

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MAR, PFOR

SUBJ: NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT: WORKING PAPER ON
POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT BETWEEN CHILE AND PERU

REF: STATE A4683 OF JUNE 10

1. IN VIEW OF RECENT INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED BY U.S. MISSION ON THIS TOPIC, EMBASSY SUGGESTS SOME EDITORIAL CHANGES IN PARAGRAPHS 24 AND 25 OF SUBJECT PAPER DEALING WITH BOLIVIA.

2. REVISED TEXT WOULD READ AS FOLLOWS:

"PRESIDENT HUGO BANZER WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY TRY TO EXPLOIT INCREASED TENSIONS BETWEEN PERU AND CHILE TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN, PROBABLY BY ENCOURAGING BOTH COUNTRIES TO VIEW BOLIVIA AS A POTENTIAL BUFFER. ALTHOUGH BOLIVIAN RELATIONS WITH PERU HAVE COOLED RECENTLY BECAUSE OF WHAT BOLIVIA PERCEIVES TO BE LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN THE PERUVIAN MILITARY, MOST BOLIVIAN MILITARY LEADERS TEND TO IDENTIFY WITH PERU MORE THAN CHILE BECAUSE OF ETHNIC AFFINITY,

COMMON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, AND A COMMON AND DEEPLY ROOTED ANTIPATHY

TOWARD CHILE. HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH BOLIVIA HAS TRADITIONALLY VIEWED CHILE AS AN ENEMY, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE PRESENTLY ON BETTER TERMS THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE 1962 BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. BRAZIL HAS ALSO BEEN ENCOURAGING AS BOLIVIAN-CHILEAN RAPPROACHMENT.

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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 04305 031412Z

ON BALANCE, IT APPEARS THAT IN THE FACE OF IMMINENT OR ACTUAL

HOSTILITIES, BOLIVIA WOULD MOST LIKELY REMAIN UNCOMMITTED DUE TO A REALIZATION BY THE BANZER GOVERNMENT THAT POSSIBLE IMMEDIATE GAINS OBTAINED THROUGH INTERVENTION WOULD BE MORE THAN OFFSET IN THE LONGER TERMS BY DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY BOLIVIA'S AFFECTED NEIGHBORS. IT SHOULD

BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NEUTRAL STANCE OF THE BANZER REGIME COULD CHANGE UNDER A DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT (CHANGES IN BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN NOTORIOUSLY FREQUENT). IF BOLIVIA BELATEDLY SUPPORTED EITHER

SIDE, IT WOULD MOST LIKELY NOT BE WITH A MAJOR TROOP COMMITMENT, BUT ANY SUPPORT IT RENDERED WOULD HAVE A PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL AS DIVERSIONARY EFFECT ON OPERATIONS AT THE FRONT."
STEDMAN

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