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ARGUEDAS REPORT AROUSES BOLIVIA

Country Is in Uproar Over
Charges of C.I.A. Role

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Special to The New York Times

LA PAZ, Bolivia, Aug. 18—

The assertion yesterday by Bolivia's former Interior Minister that he had been an agent for the United States Central Intelligence Agency for three years has left this nation in an uproar.

The explosive declarations by the former Minister, Antonio Argüedas Mendieta, in a news conference after his arrival here yesterday were broadcast verbatim by radio stations throughout Bolivia, and a complete transcript was published in today's newspapers.

Newspapers were sold out almost immediately and a black market was flourishing in which people were paying up to a dollar for a paper.

It appeared today that Mr. Argüedas will not be tried for treason for having transmitted a copy of the diary of the late Ernesto Che Guevara to Cuba two months ago. Informed sources said he would not be tried by a military tribunal but almost certainly would be tried by the Bolivian Congress itself.

More Disclosures Possible

This will give him an opportunity to make still more declarations.

Mr. Argüedas fled Bolivia one month ago today, and returned here yesterday after a series of mysterious adventures in Chile, Britain and the United States. He asserted that he had been kept under surveillance during his brief stay in the United States, and that he had been taken from New York to a place north of Groton, Conn., before his trip to Lima two weeks ago.

He returned here, he said, to "give the Bolivian people the full truth" about alleged interference in their sovereignty by the United States.

Mr. Argüedas said yesterday that he had been forced by C.I.A. agents in 1965 to abandon his post in the Government. The agents accused him of being a Communist infiltrator and threatened to cut off all American aid to this country unless he resigned, he said. He was reinstated later, he said, after he had submitted to four days of interrogation by the C.I.A. in Lima. He was subjected to a lie-detector test and some kind of drug, he maintained.

Names of Agents Given

In talks with The New York Times and at his news conference here, he disclosed the names of many persons he said were officials or agents of the C.I.A. here. He said he had been given money by the intelligence agency for the purpose of corrupting officials of political parties, a mining official and journalists. He also said he had passed various kinds of misinformation, on the instructions of the C.I.A., to political figures and the press.

This misinformation, he said, had to do with the death of Mr. Guevara, French financial credits in Bolivia and many other matters.

He said that even the Peace Corps in Bolivia was directed by the United States for political purposes although it was not controlled directly by the C.I.A.

President René Barrientos Ortuño was not available for comment on these charges, and spent today in Cochabanda. But indications were that the Bolivian Government has taken the Argüedas statements seriously and that relations between the United States and this country are entering a complicated period.

Is Treated Respectfully

Bolivian officials are referring to Mr. Argüedas respectfully for the first time since the scandal began a month ago, using his title of "doctor" to which he is entitled in this country as a graduate lawyer. He is no longer spoken of as a traitor in the press or in official statements.

The United States Embassy has made no statement. At least one official has been notified that his tour has been curtailed and that he is to return shortly to Washington.

Rumors are circulating here of some kind of impending military upheaval not involving the chief of the armed forces, Gen. Alfredo Ovando Candia. The state of siege decreed last month after Mr. Argüenda's flight is still in effect.

C.I.A. Declines Comment

Officials of the C.I.A. have declined to comment on Mr. Argüedas's statements.

In an interview with The New York Times Saturday, Mr. Argüedas gave the following names of men he said had been involved in C.I.A. activities in Bolivia: Col. Edward Fox, an air attaché at the United States Embassy; Larry Sternfield, an embassy attaché and former chief of the C.I.A. in Bolivia; Nicholas Leondiris, "a top C.I.A. man" and chief of public security at the embassy; Hugo Murray, C.I.A. station chief in La Paz, and John S. Hilton, Mr. Murray's predecessor.

The only Col. Edward Fox listed in the Air Force register is 46-year-old Col. Edward J. Fox. According to the Foreign Service List, Col. Edward J. Fox is assigned as air attaché to the United States embassy in Madrid.

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