

South America Coups

CIA Master Plan Seen

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The violent toppling of still another Bolivian regime is seen by knowledgeable sources here as part of a far-reaching movement, backed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to seize power in a total of six South American republics.

Although it has been officially denied, CIA money, training and advice was liberally given to the rebel strategists who master-minded over-

**A
News
Analysis**

throw of Bolivia's leftist President Juan Jose Torres.

Similar action is reportedly planned over the next 18 months in Peru, Argentina and Chile, probably in that order. In Uruguay and Colombia, it is felt that attempts will be made to achieve the goal through the ballot box, with force reserved as a last resort.

Because the Bolivian political situation has been chronically chaotic throughout its history — the latest coup was number 167 in 146 years of independence — that republic was given top priority on the international planners' timetable.

EX-PRESIDENTS

The "brain trust" of this sweeping Latin American scheme includes four former presidents of the countries involved — all but one also ousted from office — prominent Catholic church leaders and conservative officers in the armed services' commands of each nation.

Their common aim is to

prevent spread of Soviet and Communist Chinese penetration in that area, following a sharp decline of United States influence there over the past several years.

CIA collaboration was sought by Peru's ex-president, Fernando Belaunde Terry, with the consent of his colleagues in the movement. Although it remains to be clarified whether President Nixon was consulted personally, there can be no doubt that CIA Director Richard Helms got the green light at top administration level.

PARTIES

The plotters seek to establish center-left, non-Communist regimes within the respective countries, relying chiefly on the leaders and programs of Social Democrat or Christian Democrat parties.

However, since they must also count on the aid of military men who are in many cases extreme political rightists, personally ambitious, or both, success in attaining those ends is at best uncertain.

The Bolivian developments offer a clear case in point. Former president Victor Paz Estenssoro of that landlocked Andean republic, a moderate Socialist, is a "brain trust" member; the main purpose of the revolt there was to let him return from seven years' exile in Lima and take over the presidency again.

FALANGE

But Colonel Hugo Banzer, backed by the fascist-oriented Bolivian Falange, had himself sworn in as chief executive before Paz could

set foot on home soil.

During Paz's two periods in office, his Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) and the Falange were bitter foes. Although they joined forces to help topple Torres, a voluntary surrender of power by one to the other is now considered most unlikely.

Observers believe that similar frustrations are apt to

crop up in at least three of the other target republics. It is regarded as most probable in Argentina, where the planners hope to put ex-president Arturo Frondizi back in office and keep former dictator Juan Peron out.

Uruguay and Colombia, however, represent the greatest risks, for prime reliance in both countries is to be placed on the electoral process.

ELECTION

The Uruguayan constitution forbids two consecutive presidential terms, but supporters of President Jorge Pacheco Areco are pressing for an amendment which would let him run again in November — with the country's present "state of emergency" measures maintained during the balloting.

They reason that traditionally conservative farmers and cattlemen will join the business community in voting for Pacheco against Libor Sergegni, the fiery ex-general who wants to nationalize industry and banking. And police power under the emergency decree is expected to keep leftist demonstrators off the streets.

The gamble will be even greater in Colombia, where a 16-year "co-existence" pact between the republic's two major political parties runs out in 1974.

There the CIA has taken the initiative, insisting on support for independent leftist Alfonso Lopez Michelsen over the objections of many who wanted to back respected former president Alberto Lleras Camargo.

ROJAS

But the man to beat, everyone admits, is aging General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, who ruled Colombia with an iron fist for 4½ years during the 1950s. Exiled, then tried and condemned for malfeasance in office, Rojas won a supreme court reversal of his conviction and made a stunning comeback, almost win-

ning the presidency last year.

The CIA view is that the ex-dictator must be defeated at all costs, and the CIA picked Lopez because he would let himself be put in office via a coup, if necessary, while Lleras would not.

Last but by no means least is Chile. The Marxist government of President Salvador Allende was voted into power, whereas the Bolivian, Peruvian and Argentine regimes are all de facto. For that reason, Chile is last on the plotters schedule.

They believe that another

year and a half of Allende's socialization program will have alienated enough Chileans to make his ouster from office both practical and popular.

Allende's immediate predecessor, Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei, would be the replacement. He, too, belongs to the international movement's "brain trust."

Well informed sources report that the CIA has committed a \$14 million fund to this six-nation project, with close to a million of it already spent in helping to finance the Bolivian rebels.