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The War of a Thousand Days

COLOMBIAN HISTORY

WRITTEN BY: The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica
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Alternative Title: La Guerra de Los Mil Días

The War of a Thousand Days, Spanish **La Guerra De Los Mil Días**, (1899–1903), Colombian civil war between Liberals and Conservatives that resulted in between 60,000 and 130,000 deaths, extensive property damage, and national economic ruin.

The Liberal Party represented coffee plantation owners and import-export merchants who favoured a laissez-faire economic policy. Largely excluded from participation in government after the Conservative victory of 1885, they were further distressed by the drastic downturn in the international price of coffee; by 1899 many coffee growers were operating at a loss.

The Conservative government, suffering from reduced customs revenues, responded by issuing unbacked paper currency, causing the value of the peso to drop precipitously. War broke out in the coffee-growing regions in 1899; and the first phase, lasting about seven months, ended with the defeat of Liberal forces at Palonegro on May 25, 1900. During the next two and a half years disorganized but highly disruptive guerrilla-style warfare raged in the rural areas, with great destruction of property and loss of life both in combat and from disease. Unable to pacify the countryside through military tactics, imprisonment, fines, and expropriation of property, the Conservatives offered amnesty and political reform on June 12, 1902. By November the two most important Liberal

leaders, Rafael Uribe Uribe and Benjamín Herrera, surrendered after negotiating peace treaties promising amnesty, free elections, and political and monetary reform. Panama seceded soon after the war.



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Colombia

Colombia, country of northwestern South America. Its 1,000 miles (1,600 km) of coast to the north are bathed by the waters of the Caribbean Sea, and its 800 miles (1,300 km) of coast to

the west are washed by the Pacific Ocean. The country is bordered by Panama, which divides...

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The War of a Thousand Days

QUICK FACTS

DATE

1899 - 1903

LOCATION

Colombia

PARTICIPANTS

Liberal Party

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