

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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62

ACTION SS-30

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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

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