

city and that it was therefore necessary to transport the prisoner to safety immediately. Then, amid protests from both the reporters and Arguedas, the latter was forcibly removed to another room in the building. About five minutes later, a security agent wearing Arguedas' clothing was hurriedly rushed into a car and driven away in the wake of a motorcycle escort. However, the deception failed, and the reporters waited outside the building for Arguedas to reappear. Approximately a half hour later, the director of information of the presidency appeared and admitted to the press that Arguedas was still in the building but that he was prohibited for the time being from making any public declarations. Shortly thereafter, a police jeep arrived, and Arguedas was taken to it under heavy guard. As he reached the jeep, he shouted at the reporters: "I demand that the press conference be continued in order to expose the CIA." He was cut short by a violent effort on the part of his guards to push him into the jeep. They succeeded in forcing him into it and, together with another police vehicle, it immediately sped away in the direction of the city.

Later in the day, Arguedas was taken to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and upon instructions from the president, he was permitted to meet with the press a second time. This time he was allowed to answer approximately thirty questions during the course of an hour and a half. Afterwards he was returned to his cell in the Criminal Investigations Division and not allowed to meet with the press again.

Arguedas revealed to the press that his association with the CIA had begun in 1964, shortly after the MNR government of Paz Estenssoro was overthrown by the military. At that time, Arguedas was appointed to the high-level administrative post of sub-secretary in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. But two months after his appointment, Colonel Edward Fox, the air attache in the U.S. Embassy, informed Arguedas that if he continued in office, the

United States government would suspend all economic assistance to Bolivia and take drastic measures against its government. The reason given was Arguedas' past membership in the Bolivian Communist Party. In order to avoid any trouble, Arguedas resigned. However, several weeks later, he was again contacted by Colonel Fox, who told him the U.S. government might reconsider their opposition to him if he would meet with an American diplomat in Bolivia. Arguedas agreed, and Colonel Fox introduced him to Larry Sterfeld, then the head of the CIA in Bolivia. Sterfeld suggested to Arguedas that he voluntarily undergo interrogation outside of Bolivia so that it could be determined whether or not he had been a militant member of the Communist Party and whether or not the Party had instructed him to infiltrate the new military regime.

In order to clear himself with the Americans, Arguedas agreed to go to Lima for several days of intensive interrogation by the CIA. In Lima, he was exposed to three days of interviews and interrogation with the use of a lie detector. On the fourth day, he was interrogated while under the influence of drugs. When he recovered, the CIA told him they were convinced he had not been a militant member of the Communist Party, nor had he been instructed by the Party to infiltrate the new government in Bolivia. As far as they were concerned, he was free to resume his duties in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Arguedas returned to La Paz and was reappointed to his post in the ministry. However, as time went by, the CIA asked him to provide them with various kinds of information to which he had access in his position. Later on, they told him that they would see that he became the next minister of internal affairs. They promised to praise him in all the right circles and to present him as the ideal person for this important post. Soon articles began appearing in the newspapers concerning the marvelous job Arguedas was doing. In addition, the Americans around President Barrientos began praising Arguedas. The

president assumed that Arguedas had become friends with the Americans through his work in the Ministry, and largely because the Americans thought so highly of Arguedas, Barrientos appointed him minister of internal affairs. At that time, the CIA invited Arguedas to visit Washington and gave him sixty-five hundred dollars for traveling expenses. In Washington, they briefed him on the policies of the various Latin American countries and about the revolutionary activities and shortcomings of Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba. Evidently, they wanted to ensure that his outlook on Latin American affairs conformed with theirs.

After he became minister of internal affairs, Arguedas' relations with the CIA assumed a totally different character. According to Arguedas, under the threat of blackmail they forced him to carry out a variety of activities which served their interests. Through him, he claimed, they took control of the most important operations in his ministry, in particular the state intelligence service. This in turn allowed them to infiltrate agents into many of Bolivia's political parties and to control the information presented to the president and the cabinet on matters of internal security. Naturally, this arrangement also gave the CIA access to all of Bolivia's state secrets.

Arguedas also revealed that the CIA gave him money to corrupt various Bolivian leaders. He told the press of an instance in which the CIA gave him twenty-five hundred dollars to obtain information from an important union leader about the contacts he had made on a recent trip to China and various other socialist countries. On this particular occasion, the individual concerned refused to be bought. However, Arguedas made it clear that a good many other individuals were compromised in this manner. Arguedas also claimed that the CIA had charged him with the task of destroying the reputation of the co-director of Bolivia's best newspaper, *Presencia*. It seems that the newspaperman in question had organized a civic group to carry out a campaign of community develop-

ment in the rural areas. For some reason this greatly alarmed the head of the CIA in Bolivia, and he gave Arguedas money to employ people to paint on the walls around La Paz signs which gave the impression that the newspaperman was organizing his own political party instead of a civic group. The CIA also gave Arguedas money to further discredit the newspaperman by involving him in *un escándalo de falidas* ("a scandal of skirts").

According to Arguedas, during the time he was in office the CIA intervened extensively in Bolivian affairs. They spread information which undermined the government's attempts to negotiate credit in France. They recruited agents from, and infiltrated, nearly all of the major political parties and government agencies in the country. They also gave assistance to the military or political careers of those persons whom they were interested in advancing. Moreover, it is extremely interesting to note that the head of the CIA mission in Bolivia asked Arguedas to give Juan Lechin (the outlawed popular leader of the Revolutionary Party of the Nationalist Left) a passport under a false name so that he could leave the country and travel abroad. Although Arguedas did not say why the CIA wanted to help Lechin leave the country, it seems clear that Lechin had made some kind of deal with the CIA.

Because Lechin was an enemy of the Barrientos regime and a wanted man, Arguedas refused to give the CIA the passport. His obstinacy created friction between him and the CIA chief, which increased as time went by. Apparently, his relations with the CIA were further estranged when, under his orders, the Bolivian police broke up an underground spy network which they thought was being run by the pro-Peking Communists. Following the announcement by Arguedas that the government had uncovered a pro-Peking spy network, he was angrily informed by Hugo Murray, the CIA agent who worked most closely with him, that the network belonged to the CIA. The CIA, not content with controlling the Bolivian

intelligence apparatus, had organized their own intelligence network under the camouflage of a pro-Peking operation.

When Che's guerrillas were discovered in the southeast, the head of the CIA mission in Bolivia called Arguedas and informed him that he was sending him some "advisers." According to Arguedas, the CIA chief told him that their presence was required because of the ineffectiveness of Bolivia's security agents. A few days later, four Cuban exiles arrived and assumed "advisory" positions in Arguedas' ministry. Within a short time, the Bolivian officials in the ministry began to refer to these Cubans as *gusanos* (worms), the name commonly used by pro-Castro. On the other hand, perhaps by this time the CIA was no longer terribly worried about what he might say. They had by this time withdrawn their advisers from the Bolivian Ministry of Internal Affairs and replaced all the CIA personnel in Bolivia known to Arguedas. Moreover, they had successfully planted a considerable amount of information in the Latin American press which depicted Arguedas as either a traitor or a madman. Thus, they probably assumed that anything Arguedas might say about the CIA's activities in Bolivia would be rejected by the general public as the lies of a disreputable politician. At