by the North American Government as a danger for their interests.
March 26 – The Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, appears before the Allocation Subcommittee of the Senate to announce that the budget that he submitted included 26 900 000 dollars for broadcasts against Cuba by Radio and TV Martí, by means of which internal subversion, sabotage plans, desertion and illegal migration are encouraged; as well as the dissemination of lies and tall stories against Cuba.

March 31 – The State Department publishes the report on Human Rights in the world, where it dedicated pages of calumny and lies to Cuba that pave the way to later on submit the Resolution against Cuba at the Human Rights Commission in Geneva that the United States sponsors and organizes.

April 2 – The Secretary of State Assistant for Affairs of the Western Hemisphere, Curtis Struble, points out that the North American Agency for Foreign Assistance will invest 7 million dollars in Cuba this year out of the funds for economic support.

April 16 – Karen Harbert, assistant sub-manager of the USAID for Latin America and the Caribbean, in the hearing of the Plenary Commission on Cuba at the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives of the United States points out: “The USAID has provided independent libraries in Cuba and the Cuban people directly with over 1 700 000 books, booklets, newsletters and other informative materials. We will increase this information flow directed to the ever growing number of independent libraries all over Cuba, and, we will specially increase the circulation inside the island of the works by Cuban independent writers”.

April 20 – The newspaper New York Times reports that President Bush announced the possibility of punishing Cuba even more by suspending cash payments to relatives who live in Cuba or suspending direct flights to the Island.

April 30 – The government of the United States presents the annual report, “Patterns of World Terrorism”, where once again it included Cuba on the list of States that allegedly sponsor terrorism in the international setting.

May 20 – President George Bush, in his habitual message to the Cuban people every year in this date reiterates his attacks to the revolutionary May – Nancy Hernández, deputy director of the Technical Processes at the José Martí National Library, gets a denial from Mr. Nicholas Cop,
government.
This day the radio show promoting subversion in Cuba was broadcast from the United States, using four new frequencies, causing interferences and disturbances to the Cuban radio broadcasts and a C-130 airplane from the North American Air Force transmitted the anti-Cuban subversive TV signal using channels and systems legally assigned to Cuban TV stations and registered in the UIT.

director of the Latin American Division of OCLC, upon her request to be provided with the on-line cataloging services offered by this corporation through the payment of a subscription.

| September 30 – The OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control), agency of the government of the United States that belongs to the Treasury Department prohibits the publication of scientific articles coming from countries subject to embargo sanctions by the United States, among them, Cuba. OFAC took this measure using the pretext that the reviewing process was a service that would add value to such articles, and therefore, they would be violating the Trading with the Enemy Act. The violation of this law could entail the payment of a fine of $50 000 dollars or imprisonment of up to 10 years. The pressures by the international scientific community managed to have this measure revoked on April 5, 2004. | September - Fernando Martínez, in charge of digital publications of the National Library, is denied his visa by Canada, so he could not respond to the invitation issued by a professional firm from that country in order to take training as a digital master. |
| October 4 - Adolfo A. Franco, Assistant Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean of the US International Development Agency (USAID) intervenes in the US-Cuba seminar, sponsored by the Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies of Miami University. In that meeting he expressed: “Human rights advocates in Cuba, independent journalists, independent librarians and members of other independent organizations have already started to guide the Cuban people towards a quick and peaceful transition towards democracy.” |  |
| October 10 – President George W. Bush announces “several new initiatives intended to expedite the arrival of a new, free and democratic Cuba.” Among them: - the creation of the so-called “Presidential Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba”, presided by the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mel Martínez. - To increase the rigor of measures prohibiting travels to Cuba. - He also promised to increase the number of immigrants welcomed by his country every year. - To increase the quantity and to extend the |
distribution of materials printed in Cuba, of information at Internet inside Cuba and of AM-FM short wave radios for Cubans, as well as to continue broadcasting both Radio and TV Martí.

November 12 – A joint commission of senators and members of the House of Representatives rejects an amendment canceling the prohibition for North American citizens to travel to Cuba. The amendment, included in a budgetary bill, had been approved by the majority from the House of Representatives and the Senate, but President Bush threatened with vetoing the bill if the amendment was kept. The joint commission was in charge of drafting the final text before this was passed by the President.

November – The denial of visas to Cuban staff to participate at the International Book Fair in San Juan, Puerto Rico, affected the possibility of acquiring literature that would update the collections in Cuban libraries.

This year the hostility of the United States against Cuba was deepened in every single sphere of society.

The North American government denies visa to travel to the United States to Bárbara Susana Sánchez Vignau, Director of the Rubén Martínez Villena Central Library of Havana University. The Director was invited to the Cuba – Alabama Cultural Encounter. Her passport was stamped with the number 212-F.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 12</td>
<td>The Director of Governmental Affairs, Matt Grayson, receives a letter from OFAC, demanding additional information about his trip to Cuba in the month of October. Matt participated at the First Conference on US-Cuba travels, held in Cancun and Havana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>At the Seminar of the Project for the Transition of Cuba of the USAID (Foreign Aid Agency of the US government), Roger Noriega, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, refers to the decision of his government of “cooperating with international organizations and keeping the international community focused on Castro’s continuous abuses of human rights”.</td>
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<td>January 20</td>
<td>The authorities of Manatee Port, Florida, received a communication from OFAC, demanding a written report about the agreements and intent letters signed during the visit to Cuba of a representation from that port, with the warning that they could be the object of a fine, if the information was not received within the established deadline.</td>
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<td>February 9</td>
<td>The North American Secretary of Treasury, John Snow, announces a new extraterritorial measure in Miami. OFAC would financially block assets under US jurisdiction immediately, of ten enterprises with international operations which the United States consider to be linked to Havana; specialized on promoting travels to Cuba and the shipment of money remittances. That included companies based in Argentina, Bahamas, Canada, Chile, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. That very day, such official conducts a retelling about the application degree of the US President’s decision to increase the controls on travels to Cuba, itemizing the number of inspected flights, the fines imposed and the seizures performed.</td>
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<td>January</td>
<td>An Italian advertising firm that was renewing its computer equipment and which wanted to donate to the National Library of Cuba those it was going to withdraw from its center, was prohibited to carry out this action due to new regulations passed by the European Union that identify these countries with the political line of Washington towards Cuba.</td>
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<td>January</td>
<td>The organization Amnesty International, based on information contributed by the counterrevolutionary organizations Freedom House and Friends of Cuban Library by the press and other media advertise that in Cuba, Cubans were being deprived of having access to INTERNET. They supported themselves on a wrong interpretation of the implementation of Resolution 180/2003. In this slanderous campaign they were affirming that continuous violations of basic human rights of free access to information and freedom of expression were taking place in the Island. Some IFLA and FAIFE managers believed these false statements.</td>
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<td>February</td>
<td>The Government of the United States blocks bank transfers from solidarity groups with the “Five” in France and Spain, addressed to the North American organization “Peace for Cuba”, which requested donations for the publication of an article about the “Five” in the New York Times. Transfers were unblocked on February 25.</td>
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Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries

February 26 – President George W. Bush signs Presidential Ban 7757, restricting the exit from the US territory of ships with the intention of entering Cuba. Regulations establish fines of up to 25,000 dollars or five years in prison or both and the seizure of the ships of transgressors.

February 27 – The Treasury Department reports that three administrative judges have been hired to carry out the hearings that will clarify the cases of transgressors of blockade regulations and that a “special team” was created to persecute banks and companies doing business with Cuba.

The PUROLITE company, from Philadelphia, and two of its executives, is accused of violating the blockade for selling resins for water purification to Cuba. They pleaded guilty of having “violated the US trade embargo against Cuba” and paid fines for 250,000 dollars (the company) and 10,000 dollars (the executives).

March 5 – The MARAZUL travel agency gets a communication from OFAC, where it is told that the existing general licenses for academic travels to Cuba would not be valid for conferences or meetings, for which, a specific license will be required. As a result, MARAZUL has to cancel the travel of 68 North Americans who would attend the scientific event on Coma and Death.

March 24 – The Commerce Committee of the House of Representatives of the State of Florida approves the bill HB.1193 “Trade with Terrorist States Act”, introduced by the state representative of Cuban origin David Rivera. An identical bill, the SB.2614, is introduced in the Senate by the state senator, also of Cuban origin, Alex Díaz de la Portilla. The bill requests imposing an additional tax to those individuals or entities transporting passengers towards countries making up the list of States sponsoring terrorism, made by the State Department (Cuba has joined this list), as well as demanding universities and colleges integrated to the state educational system to organize trips to some of those countries, using charter flights, sending to the Education Department and to the Law Fulfillment Department a report of all participants, the expenses incurred and the programs of activities carried out in the visited country.

March 28 – Dr. Marta Terry González, member of IFLA in its section for Latin America, official guest of this organization and of the Organizing Committee of Librarians of El Salvador, in order to participate at a meeting of this association, cannot attend because upon her arrival at the airport of that country, did not get her visa, as it had been promised to her.
March - The OFAC issues an order against the Center for Cross-Cultural Study, based in Massachusetts, for it to “stop and give up” academic programs that it was conducting in Cuba. Since 1996, this Center would send student groups to be trained at the School of Arts and Letters of Havana University, using a specific license for educational exchanges.

April 29 – The content of a letter sent by OFAC to the Finances Committee of the Senate is known, at the end of 2003, out of which it is concluded that such entity dedicates more resources and staff to the implementation of the blockade against Cuba than to investigating the transactions of terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda. OFAC affirms that it has allocated over 20 officials to Cuba and only 4 to persecute terrorism, and, between 1990-2003, it opened 10,683 investigations for blockade violations as compared to 93 related with terrorism.

May 6 – President George W. Bush approved the report “Commission to Assist a Free Cuba”. And expresses:

“This strategy is a strategy fostering the spending of money to help organizations to protect dissidents and to promote human rights. It is a strategy that encourages directing the clear voice of truth to the Cuban people by means of radio and TV Martí. It is a strategy that will keep the regime from taking advantage of the hard currencies of tourists and of remittances to Cubans to prop up its repressive regime. It is a strategy that says that we are not waiting for the day of Cuban freedom; we are working for the day of freedom in Cuba.”

May 10 – The Federal Reserve imposed a fine of 100 million dollars to the Swiss bank entity UBS AG, for conducting financial transactions in dollars with certain countries, among them, Cuba. The aim was to impede the deposit, the exchange to other currencies or the transfers through banks of third countries, of the dollars that Cuba gets legally out of tourism, remittances and sales in shopping centers, so as to prevent Cuban imports and to bring about an economic collapse and an extremely critical social situation.

May 21 – The notification of the State Department to the Jamaican hotel chain SUPERCLUBS is known, about the application
of Title IV of the Helms – Burton Act, if it does not cancel its contacts on hotel management in Cuba in a term of 45 days.

May – The Treasury Department prohibits a group of North American scientists to travel to Cuba to participate at the international event Satisfactory Longevity.

June 2 - The Undersecretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Affairs, Dan Fisk, declares to the REUTERS agency about the new measures against travels to Cuba: “an individual may decide when to travel once every three years, and the decision is his. Therefore, if he has a dying relative he has to decide when to travel.”

June 3 – It is known that the US Embassy to Guatemala contacted entrepreneurs trading with Cuba from that country, to warn them that they must stop doing it in the future, since they run the risk of being applied Title IV of the Helms – Burton Act.

June 10 – North American citizens Peter Goldsmith and Michele Geslinde are prosecuted for promoting and conducting the boat race “Conch Republic Cup”, between Key West and Havana, in 1997, 2000, 2002 and 2003, without having a license from the Treasury Department and rejecting the warnings from North American authorities.

June 24 – It is known that the Treasury Department denies the permit to a group of researchers and professors from the Massachusetts Pharmacy to participate at the VI Iberian American Meeting of Pharmaceutical and Alimentary Sciences, in Cuba.

June – The SUPERCLUBS hotel chain decides to withdraw from two hotels in Cuba, before the threat of the implementation of Title IV of the Helms - Burton Act issued by the State Department.

June 30 – Regulations for the tightening of the blockade announced on May 6 and expressed in the first chapter of the Report “Commission to Assist a Free Cuba”, come into force.

This contains 450 recommendations and suggestions to destroy the Cuban Revolution in the shortest possible time and to install a puppet regime that would allow it to have total control.
over the nation.

In subsection 1.8 it establishes the allocation of a budget of 2 million dollars to help “Independent Libraries” in Cuba. They express it this way:

“Programs to re-stock, strengthen and expand the Cuban independent library network and to promote their solidarity with national library associations in Europe and Latin America.”

In another part of the report they point out, that a type of project in which third countries and NGOs could be committed, would be the technical training and the material aid to the Independent Libraries Project.

To continue limiting licenses for educational trips and academic exchanges between North American and Cuban citizens and institutions is also stated, restricting them to the university level. Visits longer than 10 weeks will be only for those academic projects that directly support the American policy, in other words, the overthrowing of the Cuban Revolution.

These are just some of the proposals that deepen the blockade against Cuba.

The other five chapters of the report address the measures that will be imposed on Cuba by the North American government once they manage to defeat the Revolution.

July 6 – OFAC warns participants on the solidarity Caravan of the North American organization Pastors for Peace that those traveling to Cuba without the corresponding license from the Treasury Department must face the consequences of the sanctions foreseen in the regulations.

July 8 - It is known that North American biotechnology company CHIRON CORPORATION paid a fine of 168,500 dollars to OFAC, after that governmental entity reported about an “involuntary and illegal” shipment of vaccines for Cuban children that was performed by one of its subsidiaries in Europe. CHIRON had the license, through UNICEF, to export a vaccine to Cuba.

July 8 – The Coastguard Service of the United States issues regulations that openly state that the goal, of Presidential Proclamation 7757 was to tighten the embargo that the North American government applies against Cuba.

August 10 – The OFAC includes the enterprise
MELFI MARINE CORPORATION S.A., which belongs to CIMEX, within the list of “specially designated nationals”.

August 13 – The Secretary of Treasury, John Show, makes statements in Florida, reaffirming the objectives of the policy towards Cuba, defending the new anti-Cuban measures, and he points out that as a result, the revenues that Cuba gets will decrease between 470 and 804 million dollars.

August 27 - President George W. Bush in his electoral speech in Miami reaffirms the need of keeping the blockade to overthrow the Cuban Revolution, indicating that “the blockade is a necessary part of that strategy”.

September 2 – It is known that the Spanish company IBERIA paid a fine of 8 000.00 dollars to the Treasury Department of the United States for transporting a shipment of cigars of the Cohiba brand in the year 2000, from the Canary Islands to Costa Rica, passing by Miami. The original amount of the fine, of 55 000.00 dollars, was negotiated during 4 years.

September 22 – During the debate of the “Allocations for the Treasury and Transportation Departments Act for the fiscal year 2005” in the House of Representatives, an amendment by representative Charles Rangel, prohibiting the use of the funds approved under this law to apply the blockade against Cuba in its fullness, is defeated, with 225 votes against, 188 in favor and 20 absent.

September 30 – The Treasury Department of the United States indicates that in keeping with recent changes to the Control Regulations of Cuban Assets, 31 C.F.R. Part 515 (the “Regulations”), citizens or permanent residents in the US cannot legally buy products from a Cuban origin, including tobacco and alcohol, in a third country, not even for their personal use overseas. The penal sanctions for the violation of these Regulations may amount to a million dollars in fines for corporations and 250 thousand dollars and up to 10 years in prison for natural persons. Civil penalties up to 65 thousand dollars may be imposed by the OFAC, of the Treasury Department of the United States.

October 9 – The Undersecretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs of the State Department, Dan W. Fisk, announces the establishment of a “Group of Persecution of Cuban Assets” to investigate and stop new ways of movement of
hard currencies to and from Cuba, particularly mentioning “tourism, which has substituted sugar exports as a major source of hard currencies”.

October 25 – The Treasury Department designates the enterprise SERCUBA, dedicated to monetary transfers electronically, as a “Cuban national”, applying the blockade regulations to it.

November 12 - The President of the Cuban American Alliance for Educational Funds (CAAEF) gets a letter from OFAC, requesting the list of all individuals and institutions which its travel license has benefited in the last five years.

November 17 – Mass media let it known that the Treasury Department of the United States imposed a fine of 32 500.00 dollars to the German American company “Daimler Chrysler North America Holding Corporation”, for allowing its subsidiary in Mexico, “Daimler Chrysler Vehículos Comerciales” to export goods to Cuba violating like this, the blockade laws.

November 20 – The North American Congress approves the bill HR.4818, known as “Omnibus Bill”, that allocates funds for the financing of twelve government departments and a dozen of agencies for the fiscal year 2005, from which all amendments in favor of changing the policy towards Cuba which had been passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate are eliminated. This law also prohibits the allocation of direct funds for any type of assistance or compensation to countries such as Cuba, Libya, North Korea, Iran and Syria.

December 7 – The Treasury Department imposes a fine of 20 000.00 dollars to SANTANDER BANK & TRUST, a subsidiary of the Spanish banking company SANTANDER CENTRAL HISPANO, in Bahamas, for performing fund transfers to Cuba in 2001.

December 8 - The Treasury Department announces the certification as “specially designated national” to the company TOUR & MARKETING Ltd., for performing alleged travel offers to Cuba to US citizens, so as to have them avoid the blockade regulations.

December 10 – Mr. Cason and several “dissidents” gather in the house of the representative of the United States to celebrate a “ceremony of hope”, that consisted in

December – A statement of the Presidency of the Association of Polish Librarians is published at a debate forum under the title of “Call for the Support to Cuban Independent Librarians” where the self-defined “independent librarians” are defended. This proclamation received the response from Cuban librarians by means of an open letter signed by the Cuban Association of Librarians (ASCUBI) and by the Cuban Society of Scientific-Technical Information (SOICT) where Polish librarians were challenged to search for reliable information and to express themselves against the unjust blockade on Cuba.
depositing wishes in a chest containing among other things, the threatening speech pronounced by Mr. Bush on May 20, 2002. The buried chest would be opened when Cuba “be free” again.

December 11 – The newspaper *Miami Herald* publishes that representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and bothers Lincoln and Mario Díaz-Balart have decided to create within the House of Representatives the “Group for Democracy in Cuba” in order to, among other goals, to counteract the efforts favorable to a change of policy towards Cuba, to work for the elimination of sales of agricultural products, and to incite the Bush Administration to implement Title III of the Helms – Burton Act.

This year the Treasury Department imposed fines for a total value of 1,451,539.33 dollars to 77 companies, banking institutions and NGOs of the United States and of third countries. This entity also punished 316 individuals for a total amount of 497,780.03 dollars, in all cases for violating different aspects of the blockade against Cuba.
**2005**

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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>The OFAC announces that regulations about travels of US citizens to Cuba include not letting them participate at meetings in Cuba sponsored and organized by agencies of the United Nations Organization (UNO), unless they previously get a license.</td>
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<td>January 11</td>
<td>Administrative Judge Robert Barton fixes at 780.00 dollars the amount of the fine to be paid by Craig Ostrem, from Minnesota, who visited Cuba in 1999.</td>
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<td>January 18-19</td>
<td>Condoleezza Rice, during the confirmation hearing as Secretary of State before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, assures that she will pay special attention to the implementation of the recommendations of the “Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba”. She also reiterates, that the “travel ban of North Americans to Cuba obeys to the need of cutting the benefits that these generate to the Cuban regime”.</td>
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<td>February 4</td>
<td>The OFAC in its report of the month of January about the civil punishments imposed on enterprises and individuals violating the blockade against Cuba, points out that among the companies there is the UNITED NATIONAL BANK, for an amount of 11 000 dollars, for performing banking transfers in 2003. Other fines were to 71 people, out of which 62 paid an amount of 67 831 dollars for travel related transactions, and 9 for an amount of 17 119 for travel related transactions and importing prohibited goods, for a total of 84 932 dollars.</td>
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<td>February 7</td>
<td>A couple from Michigan that visited Cuba on April 2001, when they donated medicines to a religious congregation, must pay a fine of 9 750 dollars for violating the blockade laws.</td>
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<td>February 18</td>
<td>President Bush postpones Presidential Proclamation 6867, entitled “Continuation of the National Emergency about Cuba and of the Emergency Authority about the Regulation of Ships Anchorage and Movements”. In its text, the President also ratifies the objectives of Proclamation 7757 of 2004, which</td>
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extended the reach of the national emergency about Cuba to impede the entry of US recreational boats into Cuban waters, as a way to deprive Cuba of financial resources and to tighten the blockade.

February 22 - The OFAC reinterprets the concept of «cash and anticipated payment» to purchases of medical and agricultural products by Cuba in the United States, establishing that it is therefore understood that payment should be made before goods are loaded at the US port for their shipment to Cuba.

February 24 – A Court of Appeals revokes the decision of a judge from New York dated March 29, 2004, who determined that the United States, fulfilling international agreements, are compelled to acknowledge the rights of the Cuban enterprise CUBATABACO over the Cohiba brand in the territory of the United States, under the doctrine of famous trademarks. The new verdict is opposed to international regulations about trademark protection.

March 4 – The OFAC publishes the monthly report of the month of February about the civil sanctions imposed on enterprises and individuals violating the blockade against Cuba. Although enterprises were not included, it shows that 113 individuals were fined for violating the blockade: 112 of them for a total amount of 112 000 dollars for having traveled to Cuba, and 1 individual for 1 937.5 dollars, for traveling to Cuba and importing prohibited goods by the blockade regulations, for a total of 113.937.5 dollars.

March 23 – The OFAC rejects the request from several agricultural associations of not implementing the recent reinterpretation about the “anticipated payments” to the contracts signed before the issuance of that regulation and that are pending on implementation.

March 24 - OFAC’s reinterpretation about the concept of “cash and anticipated payment” for the purchases of agricultural and medical goods in the US, came into force, establishing that it is understood as such, that payment should be made before goods are loaded at the US port for their shipment to Cuba. The measure is an additional obstacle to the limited foodstuffs imports.

March 30 – The OFAC sends a letter to the organization U.S-CUBA Labor Exchange, urging it to “stop and give up” promoting and organizing
the trip to Cuba of a delegation that would attend the “the Struggle against the FTAA” and the activities on the occasion of the International Workers’ Day. The OFAC also demanded that in a term of 20 working days, a detailed list should be sent to it, with the data of the members from such delegation.

April 1 – The OFAC publishes the monthly report of the month of March about the civil sanctions imposed on companies and individuals which violated the blockade against Cuba. Among the companies there is the “E. & J. GALLO WINERY from California, fined with 3 750.00 dollars for performing transactions related with business travels. As far as individuals are concerned, 69 were sanctioned: 62 of them for a value of 61 750.00 for traveling to Cuba, and the remaining 7 for an amount of 8 638.00 for importing Cuban goods and traveling to Cuba, for a total of 70 388 dollars.

April 7 - The OFAC sends a circular letter to the organizations having licenses to travel with religious purposes to Cuba, letting them know that alleged “religious licenses abuses” are being investigated, which could lead to the suspension or cancellation of licenses and the imposition of administrative fines or penal sanctions.

April 13 – The Court of Appeals of the Third Circuit restitutes the verdict of guilty against the North American citizen Stefan Brodie, former President of the company PUROLITE, who had been prosecuted in the year 2002 for having conspired to violate the blockade against Cuba. Brodie had been acquitted for the first level judge, who determined that there was no direct evidence demonstrating his involvement in the sales to Cuba of ionized resins for water purification.

April 29 - President George W. Bush orders the Treasury Department to give 198 thousand dollars from the frozen Cuban funds to the resident of Cuban origin, Ana Margarita Martínez, in the fulfillment of an arbitrary sentence against Cuba that a state court in Florida issued in the year 2001, determining the payment of 27.1 million dollars.

This month entry into the United States was denied to the new managers of the Canadian company SHERRITT and their relatives, applying Title IV of the Helms – Burton Act.

May 1 – The OFAC publishes the report of the month of April about the civil sanctions imposed

| May 1 – The OFAC publishes the report of the month of April about the civil sanctions imposed... | May – The Treasury Department denies visa to Miguel Viciedo Valdés (senior specialist of the... |
on companies and individuals that violated the blockade against Cuba. Three enterprises were fined: the airline MARTINAIR HOLLAND N.V., MARTINAIR USA, based on the Netherlands, as well as the corporation PEROT SYSTEMS CORPORATION and the Foundation FOUR OAKS, both based on the United States, for a total amount of 14,225.76 dollars. Likewise, 54 individuals were sanctioned for a total amount of 57,937.50 dollars for importing Cuban goods and traveling to Cuba.

May 20 – President George W. Bush sends a message to the people of Cuba where he reiterates that the United States would keep its aggressive policy against Cuba when pointing out:

“We long for the day in which Cubans will no longer have to endure years of separation from their families to enjoy the benefits of freedom. We will not rest. We will continue pressuring until the Cuban people enjoys the same freedom in Havana than the one existing in the United States”.

“We help organizations to protect dissidents and to promote human rights. We work to make sure that the people of Cuba hear the clear voice of truth through Radio and TV Martí. And we are working to keep the repressive regime from taking advantage of tourists’ hard currencies and remittances to Cubans. We do not wait for the day of Cuba’s freedom; we work for the day of Cuba’s freedom”.

May 20 – The “Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba” is held in Havana, a rally supported and financed by several organizations from Miami, among which the paramilitary Alpha 66 and F-4 Commandos. For this activity 130,000 dollars were allocated as a budget coming from Florida.

May 28 – Citizen David Heslop, from Durham, was imposed a fine of 7,513 dollars for traveling to Cuba in December 2000. Heslop refuses to pay the fine and the following month he appears before an administrative judge to appeal for his sanction.

June 2 – The head of the Cuba Office, of the State Department, Kevin Whitaker, expresses satisfaction for the work of the “Commission for the Assistance to a Free Cuba”. He specified that since August 2004 weekly flights have taken place for the TV broadcasts, travels of North Americans to Cuba have diminished and Cuban

Rubén Martínez Villena Public Library) and does not grant it to Mirta Botana Rodríguez and Maria Antonia Arús (president and vice-president respectively of the SOCICT), to attend the Annual Conference of the American Association of Librarians (ALA) that was going to be held in Chicago, Illinois, June 23 through 29, 2005.
revenues have decreased in an almost 60%. He stated that they work in the second phase of the Commission and in the appointment of a coordinator to endorse the six tasks contained in Chapter I of the Report of this Commission.

June 3 - The OFAC publishes the monthly report about the civil sanctions imposed on enterprises and individuals violating the blockade against Cuba. Among the companies it mentions PIONEER VALLEY TRAVEL, for operating without a license during 2001 for an amount of 750 dollars. As to individuals: 48 people were fined or compromised, out of which 33 for an amount of 31 963 dollars for travel related transactions and 15 for an amount of 24 942 dollars for travel related transactions and importing prohibited goods, for a total of 56 905.50 dollars.

June 7 - Alberto Coll, Head of the Strategic Investigations of the Navy War College of Newport, is sentenced to 1 year of parole and to pay a fine of 5 000 dollars, for having lied about the purpose of a visit to Cuba in 2004.

July 21 - North American Customs confiscated, by the direct order of the government of the United States, hundreds of books in English language destined to the Library of Havana University, among which *The Little Prince*, by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, ands works by Ernest Hemingway, as well as dozens of computers, action that was denounced by the World Federation of Librarians gathered in a Conference in Oslo, Norway. The materials were seized by US Customs agents at the border compound of McAllen, Texas and they are part of the objects taken away from the Pastors for Peace Friendship Caravan.

August - Fernando Martínez, specialist of the José Martí National Library, Head of the Electronic Publications Department, requested by INTERNET the program PLUGINS JAVA (tm) of free access and as an answer he received the following denial: "Java (tm) cannot be downloaded to your equipment. Your country is not authorized".

October 12 – After this date there appears in the digital publication *Front Page Magazine* a series of four articles by Walter Skold, co-president of the organization *Freedom*, where ALA managers are accused of relinquishing their principles, among other libels. In this work, Skold also used offensive phrases against the director of
December 10 – Human Rights World Day, Michael Parmly, new Head of the US Interests Section, holds an activity where Cuban dissident splinter groups were invited, some diplomats and the international press. In it, he compared the revolutionary forces of the island with the repressive forces of Fascism and the racist hordes of the Ku-Klux-Klan, and he issued a call to spark off the fall of the Revolution in Cuba.

December 12 – A specialist from the Automation Department of the José Martí National Library tried to download from INTERNET the PGP, free software, useful to preserve confidential information and to send safe e-mails, and was denied access for being a Cuban user.

December 19 – The Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, presides over a meeting of the Commission of Assistance of a Free Cuba and disseminated a statement that very day proposing a quick transition to democracy in Cuba. She pointed out that the objective of this meeting was to identify additional measures allowing for that change to take place in the island.

December 28 – Daniel Motola, Head of the Automation Department of the José Martí National Library tried to download the updating of the McAfee antivirus from INTERNET and this action was denied to him because the request was coming from Cuba.

The University of Information Technology Sciences is denied the purchase of a license for the use of the RefViz (bibliographic reference visualizer) owned by the North American company Thomson ISI.

In the preparations for the “Workshop on Ancient Books Identification and Preservation”, that was going to be held at the Institute of Literature and Linguistics of Havana, the Treasury Department prohibited taking the customary donations in materials to the Island. With this measure it was depriving Cuban library centers participating in the workshop, of the possibility of getting highly needed (and costly) inputs, used in the preservation process of hereditary documents.

Notes

1 As a result of the high number of actions and statements of the North American government against Cuba in this period, a selection of them was made, but it must be taken into account that all declarations performed against the island are aimed at the purpose of justifying the blockade. This section of the chronology is based on the one presented by the site CUBAVSBLOQUEO. <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/Default.aspx?tabid=62>


3 Press conference granted by Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque, about the mercenaries at the service of the empire, that were processed on April 3, 4, 5 and 7. City of Havana, April 9, 2003. Granma Internacional Digital <http://www.granma.cu/documento/espanol03/012.html>
Impact of the Blockade of the United States Government on Cuban Libraries


vii Most of the data on the actions of the government of the United States corresponding to the years 2004 and 2005 were taken from the Report of Cuba to the Secretary General on Resolution 59/11 of the General Assembly of the United Nations about the need of putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. <http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/Default.aspx?tabid=934>


ix Both the Freedom House and the Friends of Cuban Library have received funds from the US government under the Torricelli Act, which is designed to foster internal dissidence in Cuba aimed at overthrowing the Cuban government.

x It refers to the five Cuban men unjustly incarcerated in the United States for fighting against the terrorism conceived inside that nation by counterrevolutionary elements who try to destroy the Cuban Revolution. They are: Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, René González and Fernando González.


