

[REDACTED]

Colombia May Break Relations With Cuba

Colombian-Cuban relations have been strained for over six months, and the two countries do not now exchange ambassadors. President Alberto Lleras may be forced to a formal break of diplomatic relations in the near future because of increasing pressure from both factions of the Conservative party and a majority of the Liberal party, as well as from the right and moderate press, business circles, and Colombia's influential labor organization, the Confederation of Colombian Workers.

President Lleras, who is a former secretary general of the OAS, apparently opposes such action since he fears it might jeopardize Colombia's chance to mediate or lead in solving the Cuban problem and because he prefers multi-lateral action. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Previously reported intervention includes dissemination of Cuban and Communist propaganda, smuggling arms to sympathetic guerrilla bands, and training pro-Castro Colombians in guerrilla warfare tactics. [REDACTED]

Rural violence--springing mainly from a complex of agrarian grievances, regional rivalries, and sharp party antagonisms--has cost the lives of over 250,000 people in the past 13 years--over 2,600 last year. Its recent upward swing is increasing tension at local levels between the political parties which make up the National Front coalition government.

Latin American nations which have either broken or suspended relations with Cuba are Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Paraguay. The status of Cuban - El Salvadoran relations is not clear. [REDACTED]

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