



TRUMP'S WAR ON CUBA

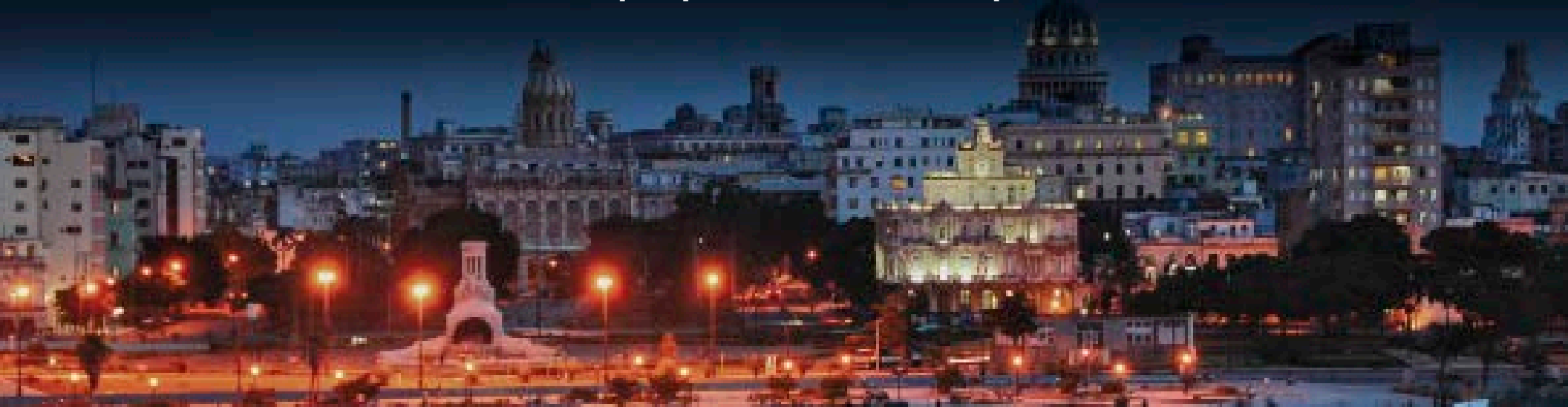
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Cuba from the inside

Belly of the Beast tells Cuba's untold stories.

Through hard-hitting journalism and stunning cinematography we inform and inspire, opening eyes and hearts to a country with a unique past and a wide-open future.






“Trump has unleashed the most potent economic measures the US has taken against Cuba in the last 60 years”

William Leogrande, American University Professor



Trump's Cuba policy could be a decisive factor in the 2020 US elections



**“Every night, when I hear of new sanctions on the news,
I know it will be more difficult for me to save lives”**

Eutivides Aguilera Sánchez, Pediatric Cardiologist

BACKGROUND

Donald Trump's policy toward Cuba harkens back to the Cold War. Trump has stacked the State Department and National Security Council with Cuban-American hardliners who have turned Latin American policy into a single-minded pursuit of regime change.

The Trump administration has launched an unprecedented barrage of sanctions against Cuba that has battered the country's precarious economy and shattered the détente brokered by former President Barack Obama. Trump recently explained what is driving his policy: the belief that "Latinos" will deliver him an electoral college victory in Florida in 2020.

TRUMP'S WAR ON CUBA

The outcome of the 2020 US presidential elections could hinge on Trump's policy toward Cuba. Yet major media outlets have failed to report on his onslaught against the island, not to mention the money and interests driving it.

Trump's War On Cuba is a series of 10 films that fills this void, combining rock-solid investigative journalism with stunning cinematography. The episodes, ranging from 8 to 12 minutes, document the harsh realities on the ground in Cuba and follow the money in the US.

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***Trump's War On Cuba* fills a media vacuum, telling vital stories that would otherwise never come to light**



EPISODES





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War on Entrepreneurs

- Trump's restrictions on US citizens traveling to Cuba have devastated the island's once burgeoning private sector
- 97% of Cuban entrepreneurs say travel from the US generates revenue for their businesses, according to a poll by Cuba Educational Travel
- Trump's elimination of the multiple-entry five-year US visa constitutes a "mini-blockade" against Cuban entrepreneurs who source vital components for their businesses in the US



Oil Blockade

- Trump has blocked oil shipments to Cuba from Venezuela and the impact has been devastating for the Cuban people
- Food production has been hit hard, public transportation has been slashed and sweltering offices are operating without air conditioning
- We will profile ordinary Cubans in the capital and countryside whose lives have been affected by the energy crisis

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Trafficked Doctors?

- Tens of thousands of Cuban doctors are working in dozens of countries around the world, providing free health care to vulnerable populations
- Trump has sought to undermine the program, accusing Cuba of “human trafficking” because it receives billions of dollars in foreign currency in exchange for the doctors’ services
- We investigate a lawsuit filed against Cuba before the International Criminal Court and a US government program that offers \$3 million to organizations that provide evidence that Cuba is guilty of “modern slavery”
- We travel to Haiti where we meet Cuban doctors as they work in Latin America’s poorest country and northeast Brazil to investigate how the abrupt shutdown of Cuba’s medical assistance has affected the local population





Game Over

- Last December, Major League Baseball signed a historic agreement with Cuba that allowed US teams to contract Cuban players in exchange for a fee paid to the Cuban government
- Trump nixed the deal despite appeals from MLB that it would have ended the rampant illegal trafficking of players
- We explore the impact this has had in Cuba by profiling players both in Cuba and the United States, and speaking to key figures in the MLB-Cuba negotiations

Banned from Havana

- US tourism to Cuba, which tripled from 2014 to 2017, has ground to a halt
- Trump has banned US cruise ships from docking on the island and stopped US flights from landing in airports of every Cuban city except Havana
- We profile the Cuban entrepreneurs who have been hit the hardest and examine the toll the measures have taken on the island's economy

6

Cultural Barriers

- Trump recently prohibited financing cultural exchanges with the Cuban government
- We profile dancers and musicians whose performances and concerts have been canceled as a result of the measure and who have been unable to collect payment for their work
- We look into how Cuba's free music and dance education programs have been affected



7

Lives on the Line

- The sanctions have cost lives in Cuba and the US
- We visit the main oncological hospital where doctors are unable to obtain prosthetic limbs for children with cancer and a children's cardiology hospital where life-saving equipment from the US is inaccessible
- We examine the economic and health impacts of the US blockade of Cuban-produced medicines, including Heberprot-P, which reduces amputations caused by diabetic foot ulcers by more than 70 percent (there are more than 70,000 diabetes-related amputations annually in the US)





Immigration Crackdown

- Under Trump, record numbers of Cubans have been detained and deported, breaking precedent with the US government's long-standing policy of leniency toward Cuban immigrants
- We profile Cuban immigrants as well as family members in the US and Cuba who have suffered the economic and emotional impact of the detentions and deportations
- We also examine how Trump has limited the ability of Cubans living in the US to send money and visit their family members on the island

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TITLE III

- Trump is the first president in more than two decades to implement Title III of the Helms Burton Act, which allows US citizens to sue foreign companies “trafficking” in property previously expropriated by the Cuban government
- We document high-profile lawsuits filed in Miami and Washington, DC to recoup properties, including Havana’s airport, an iconic hotel and oil refineries claimed by ExxonMobil
- We gauge the impact of the lawsuits in Cuba, where foreign companies have halted investments in fear of being sued in US courts





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Follow the Money

- We identify and investigate the architects of Trump's policy in Cuba, from Senator Marco Rubio to Mauricio Claver-Carone, who runs Latin American policy at the National Security Council and is the former head of the most powerful Cuban exile lobby group
- We connect the dots between Trump's Cuba policy and the 2020 elections in Florida

DISTRIBUTION

Trump's War on Cuba will be distributed by **Belly of the Beast** on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Our primary audience will be young people who will have a large impact on the 2020 election, and who aren't typically the target for news on Latin American politics.

Belly of the Beast's co-production partners will include leading media outlets specializing in investigative journalism that will expand the reach of the series by publishing in-depth articles accompanying the documentaries.

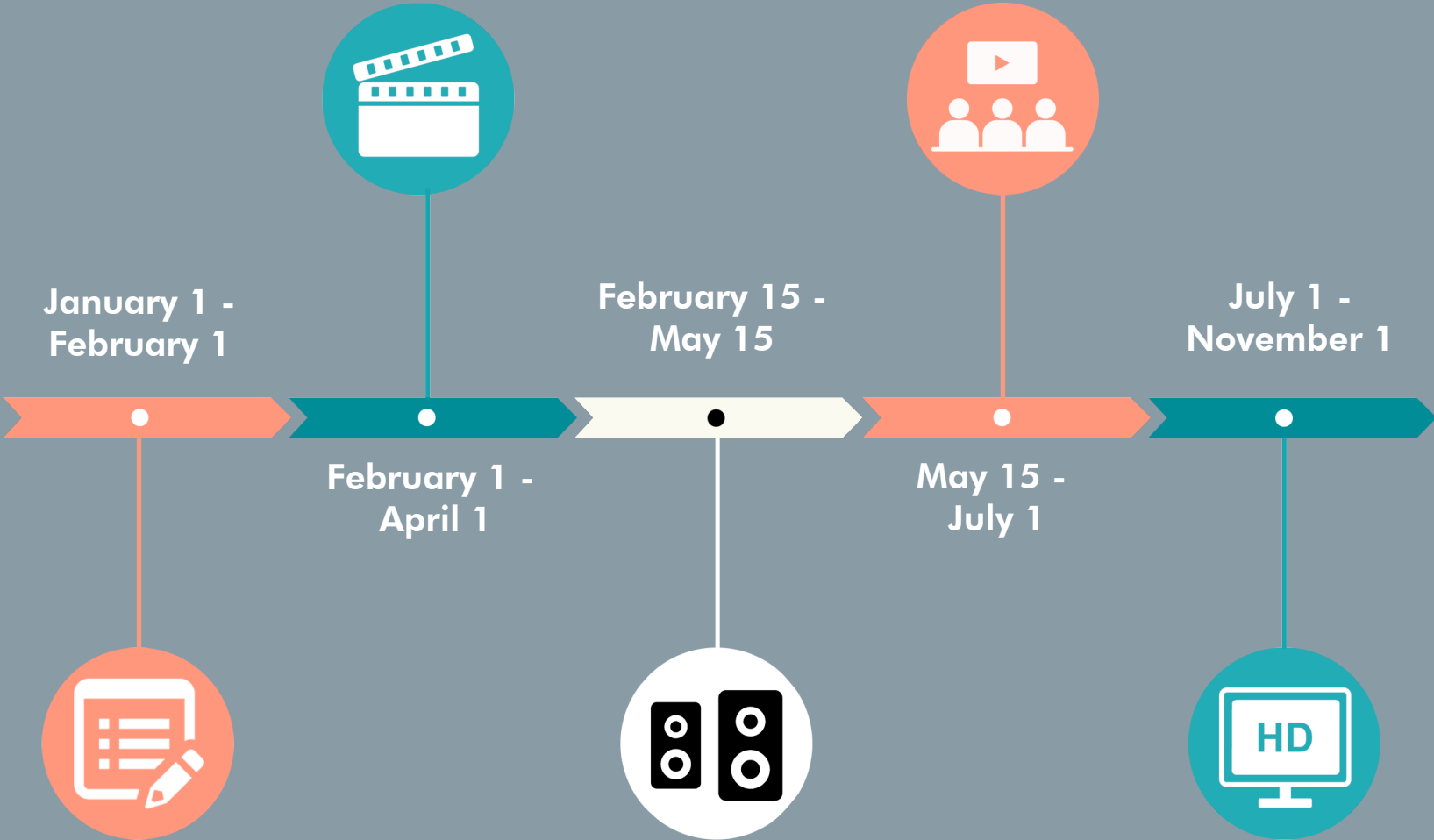
Finally, **Belly of the Beast** will carry out a vigorous outreach campaign targeting online influencers and communities with ties to Cuba and Latin America. This high-impact series will be the first exposé of its kind, filling a void in the underwhelming media coverage of Cuba and US-Cuba relations.

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TIMELINE

PRODUCTION

LAUNCH AND DISTRIBUTION



PRE-PRODUCTION

POST-PRODUCTION

CONTINUED DISTRIBUTION

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As a journalist and documentary filmmaker, I have spent the last 20 years covering military coup d'états and elections, interviewing presidents and gang leaders, weathering hurricanes and dodging bullets, investigating corruption and documenting massacres. So why do I find myself in the journalistic backwater that is Cuba? Appearances can be deceiving. Cuba could play a critical role in deciding the next US president. The stakes could not be higher, yet mainstream coverage of Cuba and US-Cuba relations is scarce and shallow.

Belly of the Beast fills this media vacuum. I have assembled a dream team of first-rate investigative journalists and producers who are uniquely positioned to dive deep into the impact and origins of US policy toward Cuba. Having spent years working on the ground in Cuba we are attuned to the nuances of the country and its historically thorny relations with the US. Supported by an impressive cast of Cuban editors, directors of photography, graphic artists and composers, we are uniquely positioned to tell the urgently important and as-of-yet untold story of *Trump's War On Cuba*.

- Reed Lindsay

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REED LINDSAY

Director

Reed Lindsay is an award-winning journalist and independent documentary filmmaker whose work has been published in more than 20 major newspapers and magazines and broadcast on television news networks throughout the world. Reed won a Gracie Award in 2014, and was co-winner of an Emmy and nominated for a Rory Peck Award in 2011.

Reed has been reporting and directing documentaries in Cuba since 2015. He was previously based in Port-au-Prince, Cairo and Washington, DC.



ED AUGUSTIN

Producer



Ed Augustin is a journalist and filmmaker who has lived in Havana for six years. He writes for *The Guardian* and the *New York Times* and broadcasts for *France 24*, *ARD* and *Al Jazeera*.

Ed has reported extensively on US-Cuba relations as well as the US embargo. He has made films about Guantánamo Bay, Cuba's highly acclaimed hurricane response system and the bizarre and inventive ways in which Cubans use condoms as workarounds for everyday problems.

LUNA OLAVARRÍA GALLEGOS

Digital Strategy



Luna Olavarría Gallegos is a storyteller, researcher, technologist, and arts practitioner. She is the founder of the multimedia project, AfroRazones, which confronts issues of digital accessibility and archives.

Her written pieces on music, race and technology have been published in outlets including *The Guardian*, *La Liga* and *The FADER*. As a curator, she has organized panels, showcases and film festivals that highlight the work of Black and Latin American artists.

TRACEY EATON

Advisor

Tracey Eaton is an award-winning journalist. He has worked throughout Latin America and is a former Fulbright scholar in Ecuador. Eaton headed *Dallas Morning News* bureaus in Mexico and Cuba from 1994 to 2005.

His stories have appeared in hundreds of online media outlets and newspapers. He travels to Cuba regularly and is the founder of the Cuba Money Project, which tracks US tax dollars spent in Cuba.





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bellyofthebeastcuba.com
contact@bellyofthebeastcuba.com