

U.S. Denies Ties To Bolivia Coup

Washington

A State Department spokesman said yesterday the United States had "played no part" in last Sunday's change of government in Bolivia where an anti-communist rebellion ousted the leftist regime of General Jose Torres Gonzales.

Commenting on press reports that a U.S. Air Force major had actively assisted the rebels, the spokesman said, however, that the State Department would look into these "allegations."

A dispatch from Santa Cruz, Bolivia, published yesterday in the Washington Post, said that Major Robert J. Lundin, an adviser to the Bolivian Air Force school in Santa Cruz, had frequent contacts before the outbreak of the rebellion with Colonel Hugo Banzer Suarez, who assumed the country's presidency last Sunday.

MEETING

The article said Lundin had met with Banzer when the latter entered Santa Cruz clandestinely from Argentina, where he had lived in exile since an abortive coup attempt in January, to prepare the rebellion.

Highly authoritative informants disclosed yesterday that early in January the Central Intelligence Agency advised Washington in a classified report that Banzer, then director of the Bolivian military college in La Paz, was planning an uprising against the Torres regime.

The CIA report, these informants said, claimed that Banzer intended to stage a rebellion in La Paz with his cadets in conjunction with

other military units in the country. The report also said Banzer had the support of the Bolivian Socialist Falange, a rightwing party that helped him to gain power a week ago.

EXILE

Two weeks after the CIA report was received here, Banzer was charged with plotting against the regime and exiled to Argentina.

Informants here were unable to say whether the CIA's advance knowledge of Banzer's original coup plans simply indicated "good intelligence" or whether he had directly advised the agency of his preparations.

They said, however, that even if Banzer had done so, the inference should not necessarily be drawn that the U.S. was involved in the plot or favored it.

RADIO

The Post article said that after the Banzer forces in Santa Cruz lost contact with La Paz during the first days of the successful August revolt, Lundin allowed the rebels to use his own radio communications in the American Embassy.

The account of Lundin's alleged activities was published here against the background of earlier charges by Torres' supporters that the U.S. had helped to plot Torres' overthrow.

Informed sources here said they had no direct knowledge of any role Lundin might have played in the rebellion. But they noted that Banzer had for years maintained close personal connections with U.S. military figures.

N.Y. Times Service