

27 FEB 72

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PRELIMINARY VIEWS  
OF ANALYSTS OF THE  
WESTERN HEMISPHERE  
DIVISION OF O C I

LATIN AMERICAN BY-LINES.

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terminated legally belonged to someone else. The scene was the cattle-raising country of remote Olancho Province, and in many respects is reminiscent of the battles between cattlemen and homesteaders in our own pioneering era of a hundred years ago.

Honduras' new chief of the police forces, Col. Melgar, deeply concerned over this first violent expulsion in almost two years, is personally conducting an on-the-spot investigation. Melgar's most recent assignment was commandant of the military forces in the commercial and industrial area around San Pedro Sula where his capability and compassion won him great respect from all sectors. His personal and immediate interest in the squatter problem will probably keep future violence to a minimum. (CONFIDENTIAL) [ ] X-5373

BOLIVIA

Altmann/Barbie Case Lingere On

Bolivian officials continue to insist that the Altmann extradition case is under study by a special panel of jurists and that no decision will be made until a legal opinion is rendered. Altmann is the man that France, with good evidence, claims is really Klaus Barbie, the Gestapo chief in occupied Lyon sentenced to death in absentia for the torture and execution of French Jews and resistance fighters during World War II.

There is no Bolivian-French extradition treaty, and the legalities of the case hinge on whether Altmann obtained his Bolivian citizenship under false pretenses. Complicating political factors include an off-the-record Bolivian claim that the postwar "allied command" (the French included) facilitated Barbie's departure from Europe, and a French belief that he worked for and was aided by "US forces" in occupied Germany in the late 1940's. No one in an official capacity has yet echoed charges by a private Paris-based group that Altmann is a CIA agent.

French interest in the case runs high. Paris wants not only to bring Barbie to justice, but to discover who betrayed resistance hero Jean Moulin to the Gestapo. The Bolivians, still smarting from some heavy-handed French pressure for the release of Regis Debray in 1970, are extremely sensitive to the current French initiatives.

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Interior Minister Adett-Zamora has commented that, since Debray has violated the terms of his release, perhaps the French should be asked to return him. The Bolivians still seem to be in a quandry over what to do about Altmann, however. (CONFIDENTIAL) (Chase, x-5272)

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