


MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET/CODEWORD~~INFORMATION
August 19, 1971


MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

FROM: ARNOLD NACHMANOFF 

SUBJECT: Status of Coup Plotting in Bolivia

Embassy, Defense Attache and intelligence sources reported that an attempt by military and civilian plotters to oust President Torres would begin early Thursday morning. The Embassy also reported that the Torres Government moved late Wednesday to counter the threat and had arrested at least four military officers for engaging in "subversive discussions". The Embassy noted that if a coup attempt should occur at this time, it is unclear which side would emerge victorious. It is also unclear whether the plotters actually have all the military support which they claim, particularly in the key military regiments in La Paz. Our Defense Attache believes there is danger that fighting within the military could break out in the face of a coup attempt; and the Embassy believes that, unless the plotters can successfully take over La Paz within the first couple of days, Torres would have time to rally worker and student support and that the situation could deteriorate into serious civil strife and bloodshed. Should an attempted coup be unsuccessful, the strength and influence of moderate elements in and out of the military probably would be seriously weakened and the Torres regime probably would be solidified in power.

25X1


As of 7:30 a. m., all was reported quiet in La Paz. It is not yet clear whether the Government will effect a major roundup of plotters at this time.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

DIA review completed.

State Dept. review completed

MORI/CDF C05126152

~~SECRET/CODEWORD~~