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This does not constitute proof that Che Guevara is alive and operating in Bolivia but it certainly heightens the possibility.

I think the President might like to read this one.

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DIST 28 JULY 1967

COUNTRY BOLIVIA/CUBA

DOI

SUBJECT GUERRILLA BAND IN SOUTHEAST BOLIVIA UNDER THE COMMAND OF ERNESTO "CHE" GUEVARA

- BAKER
- BOWLER
- BUDGET
- DAVIS
- HANSBURN
- HAMILTON
- KESLER
- JOHNSON
- JORDEN
- KEENE
- SAUNDERS

ACQ

[Redacted]

FIELD NO.

SOURCE

[Redacted]

1. (SUMMARY: [Redacted] THE CAPTURE BY THE BOLIVIAN ARMY ON 20 APRIL 1967 OF CARLOS ALBERTO FRUTOS (THE NAME APPEARING ON BUSTOS' FALSE ARGENTINE PASSPORT.), JULES REGIS DEBRAY, FRENCH MARXIST INTELLECTUAL AND WRITER ON GUERRILLA WARFARE, AND GEORGE ANDREW ROTH, ENGLISH FREELANCE JOURNALIST. THE THREE HAD JUST LEFT THE GUERRILLAS IN SOUTHEASTERN BOLIVIA AND WERE WALKING TOWARD THE TOWN OF MUYUPAMPA ON THEIR WAY OUT OF THE AREA OF GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION HAS BEEN EXTRACTED FROM A 30 PAGE WRITTEN STATEMENT PREPARED BY BUSTOS TO DESCRIBE HIS ACTIVITIES

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By [Signature] NARA. Date 1-12-11

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AND OBSERVATIONS WITH THE GUERRILLA BAND IN BOLIVIA FROM THE TIME HE LEFT HIS HOME IN CORDOBA, ARGENTINA, ON 25 FEBRUARY 1967, THROUGH HIS ARRIVAL AT THE GUERRILLA CAMP IN BOLIVIA ON 6 MARCH, UNTIL, IN THE COMPANY OF DEBRAY AND ROTH, HE LEFT THE GUERRILLAS AND WAS ARRESTED ON 20 APRIL. BUSTOS EARLIER CLAIMED THAT HE HAD BEEN SELECTED AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A VARIETY OF LEFTIST GROUPS IN ARGENTINA TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE BOLIVIAN GUERRILLAS AND MAKE CLEAR THAT THE ARGENTINE GROUPS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN RENEWING GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN ARGENTINA.

[REDACTED] IN HIS WRITTEN STATEMENT BUSTOS EXPLAINS THAT THE BOLIVIAN GUERRILLAS WERE INTERESTED IN HIM AS ONE MEANS OF GENERATING SUPPORT FROM ARGENTINA. BUSTOS SAID HE WAS GIVEN THE ASSIGNMENT OF SEEING LEADERS OF ARGENTINE POLITICAL GROUPS WHICH THEORETICALLY HAD REVOLUTIONARY ATTITUDES AND TRYING TO ARRANGE A MEETING OF THEM THAT WOULD LEAD TO A COMMITTEE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY FOR THE STRUGGLE IN BOLIVIA. BUSTOS IS A SKILLED, EXPRESSIVE WRITER AND APPEARS TO BE A CAREFUL, ASTUTE OBSERVER. HE RECOUNTS HIS TRIP TO THE GUERRILLA AREA ESCORTED BY TANIA, THE GUERRILLA COURIER PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS LAURA GUTIERREZ BAUER DE MARTINEZ [REDACTED] HIS MEETING WITH DEBRAY ON

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THE BUS FROM LA PAZ, THEIR ARRIVAL AT THE GUERRILLA CAMP, AND BUSTOS' LONG DISCUSSION WITH ERNESTO "CHE" GUEVARA. THE FULL TEXT OF BUSTOS' STATEMENT APPEARS IN THE ORIGINAL SPANISH AND IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION AS ATTACHMENTS TO [REDACTED] IN THOSE INSTANCES WHERE BUSTOS' STATEMENT DEALS WITH THE SAME PEOPLE OR EVENTS REPORTED BY OTHERS WHO HAD BEEN MEMBERS OF THE GUERRILLA BAND, WERE CAPTURED BY IT, OR WERE OTHERWISE IN CONTACT WITH THE GUERRILLAS, THE STORIES ARE IN ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AND OTHER REPORTS CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SAME GUERRILLA BAND.)

2. UPON HIS ARRIVAL ON 6 MARCH 1967 AT THE GUERRILLA CAMP NEAR CAMIRI IN SOUTHEASTERN BOLIVIA CIRO ROBERTO BUSTOS FOUND THE GUERRILLAS TO BE WELL-ORGANIZED AND WELL-ARMED. EVEN DURING PERIODS WHEN EVADING OR FIGHTING THE BOLIVIAN ARMY REQUIRED THE MOST STRENUOUS FORCED MARCHES, PERIODS WHEN THE FOOD SUPPLY WAS LOW AND ALL SUFFERED FROM SICKNESS OR EXHAUSTION OR BOTH, MORALE AND DISCIPLINE REMAINED HIGH. THE GUERRILLA INSTALLATION BUSTOS ENTERED WAS DIVIDED INTO SEVERAL ENCAMPMENTS, ALL WELL-PLACED FOR DEFENSE AND GUARDED WITH OUTPOSTS AND TRENCHES. THE GUERRILLAS THEMSELVES WERE WAITING FOR THE RETURN OF A SCOUTING

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PARTY THAT HAD TRAVELED NORTH SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER LED BY THE GUERRILLA COMMANDER "RAMON," WHO BUSTOS WAS TOLD BY ONE OF THE GUERRILLAS WITH A CUBAN ACCENT WAS REALLY ERNESTO "CHE" GUEVARA. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] STATED THAT DURING HIS INTERROGATION BUSTOS HAD IDENTIFIED "CHE" GUEVARA FROM A CLEAR PHOTOGRAPH AS BEING ONE OF THE CUBAN OFFICERS HE HAD MET WITH THE GUERRILLA BAND.) WHILE AT NO TIME WAS BUSTOS EXPOSED TO ALL THE GUERRILLAS, HE IDENTIFIED 18 CUBANS BY ALIAS, PROVIDING PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF 15; THREE PERUVIANS, WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH; AND 23 BOLIVIANS, OF WHOM HE DESCRIBED 9.

3. ON ABOUT 19 MARCH 1967 "CHE" GUEVARA WITH HIS SCOUTING PARTY RETURNED FROM HIS EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH AND RESUMED COMMAND. AFTER DETERMINING WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN THE APPROXIMATELY SIX WEEKS HE HAD BEEN AWAY, AND REASSERTING HIS CONTROL OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE BAND'S ACTIVITY, GUEVARA BEGAN TALKING INDIVIDUALLY TO THE THREE VISITORS TO THE GUERRILLA BAND, "EL CHINO," JUAN PABLO CHANG NAVARRO LEVANO, A RACIAL CHINESE OF PERUVIAN NATIONALITY WHO WAS A VISITOR RATHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE GUERRILLA BAND; TO JULES REGIS DEBRAY; AND THEN WITH BUSTOS. IN A SECLUDED SPOT, GUEVARA EXPLAINED PRIVATELY TO BUSTOS THE

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ESSENCE OF HIS APPROACH TO REVOLUTION. HE DEFINED HIS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AS THE CAPTURE OF POLITICAL POWER IN ONE OR MORE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH AMERICA AFTER INSURRECTIONAL ARMED STRUGGLE HAD DEVELOPED. THE KEY TO HIS OBJECTIVE IS, HE EXPLAINED, THIS GUERRILLA BAND, WHICH MUST BE DEVELOPED, CONSOLIDATED AND EXPANDED BY ITS OWN ACTIVITY IN ORDER TO BECOME THE NUCLEUS FROM WHICH OTHER GUERRILLA BANDS WILL DEVELOP AND PROLIFERATE AND THEN ACT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE NUCLEUS WHEREVER CONDITIONS ARE THE MOST FAVORABLE. THE UNDERLYING POLITICAL BASIS FOR THIS IS THAT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM IS THE FACTOR COMMON TO ALL LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS. IMPERIALISM IS THE REAL ENEMY, NOT THE OLIGARCHIES, WHICH ARE ENEMIES OF FORM RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE. BECAUSE THE REAL ENEMY IS A COMMON ONE FOR ALL LATIN AMERICA, A NEW STRATEGY IS NECESSARY. THIS STRATEGY MUST START FROM THE PREMISE THAT IN LATIN AMERICA NO SINGLE COUNTRY CAN NOW OR IN THE FUTURE CARRY OUT THE REVOLUTION ALONE, NOT EVEN A GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED BY ITS OWN ARMY AND BY ITS PEOPLE. IT WOULD MERELY PRODUCE PALLIATIVES AND IMITATIONS OF CHANGE, BUT IT WOULD NOT MAKE REVOLUTION. ONE COUNTRY ALONE IS QUICKLY SURROUNDED, STRANGLER, AND SUBJUGATED BY THE IMPERIALISTS BECAUSE REVOLUTION IS A SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACT AND NOT A ROMANTIC,

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PATRIOTIC EVENT. ECONOMIC UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA IS CAUSED BY IMPERIALISM AND ITS TOTAL CONTROL. CHANGE WILL BE POSSIBLE ONLY WHEN THERE IS TOTAL OPPOSITION. IT IS NECESSARY, THEREFORE, TO UNITE THE TOTAL STRENGTH OF THE LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS IN A DECISIVE CONFRONTATION AGAINST THE UNITED STATES.

4. GUEVARA SAID THAT HIS THESIS WAS APPLICABLE IN AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA. AN ADVANTAGE FOR AFRICA WAS ITS GREATER DISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES AND ITS GREATER POSSIBILITIES FOR LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FROM THE USSR, CHINA, UAR, AND ALGERIA. HE HAD INITIALLY CHOSEN AFRICA AND HAD ARRANGED HIS "VOLUNTARY INCORPORATION" INTO THE STRUGGLE IN THE CONGO, BUT THE HUMAN ELEMENT FAILED. THERE WAS NO WILL TO FIGHT AND THE LEADERS WERE CORRUPT. AFTER SIX MONTHS HE ABANDONED THAT ARENA. ALTHOUGH IN THE MEANTIME HE HAD PREPARED NOTHING FOR THE SECOND CHOICE, SOUTH AMERICA, HE MADE A STRATEGIC DECISION. BECAUSE SUPPORT TO CUBA BY ESTABLISHED COMMUNIST PARTIES WAS WANING AND PRO-CASTRO MOVEMENTS EVERYWHERE HAD BEEN DESTROYED OR HAD NOT DONE ANYTHING, HE DECIDED THAT BOLIVIA WAS THE BEST PLACE TO BEGIN. BOLIVIA HAD A MILITARY GOVERNMENT, AN ACUTE SOCIAL SITUATION, AND AN ECONOMY UNDER IMPERIALIST PRESSURE. IT WAS NEAR THE

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BEST POLITICAL BASES, ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CHILE, AND PERU, AND IT WAS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES THAT HAD EXPERIENCED FAILURES, ARGENTINA AND ESPECIALLY PERU. "RICARDO," A COMRADE OF GUEVARA'S FROM THE CONGO CAMPAIGN, TRAVELED TO BOLIVIA EARLY IN 1966, DID THE ORGANIZATIONAL WORK, MADE THE CONTACTS, AND SET UP THE WORKING TEAM. THEY RENTED A HOUSE, BOUGHT THE JEEP, BOUGHT THE FARM AND LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. [Redacted] COMMENT: [Redacted]

A HOUSE IN THE SUBURBS OF LA PAZ IS PRESUMABLY BEING USED TO STORE SUPPLIES FOR GUERRILLA OPERATIONS. [Redacted] FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE JEEP AND FARM USED BY THE GUERRILLAS.)

5. GUEVARA EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL, SMALL WORKING TEAM HAD DONE WELL, THE EFFORT TO ESTABLISH A POLITICAL BASE HAD BEEN A FAILURE BECAUSE NEITHER THE PRO-SOVIET NOR PRO-CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF BOLIVIA WOULD SUPPORT THE PROJECT. IT PROVED POSSIBLE ONLY TO RECRUIT INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN THE ORIGINAL GUERRILLA NUCLEUS. ON A TRIP TO CUBA, PROBABLY IN OCTOBER 1966, RICARDO CONVINCED GUEVARA THAT EVEN WITHOUT COMPLETE PREPARATION IT WAS NECESSARY FOR HIM TO COME TO BOLIVIA. GUEVARA'S REASON FOR INVITING BUSTOS (AND OTHERS FROM ARGENTINA WHO HAD VISITED

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THE GUERRILLA AREA BEFORE BUSTOS HAD ARRIVED AND WHILE GUEVARA WAS ON RECONNAISSANCE TO THE NORTH) WAS ESSENTIALLY TO TRY TO CREATE POLITICAL SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE BOLIVIA. HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN ANY POLITICAL PARTY BUT WANTED TO REACH INDIVIDUALS OR REPRESENTATIVES OF SMALL OR LARGE GROUPS WHO WERE IN THEORY OR PRACTICE FAVORABLE TO THE ARMED STRUGGLE. BUSTOS TOLD GUEVARA THAT IN HIS OWN OPINION, PUBLICITY ABOUT GUEVARA'S PERSONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE BOLIVIAN GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, ESPECIALLY AFTER SO MUCH SPECULATION ABOUT HIS LOCATION AND ACTIVITY, MIGHT BY ITSELF GIVE RISE TO SUPPORT A MOVEMENT OUTSIDE BOLIVIA. GUEVARA SAID THIS WAS PRECISELY WHAT HE DID NOT WANT. THE STRUGGLE SHOULD BE A BOLIVIAN MOVEMENT, AND ONLY WHEN IT WAS WELL DEVELOPED AND HIS PARTICIPATION, ALONG WITH HIS CUBANS, WAS A SIMPLE FACT OF PROLETARIAN-REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALISM, SHOULD HIS PRESENCE BE MADE KNOWN.

6. BUSTOS POINTED OUT TO GUEVARA THAT BECAUSE IT WAS THE CUBANS WITHIN THE GUERRILLA BAND WHO CARRIED OUT THE MILITARY OPERATIONS, THERE COULD WELL BE A POPULAR REACTION AGAINST THE MASSACRE OF BOLIVIAN SOLDIERS FROM AMBUSH. GUEVARA ADMITTED THAT THIS WAS A PROBLEM BUT THAT UNTIL THE BOLIVIAN COMRADES WERE MORE EXPERIENCED AND COULD TAKE CHARGE OF THE FIGHTING

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HE HAD NO OTHER SOLUTION. THE IDEAL SOLUTION, HE SAID, WOULD BE FOR BOLIVIA TO ASK FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND FOR YANKEE, ARGENTINE, BRAZILIAN, ETC., FORCES TO MOVE INTO THE FIGHTING.

COMMENT: A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT DATED 16 APRIL 1967 TO THE MAGAZINE TRICONTINENTAL, TO BE PUBLISHED BEGINNING IN JUNE 1967 BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA, CARRIED A MESSAGE FROM "CHE" GUEVARA ENTITLED "CREATE TWO, THREE, MANY VIETNAMS - THAT IS THE WATCHWORD." THE MESSAGE STATED: "LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE OBSOLETE WEAPONS, WHICH ARE SUFFICIENT FOR THE REPRESSION OF SMALL ARMED BANDS, WILL BE EXCHANGED FOR MODERN ARMAMENTS AND THE U.S. MILITARY AIDS WILL BE SUBSTITUTED BY ACTUAL FIGHTERS UNTIL, AT A GIVEN MOMENT, THEY ARE FORCED TO SEND INCREASINGLY GREATER NUMBERS OF REGULAR TROOPS TO ENSURE THE RELATIVE STABILITY OF A GOVERNMENT WHOSE NATIONAL PUPPET ARMY IS DIS-INTEGRATING BEFORE THE IMPETUOUS ATTACKS OF THE GUERRILLAS. IT IS THE ROAD OF VIETNAM; IT IS THE ROAD THAT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY THE PEOPLE; IT IS THE ROAD THAT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY OUR AMERICA, WITH THE ADVANTAGE THAT THE ARMED GROUPS COULD CREATE COORDINATING COUNCILS TO EMBARRASS THE REPRESSIVE FORCES OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM AND ACCELERATE THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIUMPH."

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IN RESPONSE TO BUSTOS' CONTENTION THAT THE ARGENTINE ARMY WOULD NOT INTERVENE AT THIS TIME, GUEVARA SAID THAT WHEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE PENTAGON SAID SOMETHING, ALL THESE ARMIES STEPPED INTO LINE.

7. [Redacted] DISSEM: STATE, ARMY, AIR, CINCSO, CINCLANT

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