

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LA PAZ 04461 110335Z

62
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
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R 102023Z JUL 74
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3619

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 4461

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS PFOR BL UR
SUBJ: BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE INDICATES LITTLE
INTEREST IN SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT

1. DURING COURTESY CALL I MADE JULY 10 WITH MILGP COMDR SHAHA ON GENERAL RENE BERNAL, NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE, I MENTIONED THAT I HAD HEARD THAT THE USSR HAD MADE OFFERS TO BOLIVIA OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. BERNAL SAID THAT MY INFORMATION WAS CORRECT AND THAT HE HAD BEEN INVITED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO TO MAKE A TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION. IN ADDITIONA, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD INVITED HIM TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY FOR A SOCIAL FUNCTION AT WHICH A SOVIET MOVIE WAS SHOWN. BERNAL SAID THAT HIS ATTENDNANCE AT THE MOVIE WAS THE MINIMUM DIPLOMATIC RESPONSE HE COULD MAKE TO THE SOVIETS, AND HE HAD NO INTENTION OF TRAVELING TO THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID HE OPPOSED COMMUNISM AND THE SOVIET SYSTEM AND LEFT ME WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT HE HAD LITTLE INTEREST IN SOVIET EQUIPMENT.

2. THIS EXCHANGE FOLLOWED AN EXTREMELY FRIENDLY CONVERSATION DURING WHICH BERNAL EXPRESSED AFFECTION, RESPECT, AND ADMIRATION FOR THE U.S., ITS PEOPLE, ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND ITS ROLE AS LEADER OF FREE WORLD.

STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PROCUREMENT, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JUL 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: martinml
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LAPAZ04461
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740184-0753
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740762/aaaacauy.tel
Line Count: 50
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 1
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinml
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2003 by martinml>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE INDICATES LITTLE INTEREST IN SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, BL, UR, (BERNAL ESCALANTE, RENE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005