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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
21 August 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

BOLIVIA

(Situation Report as of 1300)

1. The US Embassy has received a report that at 11:15 this morning the armed forces commanders gave President Torres an hour to leave the country. We are seeking confirmation of this report.

2. All army divisions outside of La Paz, with the exception of the First Division at Viacha, have joined the rebel ranks. In addition, the Military Air Transport group has defected to rebel forces. The rebels now have two aircraft, in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba respectively, that can be used to transport rebel troops to La Paz if they can secure El Alto airbase.

3. Meanwhile, radio Condor in Oruro, controlled by the rebels, has claimed that peasants from the Potosi Area plan to march toward La Paz in support of the rebels. Other overt reports say that army units in Cochabamba and Oruro will move on La Paz unless President Torres steps down.

4. Late last night the La Paz military, which remained loyal to Torres, took up positions at El Alto. The primary objective of the general staff located there is to avoid a confrontation with rebel forces.

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5. If President Torres is in fact at El Alto, he may be preparing to resist any attack on La Paz from points in the interior, or to leave the country.

6. Press reports indicate that the Torres government has requested asylum in Chile for sixty people. The sixty are said to include retired Army Col. Hugo Banzer, who was yesterday proclaimed president of Bolivia by the rightwing opponents of Torres. Banzer was one of the 30 people reported arrested Thursday night in Santa Cruz. However, it is also possible that Torres was seeking asylum for himself and some of his followers.

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