

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Bolivia REPORT NO. [REDACTED]
SUBJECT Comments by Bolivian Businessman re Overthrow of the Paz Estenssoro Government DATE DISTR. 20 Nov 64 NO. PAGES 3 REFERENCES

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- 1. "As soon as all the excitement and the last events are over, I do want to pass on to you a brief information regarding the outcome of the revolution.
2. "As you are aware, the problem began with the students, about three months ago. This tension between students and teachers against the government was becoming more and more latent. [sic] It became the focus of the attention of the whole country. Gradually, this tension was building up constantly until the differences between students and government were notorious. The government began making things very difficult for students particularly, all over the country. This problem was complicated with something that the government called a revolution under Hernán Siles' leadership. Paz Estenssoro started to throw punches indiscriminately. I think this was the beginning of Paz Estenssoro's real problems. I also thought that deporting Siles, who gave Paz Estenssoro the Presidency, was going to demoralize his own party, since Siles undoubtedly was, from the beginning to the last moment, the undisputed head of the M.N.R.; although Paz wanted to maintain that title without the merits that Siles had obtained with his ability and determination.
3. "Following this, the students of the University with unbelievable courage, started to fight Paz and his "carabineros" openly until the rebellion was an open fight with stones, clubs, and other minor weapons. This kind of tension and demonstrations were going on almost daily between the students and the carabineros, until finally the government got tired and surrounded the University and took hostages by hundreds. It is well known that the first day the Political Control members, which will be described later, beat

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S-Yes U-Yes MAR 1968

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GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

Table with columns: STATE, ARMY, NAVY, AIR, FBI, AEC

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the students almost to death inside the University. Later, they took the students to the "Control Político" and gave them further punishment. Humiliation, physical and moral suffering was drawn upon the boys, which naturally brought anger to the families of the students, many of whom were looking for revenge, because the Control Político, which was organized by Paz in 1952, was nothing but a grotesque copy of the Gestapo. This Control Político was organized at the beginning of Paz's regime by two Spanish refugees of the Spanish Civil War, who were experts in torturing and were highly trained in the USSR. From 1952 to 1956, we had in Bolivia concentration camps such as the ones seen in Germany during Hitler's time.

4. "Fortunately, Siles became President in 1956 and one of his first acts was to abolish the concentration camps, which had hundreds of innocent people imprisoned just for their political ideas or for their connection with political parties.
5. "When Paz came back into power in 1960, he again started to reorganize the Control Político, but fortunately the concentration camps were not reopened. During 1960 to 1964 Paz had, as we might say, a rather easy government. He did not have much opposition and he thought the rest was going to be easy. Then he decided to succeed himself, violating the constitution of the country. He changed it the way he pleased and was elected with a tremendous majority. It is well known that it was a widely organized fraud. Government employees and the majority of the indians were brought to the polls, and in that way there was complete control of the votes cast. They were practically herded to the polls.
6. "Siles immediately broke with Paz Estenssoro since he was going against the constitution, and Siles decided to fight with the rest of the political parties, which were still alive. Siles fought Paz until he was deported, as indicated above.
7. [REDACTED] that Rene Barrientos Ortuno was the man to watch, and I think I told you that he was an ambitious young man who could be, one day, the President of Bolivia.
8. "Barrientos in the last elections ran as Vice President, his ticket was supported by the Army. It was clear that Barrientos and the Army were getting ready to take over the government as soon as the opportune moment came.
9. "When the revolt of the students was destroyed by the government, Barrientos went to Cochabamba and started, with the Seventh Division of the Army, the revolt against the government. Barrientos is a brilliant man with great imagination to convince the mass. In Cochabamba, there is a very large indian settlement called Ucurena. They are well trained in the militia warfare, and they are armed to the teeth. Barrientos, who is a native son of one of the small provinces of Cochabamba, naturally speaks their tongue (quechua) and during the last two years, he was practically living with them. Once the revolt began, he felt at ease with the whole hearted support of the Ucurenas and the Seventh Division of the Army. Immediately the miners of Oruro followed suit and gradually the rest of the Army started to join Barrientos Ortuno, until 3 Nov 64 when Paz Estenssoro's cause was over. In the morning, we saw truck loads of his belongings leaving his home, and, as usual, defections within his own party started gradually the night of 3 November when quite a few of his followers were already looking for asylum in several Embassies.

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10. "The night of 3 November, Barrientos and the garrison of La Paz came to a cease fire agreement to last until 12 o'clock in the morning of 4 November. During that night, Barrientos had instructed the Santa Cruz and Cochabamba garrison to wait until 12 o'clock in the morning of 4 November before proceeding to La Paz. Barrientos was lucky enough to have in Cochabamba the Lloyd Aereo Boliviano and part of the Bolivian Air Forces, so he promised to air lift his soldiers to Oruro and to come in with the rest of 10,000 very well-armed soldiers from Oruro to La Paz.
11. "During the dramatic hours of the morning of 4 November, Paz Estenssoro and his followers were desperate. Everybody started to run for himself, trying to take as many of his belongings as he could to the Embassies. At five o'clock in the morning, it was known that Paz Estenssoro was forced to renounce the Presidency, but he did not want to do so. At ten in the morning, he was escorted to the airport and shipped, with his family and very few of his close associates, to Lima.
12. "In La Paz, for practically 24 hours, we did not have a government. Only yesterday [5 Nov 64], René Barrientos arrived and took over the government together with Alfredo Ovando Candia, the Head of the Bolivian Army.
13. "When Barrientos and Ovando Candia were to address a mass of several thousand people in the main square, Ovando Candia spoke first. The people insulted him and did not let him deliver his speech. It was brief and lasted only 25 seconds. Immediately it was apparent that the people were completely against Candia because he was not a man of decisions. He was constantly trying to follow the course of events and he was the one who guaranteed Paz Estenssoro's escape.
14. "The tremendous pressure of the mob outside the palace forced Candia to resign his post in the Junta and also as Head of the Army. Rumors are that he was later confirmed as Head of the Army.
15. "During the 36 minutes Barrientos spoke to the mass outside the Palace, he delivered a speech full of hope and promises of giving his country freedom of expression and also respect to the human rights of the Bolivians, etc., but the most encouraging statement which he emphasized was that he is not a President of a party as was Paz Estenssoro, but he is the President of all the Bolivians. He said that the Control Político, which all Bolivians feared, was abolished and completely dismantled. The members of the Cabinet are people of good will. They are well known for being honest and sincere. You know personally the Minister of Economy, Julio Sanjines. Julio, as we call him, is very well known and he has been working in very close contact with the American Embassy for the last three years. Until yesterday, he was the Liaison Officer of the Aid Program with the Bolivian Government. Also, Julio has been until yesterday, the President of El Diario, the oldest paper in La Paz with definite democratic ideas.
16. "12 years of the M.N.R. (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario) have passed and in comparison to other countries, Bolivia was stagnated and, in many instances, we have gone back.
17. "The only thing that has saved Bolivia from complete deterioration has been the American Aid. Without American Aid, I wonder what would have become of Bolivia.
18. "Barrientos is a very close friend of the Pentagon, and has maintained close relations with them. With his very friendly relations with the US Army, undoubtedly, it will be easy to obtain the recognition of the free world.
19. "We look forward to better days."

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