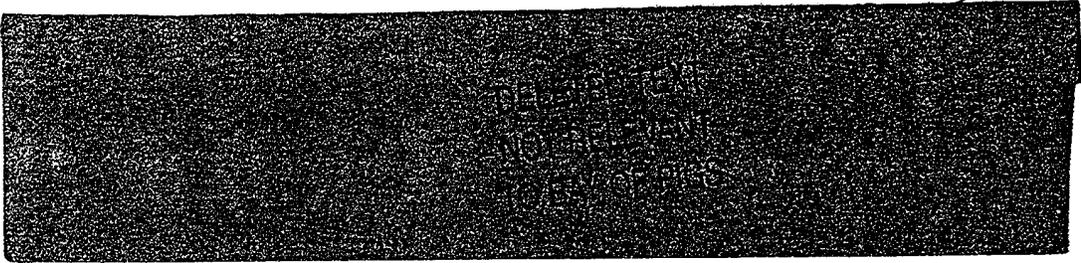


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CUBA AND THE CARRIBBEAN

Cuba

Despite Castro's seizure of the company which controls the water supply of the Guantanamo Naval Base, there is still no indication that he will attempt to use force against the base. The action does not enhance Cuba's ability to cut off the water supply to the base. However, it will enable the Cuban Government to raise water rates in an effort to obtain additional needed dollars.

During the television interview on 1 February Foreign Minister Roa reaffirmed an earlier Castro statement that Cuba would seek the recovery of Guantanamo through the channels of international law. The Cuban contention, according to Roa, is that the 1903 US-Cuban contract for the lease of the base is invalid because Cuba was not then on "an equal footing with the United States." Also, Roa said, Cuba did not agree to the lease of its own free will, "because the Cuban people were coerced by a system of government imposed from abroad."

The Castro regime during the past week stepped up its propaganda attacks on the US administration. A broadcast assailed the US action in providing \$4,000,000 for Cuban refugees in the United States, saying that since the previous administration had allotted

only \$1,000,000 to the "counterrevolutionaries," President Kennedy was "four times more the enemy of Cuba" than was his predecessor. President Dorticos told a teachers' rally in Havana on 4 February that the intensification of counterrevolutionary activity by the Roman Catholic clergy and private school students was closely connected with the US action.

The teachers' rally was convoked by the government in an attempt to counter the growing opposition efforts of Catholic students and private educational institutions. The regime's attacks on these groups probably foreshadow a takeover of all Cuban private schools. The government's concern over clerical and student opposition was demonstrated

instructing G-2 agents throughout the island to report in detail on counterrevolutionary activities of the clergy and on plans for a scheduled student strike.

Students at private secondary schools and colleges throughout the country apparently participated in large numbers in a "strike" staged on 6 February as a protest against the execution of counterrevolutionaries by government firing squads.

reported "large absences" in private schools in some

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sections and ordered G-2 agents to obtain lists of the participants in the strike. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reported that Catholic clergymen in Santiago were preparing another student strike for 13 February.

Acts of sabotage and counterrevolutionary guerrilla activity continue to be reported, and there has been conflicting information on the progress of the campaign by militiamen to isolate and liquidate anti-Castro forces in the Sierra Escambray area of Las Villas Province. [REDACTED]

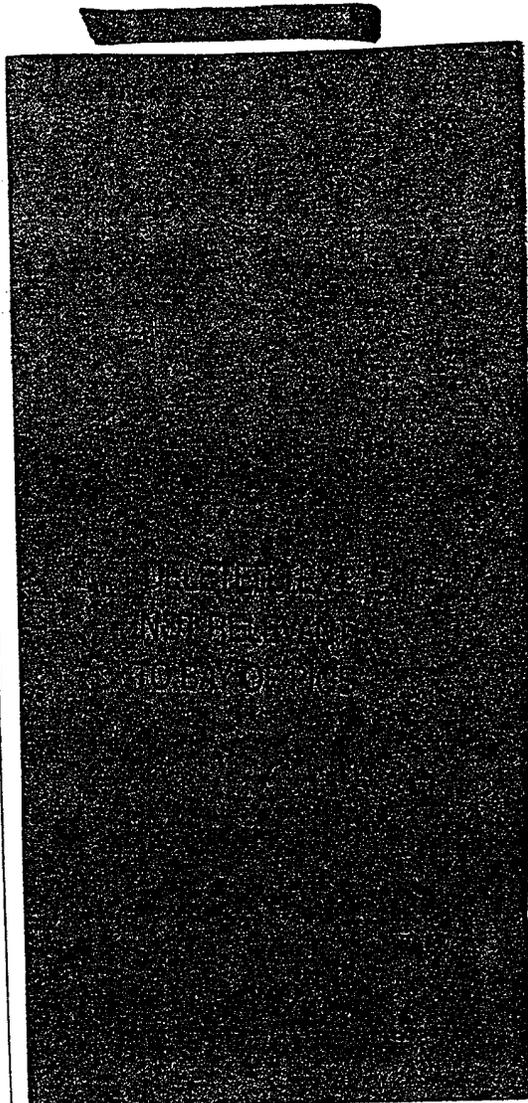
[REDACTED] however, suggest that the government is planning a major offensive against the guerrilla strongholds. According to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], an area comprising about one third of Las Villas Province and extending ten miles out to sea was designated a "prohibited area" until further notice. No aircraft flights would be permitted over this zone, [REDACTED]

A major fire in a Havana tobacco plant on 6 February causing damage estimated at several million dollars was apparently the result of a sabotage operation.

Newspapers and radio stations have begun a full-scale propaganda offensive to mobilize "volunteers"--including women and children--to harvest the first "people's crop" of sugar cane. A shortage of cane cutters, which has put the harvest behind schedule, has resulted from the government's mobilization of the militia against the alleged US "invasion threat" during most of January. In the city of Guantanamo, municipal police have reportedly been ordered into the cane fields.

The Colombian Government is under increasing domestic pressure to break diplomatic relations with Cuba, partly because of the belief that Cuban agitation has encouraged the rising violence in rural areas of the country. Peru, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic already have broken or "suspended" diplomatic relations with Havana.



PART I

OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST

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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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PART III

PATTERNS AND PERSPECTIVES

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