

Cuba Scenario Prepared

By Lawrence Stern
Washington Post Staff Writer

A detailed diplomatic scenario has been prepared in full consultation with Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger for overturning the 10-year-old political and economic sanctions against Cuba by November, it was learned yesterday.

The plan has been evolving quietly over the past several weeks and was the subject of a discussion yesterday between Kissinger and Mexican Foreign Minister Emilio O. Rabasa, whose government is a strong proponent of the move, along with a majority of the Latin American and Caribbean countries. Rabasa met with President Ford at the White House.

Designed to give the full and

formal sanction of the Organization of American States to the reversal of the decade-old U.S. and hemispheric policy of quarantine against Cuba, the scenario envisions the creation within the next few weeks of a "commission of inquiry" of five OAS countries to study the issue.

That body would be given the specific task of deciding whether the condition which gave rise to the 1964 sanctions against Cuba still exists—namely, the Castro government's active promotion of revolutionary movements throughout Latin America.

There seems to be an emerging consensus among the Latin American foreign ministers as well as U.S. officials that this is no longer the case. "It would

amount to the appointment of a fact-finding body," as one qualified official source put it. "to find out what everyone already knows to be the answer—that the condition no longer exists."

Rabasa said in an interview last night, "We all know that the only honest conclusion is that there is no longer any basis for the sanction."

It was understood, on reliable authority, that Washington has already indicated to the Latin American ministers that it has no objections to the diplomatic script which is likely to overturn an era of Cold War relations between Havana and the United States and other Latin American countries.

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Both Kissinger and his assistant secretary for inter-American affairs, Jack Kubisch, have been consulted at all stages of development of the plan. "We would do nothing to oppose it," said one qualified governmental source here.

The only major unresolved question is one of timing: whether or not the Ford administration would like to delay the playing out of the scenario until after the November elections.

This is a matter of domestic political calculus and it hinges on the White House evaluation of how seriously a reversal on Cuban policy would affect the prospects of Republican congressional candidates. On the other hand, there is a concern over the danger of the United States isolating itself in the hemisphere on the Cuban issue.

The commission of inquiry would its recommendation to its parent body, the permanent council of the OAS, which would be convened to act on the Cuban sanctions no later than November. A number of countries, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama and Ecuador, reportedly to be pressing for action within a matter of weeks.

Other countries have expressed to Kissinger a willingness to wait until the election is over, a course now understood to be the Ford administration's preference, in order to remove the issue from politics.

Mexico's Rabasa has been one of the chief actors in the fast-moving initiative to end Cuba's formal isolation under a containment policy sustained by Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon.

Rabasa's first contacts with Kissinger occurred in Acapulco in 1971 during a Kissinger vacation trip.

"He asked me what could be done to improve relations between the United States and Latin America" Rabasa said last night. "I asked him—what relations?"

The contact ripened into a series of consultations among

the Latin American ministers in which Kissinger was intermittently involved. Cuba did not emerge centrally in these discussions until talks in Mexico City last February.

After the six-day session, in which Kissinger participated, Rabasa went to see Castro in Havana and, according to his own account, asked the Cuban premier "point blank whether he would come back into the OAS." Castro replied, "Under no circumstances," Rabasa said.

The Mexican minister then asked Castro if he would be willing to attend the next Latin foreign ministers' meeting in Buenos Aires, scheduled for March, 1975. "Premier Castro thought about it carefully, and then said yes," Rabasa recalled. "He also said he would be glad to come in a constructive spirit."

Rabasa reported back to Kissinger on the contacts with Castro and said he intended to bring the matter to a head at the meeting of the foreign ministers here last April.

Kissinger was reported to be apprehensive about opening up a Cuban Pandora's box in such a public forum.

Although as it turned out the Cuban question was high on the agenda of the meeting last April, not a word was devoted to the subject in the official communique.

But a decision was made at the April meeting to let Argentina, host country for the ministers meeting next year, canvass opinion to see if the precedent-breaking invitation should be extended to Cuba.

This process is now under way. However, the immediate issue of voting on the OAS sanctions will emerge more immediately in a meeting of the permanent council in Washington.

Rabasa concurred with official U.S. estimates that more than half of the 23 countries in the OAS are already prepared to vote to remove the sanctions.

Less certain is whether there is a two-thirds vote—17 countries—for such action, the majority by which the sanctions were adopted in 1964. The United States, Rabasa said, might well find itself in the position of providing the clincher.

Procedural and parliamentary fine points aside, the expectation is that the inter-American organization will provide whatever votes are necessary to end the era of quarantine of Cuba in the remaining months of this year.

Soviet Union Approves Of New Cuba Situation

From News Dispatches

The Soviet Union last night displayed satisfaction with the new climate that is taking shape in the relations between Cuba and the American continents.

The official government newspaper Izvestia noted in Moscow that a "broad movement for recognition of Cuba" was developing in Latin America. The newspaper pointed out that even in the United States some voices have become more insistent in calling

for a re-examination of policy toward Cuba.

Meanwhile, Ecuador's President, Gen. Guillermo Rodriguez Lara, said in Quito, that his government favored lifting the economic and diplomatic blockade imposed on Cuba by the Organization of American States in 1964.

(In Bogota yesterday, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Gonzalo Facio said his country, Colombia and possibly Venezuela would ask the OAS permanent council next week to lift the blockade.)