

12. Panama Expels Another Cuban Consul

The Panamanian Government on 28 March declared Gilberto Conill, the Cuban consul in Colon, persona non grata and gave him 24 hours to leave the country. He was charged with associating with subversive elements. Conill, who arrived in Panama on 13 December and had never been issued an exequatur by the Panamanian Government, replaced a consul expelled on similar charges on 3 December.

Colon, Panama's second largest city, is a fertile field for subversion. Located at the Atlantic terminus of the canal, Colon has for a number of years had very high unemployment and continual popular unrest. Conill's predecessor, a probable Communist, was particularly

active among Communist and pro-Communist labor elements in the area and is reliably reported to have channeled Cuban financial assistance to the striking banana workers in western Panama late last year.

The former Cuban ambassador in Panama, who was reliably reported to have held clandestine meetings with leaders of Panama's weak Communist party, was expelled in mid-January, but the Cuban Embassy continues to function under an accredited chargé. [REDACTED]

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