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POLITICKING IN BOLIVIA

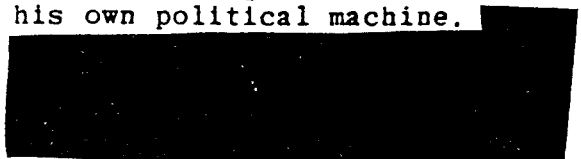
Politicking in anticipation of elections at some future date is now in full swing in Bolivia. Junta President Barrientos himself, despite his public disclaimer on 18 November of presidential ambitions, is acting like a candidate. He continues to stump the countryside drumming up popular support, and he is making efforts to create his own political organization.

There is speculation that Barrientos will resign from the junta just before the elections and run for president with the support of the Bolivian Socialist Falange (FSB) and several minor rightist parties. He is also rumored seeking an alliance with the left.

Meanwhile other groups are busy trying to make alliances. Nothing firm has emerged from

these discussions, but the smaller parties are lining up either with ex - Vice President Juan Lechin's National Leftist Revolutionary Party (PRIN) on the left, or with the FSB on the right.

Former president Hernan Siles Zuazo sees the possibility that a third group will emerge. This one would be based primarily on the remnants of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR), which ruled Bolivia for 12 years before Paz Estenssoro's overthrow. Siles is currently attempting to revive and reorganize the MNR as his own political machine.



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