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## US Maintains Cuba Embargo to Secure Florida Vote

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The US politicians oppose [lifting](#) the [Cuban](#) embargo in order to secure the Cuban-American vote in both Florida state and national elections, Dr. George Conyne, a history professor at the University of Kent told RIA Novosti on Tuesday.

"National politicians cannot afford to alienate Florida, because the rest of the country is so closely divided and Floridian politicians cannot afford to alienate the [Cuban](#)-Americans, because the rest of that state's Anglo-white and black population is so evenly divided," Conyne said.

He added that the 2000 presidential election showed that Florida was a crucial state, as well as being the third largest, it determined the winner that year and can do so again.

The historian explained that until the end of the Cold War and the Soviet Union, conservative Americans believed strongly that Cuba was at outpost of a country at virtual war with the United States.

"They opposed giving any aid to the continuation of that post as did the anti-Castro Cubans, very large portion of whom live in large numbers in southern Florida," he said.

And although since 1991 the anti-Castro Cubans are much more alone in their opposition to Cuba, they often hold the balance of political power in a state where the power of conservative Anglo-whites is roughly balanced by more moderate and liberal whites and blacks, according to the professor.

"In order to secure the Cuban-American vote that often decides state elections, these groups must oppose lifting the embargo," he asserted. "So they oppose it, see it has much less important that other issues on which they are divided from their opponent."

On Tuesday, the UN General Assembly voted 188 to 2 to condemn the US commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba. The same resolution has been passed since 1992. Only the US and Israel voted against it.

Conyne noted that to conservative Americans the blockade of Cuba had the advantage during the Cold War of not compromising with a dictatorship and the communist enemy.

"There were no real disadvantages - Americans have not paid attention to UN votes for many years," he said.

Besides, the professor underlined that the embargo had the advantage of never hurting the US, since Cuba doesn't produce anything most Americans want. So, although free [trade](#) with the US would strengthen the Cuban economy, there would not be a great difference.

Conyne stressed that in any open political system, a few people with very strong views will prevail over a large majority that have weakly held views on the opposite side of the same subject.

"That is what is happening here. Most American think little about Cuba, and do not care about it, meaning that those, who care passionately, end up controlling the policy of the country," he concluded.

The embargo was enacted in 1960 after Cuba nationalized properties belonging to US citizens and corporations. The global community, including Washington's allies Canada and the European Union, have long been opposed to the embargo. In 1996, Washington toughened the sanctions further by barring third countries' commercial ships en route to and from the communist island from entering US ports.

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