

Douglas Henderson Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 08/30/1978
Administrative Information

Creator: Douglas Henderson

Interviewer: Sheldon Stern

Date of Interview: August 30, 1978

Place of Interview: Weston, Massachusetts

Length: 145 pages; Note that pages 10 and 61 are missing.

Biographical Note

Henderson was a diplomat, economist, and government official; the Chief Economics Officer (1960–1962) and the Chargé d'affaires (1962–1963) at the U.S. Embassy in Peru; and the U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia from 1963 through 1968. In this interview Henderson discusses working at the United States Embassy in Peru under President Dwight D. Eisenhower; his daily routine and responsibilities as economic counselor; the Point Four Program and Peru; Peruvian elections; James I. Loeb as the U.S. Ambassador to Peru and changes and tensions within the Embassy; the military coup in Peru and the events leading up to it; Haya de la Torre's self-destructive behavior in the Peruvian presidential election; working at the Embassy in Peru after the coup and after Loeb leaves his position; pressure on the United States from Peruvian authorities; the issue of U.S. non-recognition of the military leaders; Canadian and British interests in Peru; John Wesley Jones as the U.S. Ambassador to Peru; problems with military governments and transitions; Henderson's daily routine and responsibilities as the U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia; his first few weeks in Bolivia; John F. Kennedy [JFK] and Bolivian President Victor Paz Estenssoro; Henderson's impressions of JFK; American hostages in Bolivia in late 1963; the military coup in Bolivia and the events leading up to it; the political breakdown of Bolivia; and political and military maneuvering in other Latin American countries, among other issues.

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Biographic Sketch

Douglas Henderson

Ambassador-designate to Bolivia

Douglas Henderson is one of the few career officers to be appointed Ambassador while still an FSO-2. After finishing the senior seminar, he was assigned to Lima in June, 1960, as Counselor for Economic Affairs. Ambassador James Loeb thought so highly of him that he insisted on his being promoted to Counselor of Embassy in December 1961. After the military coup in July 1962, Mr. Henderson served as Chargé d'Affaires for seven months and distinguished himself during an extremely difficult and trying time.] *

'62 July - Jan '63

Ambassador-designate Henderson has a thorough knowledge of the ways and problems of the Andean Indians. Not only has he dealt with Indian matters in Peru, but he served for four years as Vice Consul in Bolivian Indian country in Cochabamba, where he learned to speak Quechua, one of the major Indian languages. Because of this experience, Mr. Henderson was being considered for assignment as head of an Andean Indian project (dealing with Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) when the President decided to appoint him as Ambassador to Bolivia.] *

Mr. Henderson's well-known executive talents will be put to test in Bolivia where the many and varied programs of A.I.D. and other agencies require the firm hand of an effective coordinator.

Mr. Henderson has specialized in economic affairs during his career and has served in Mexico, Chile, and Switzerland. He graduated from Boston University in 1940 and from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1941. He is married and has six children. He speaks German and Spanish.

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Oral History Interview

with

DOUGLAS HENDERSON

← ~~From~~ August 30, 1978 *center*
← ~~From~~ Weston, Massachusetts

By Sheldon Stern *center*

For the John F. Kennedy Library

STERN: This is an interview with Ambassador Douglas Henderson in Weston, Massachusetts on August 30th, 1978 for the John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Project.

Why don't we begin with the background of your appointment to the position ⁱⁿ at the Bolivian embassy which, I believe, was still under the Eisenhower ^[Dwight D. Eisenhower] administration.

HENDERSON: To the Peruvian embassy.

STERN: Excuse me. I'm sorry. To the Peruvian embassy under the Eisenhower administration.

HENDERSON: I am a Foreign Service Officer; a career officer. I was appointed in 1942, in April of 1942. I had served in Mexico, Chile and Bolivia. ^{from 1942 - 1947.} Did three years in the Department of Commerce in an advisory capacity ¹⁹⁴⁷⁻¹⁹⁵⁰ on Latin American financial problems. I was transferred then to the American Embassy in Bern, Switzerland as Economic Officer. I was there six years

and then I was transferred back to Washington where I served for three years in the Economic Defense Division of the Department of State. I was ¹⁹⁵⁶⁻¹⁹⁵⁹ then given a sabbatical one year in the State Department's Senior Seminar. I had always considered myself world-wide available for assignment, but I did have two distinct patterns of assignments, both of them in the economic field generally: one in Latin America and the other in Europe, since the European assignments were more recent I had assumed that my continuing career would be in that direction.

I said that I thought I was world-wide available. My oldest son was born in Lima, Peru when I was on assignment in Bolivia. And under Peruvian law he was considered to be a Peruvian citizen and subject to Peruvian military draft. After my year in the Senior Seminar, I was assigned to the American embassy in Lima as Economic Officer, economic ~~councillor~~ ^{counsellor} of the embassy.

STERN: This was in the Eisenhower administration.

HENDERSON: This was in the Eisenhower administration. In, well, it was in about April of 1960 that I was notified of my assignment there. I raised the question of my oldest son and his Peruvian citizenship but the personnel people tended to downplay that. A factor I pointed out that if a military regime should take over in Peru, he would be a

hostage for them if they wanted to put pressure on the American embassy. This, however, did not concern these people and I was sent to the embassy. There was no particular reason why I should have been the only officer to fulfill the requirements of that position but when they insisted that I had to go and I raised the objection it seemed to harden their hearts and they ./././. and I went to the embassy in Peru. This is the total background of my assignment there.

STERN: It strikes me as very strange that since you are a diplomat that your son would be subject ./././. it seems ./././.

HENDERSON: Well, you see I was not on assignment in Peru at ^{of his birth.} the time. But furthermore, under Peruvian law he would have had to have been born in the embassy or in the embassy residence, ~~The~~ only extraterritorial areas in Peru. Otherwise, under Peruvian law, born in Peru is a Peruvian citizen.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: It wasn't ./././. it was a concern. The .. the personnel people and the desk officer in the department said that this was, after all, 1960 and the days of military-~~mount~~ mounted take-overs of civilian regimes had ...
[Laughter] was long gone. And that ./././.

STERN: One of his poorer predictions.

HENDERSON: And that was not, g that was not a very accurate

prediction.

STERN:

Right. We find very often that researchers (f.f.).
Of course, we're going to be discussing the major
political events in Peru in a little while. But,
very often researchers are anxious to find out, I
to get more detail about the very specific kinds of
things that were done within whatever position the
person is holding in the federal government. I was
wondering if you might be able to just, at least
briefly, sum up exactly what an economic counselor
does on almost a daily basis. What was your day like?
And that sort of thing, through your position, the
three positions that you held in Peru?

HENERSON:

Well, as an economic counselor I was responsible
for all economic reporting, analysis and reporting
to the department and through the department, to all
the agencies, interested agencies of government. I
supervised the commercial attaché's work and the
work that was done under his jurisdiction. I had
some supervision over the agricultural attaché and
I myself was responsible for some of the research,
particularly on matters of balance of payments, ~~clock~~
~~strikes in background~~ the background of economic
activities in Peru, the negotiations of such things
as double taxation treaties with Peru. I had to keep
in contact with the local banks, including the

American branches, or the branches of American banks in Peru. I was in almost daily contact with the various officers of the Division of Commerce in the Foreign Office and I made it a point to stay in touch with the American businessmen operating in Peru. The difficulty I encountered was to establish contacts with Peruvian. /././ the people, ^{and} the Peruvian people who were at a sufficiently high level to be well informed. The Peruvian upper society was a very caste-conscious, class-conscious society. I was, one, the third ranking officer in the embassy and two, I was an economic officer and under the Peruvian caste system that did not give me very strong entrée except to people who had similar interests. A typical day would start off with an examination of the newspapers for clues as to any new economic developments, a review with the ranking officers in my section as to the progress of their work, a staff conference with the ambassador in which I was expected to report on any new developments . /././

STERN: Did you meet with the ambassador just about every day?

HENDERSON: Just about every day, just about every day.

STERN: Just about every day.

HENDERSON: And then a period of research and writing, contacts with Peruvian businessmen and American businessmen

and Peruvian officials. Since the Peruvian office hours were fairly short, both in the morning and in the afternoon and in their ... in the Peruvian summer, ^{they were} exclusively in the morning, most of my interview work was done in the morning and my writing and research ^{were} ~~was~~ done in the afternoon.

With the change of administration and the emphasis on economic development, my role as economic counselor changed. Under the Eisenhower administration the embassy and its development section, which was then known as the Point Four section, was concerned primarily with technical assistance to the Peruvian government as it had been since the Point Four program was first enunciated in 1947* ^{1949* [sic]} in the Truman [Harry S. Truman] inaugural speech. I had had a significant role in the development of that Point Four program because at the time I was in the Department of Commerce working on Latin American finances and the White House was concerned to give President Truman something constructive to say in his inaugural address about the further programs to be conducted for developing nations. The first concern, of course, had been the Greek and Turkish problem and from that the the focus had widened to take in the developing countries. And it was obvious--~~or~~ we thought it was obvious--~~that~~ the United States

* Interviewer's note: The actual year was 1949

did not have unlimited resources, that it did have a technical capacity at that time far in advance of any other country and that this technical capacity could be put to work for developing countries and in conjunction with other industrialized nations we would also make available some material resources. The Point Four program in Peru had been basically then the technical assistance program. As such, although I kept in contact with them, I really had no particular role in their operation. Furthermore, from about 1956 [✓]forward the Eisenhower administration had tended at first to try to phase out of assistance programs.

STERN: Right. I am aware of that.

HENDERSON: But in 1958 the president's brother, Milton [Milton S. Eisenhower] had done a tour around Latin America probably [⊙]brought about by Nixon's [Richard M. Nixon] visit to Peru and to Venezuela and the unpleasant events associated with that. Milton Eisenhower recommended to his brother that there would have to be some resource transfer in addition to the technical assistance program and had set up a resource transfer program including an Inter-American bank which was at that ^{point}~~time~~ just in its first stages by the time I got to Peru.

With the Kennedy administration and the Bay of Pigs fiasco and the search for a new identity

for development programs, consistent with the Kennedy administration's ^{sympathies} sympathies with the developing nations, the president had announced the Alliance for Progress. The AID^[Agency for International Development] and Point Four people in Peru were not by conditioning prepared to shift gears into this kind of program. In the Senior Seminar I had as my graduating thesis done a study of the, of the comparative methods of assistance to underdeveloped countries and I had taken the West Coast of Africa nations as my field of research since ^I offered a study in British, French and American assistance. And consequently I had already been developing my own ideas about assistance to developing countries. I worked with the Point Four people in Peru to make the transition to the, to the Alliance for Progress. And consequently when Ambassador Loeb [James Loeb] was sent to Peru I had already established a base ^{from} ~~on~~ which to impl^ement some of the ideas that we were trying to work out with the Peruvian government.

STERN: Was there any particular impact in Peru from the American election in 1960? Did the Peruvians, particularly the government, seem to prefer Nixon or Kennedy or was ^{J.F.K.}

HENDERSON: No. The Peruvians were not particularly concerned about the U.S. election. At that particular point

Beltran [Pedro G. Beltran]
Pedro ██████████, who was Prime Minister under President Prado [Manuel Prado y Ugarteche], *Beltran* ██████████ was very concerned with establishing a political position of his own from which he thought he might be able to run for president in the elections which were scheduled for April of 1962. And consequently *Beltran's* ██████████ principle⁸³ interest in the election was to make sure that there would be some American assistance to his concepts of development. He was particularly concerned with building inexpensive housing for the growing number of migrants from the hinterland of Peru. And he was also interested in developing financing methods, mostly savings and loan associations to assist these people in mobilizing their own resources. And it was this thrust which *Beltran* ██████████ saw in the Alliance for Progress on which he could capitalize. As it turned out, and for reasons which I never completely analyzed, President Prado finally told him that he, *Beltran* ██████████, could not be a candidate for president and, without Prado's endorsement, *Beltran* ██████████ felt that he had no chance at all.

STERN: Apparently he tried to mobilize some American support too. It seems ./.|./.|.

HENDERSON: Well, exactly through, through ./.|.

STERN: For his own candidacy though.

HENDERSON: Yes. But mostly through this device of his develop-

human impulse was not to go in that direction. But this was, ⁹ these were things that we learned as we went along.

STERN: Right. Let's turn to Ambassador Loeb's appointment. Did you have any, ⁹ any input at all in the appointment before it was made?

HENDERSON: We were not, ⁹ the embassy, as far as I know, was not consulted.

STERN: In any way?

HENDERSON: In any way. I believe that to be absolutely true that the embassy was not consulted. It was instructed to ask for an ~~agreement~~ ^{agreement} for James Loeb and a brief bio was presented. The American business community in Peru was basically a very conservative, ⁹ [slight laughter] I guess I'll leave it at that, ⁹ community and reading Jim Loeb's bio put the wind up for them.

STERN: I can well imagine, yes.

HENDERSON: He was also aware of this. As a personal opinion, I'd like to say, having worked with Jim for the time that he was there and having seen him ⁹ one or twice since that time, I felt that his appointments ⁹ arose out of a misunderstanding. Jim was always associated with, ⁹ with bleeding heart causes--⁹ I guess I can use that term, ⁹ he was always associated with the underdog and their causes ⁹ and his causes, but this was an intellectual thing with Jim. He could sympathize in the abstract and with the mass but he had

no sympathy at all ^{for} ~~with~~ the individual. He couldn't understand the individual because he was basically one of the most intelligent men I have ever known. And as such he was ruled by his intelligence. He would have been an ideal person to send to France to deal with Charles de Gaulle. He was absolutely the wrong person to send to a developing country to deal with sensitive, hypersensitive people who reacted emotionally to their, ~~pol~~ ^{pol} to their problems, both the upper class Peruvian and the lower class Peruvian. But, in any case, Jim taught me a great deal and we worked together very well. ~~I~~ ^I I had absolutely no, ~~no~~ ^{no} feeling about Jim before he arrived.

STERN: There wasn't any problem, for example, because he was not a career officer? Which of course is ~~is~~ ^{is} fairly common.

HENDERSON: For career officers ~~would~~ ^{will} [Laughter] For career officers the fact that they ~~would~~ ^{will} have to work with a, with a political appointee is just one of the givens of our service. I had done it before. Nearly every other senior officer in the embassy had done it before and so we really didn't have too much of a problem. The chargé d'affaires, Jack ~~Neil~~ ^{Neal [Jack D. Neal]}, really did have a problem. He was conservative by nature. He was very autocratic. He had been accustomed to the Peruvian upper class way of doing things and he found basically

he and Jim were absolutely incompatible.

STERN:

Yes, that's quite clear from Loeb's own testimony.

Would you agree. *||.||* well, it's not a question of whether you agree but what. *||.||* I'd like to know your assessment of Ambassador Loeb's criticism of the embassy, particularly of ~~Neil~~^{Neal}, saying that it was much too closely identified with the, with the Peruvian

o...o upper class. He pointed to the fact, for example, that Beltran had married an American and all this sort of thing. He has one, *J* there is one point in which he mentions that an upper class Peruvian woman had said to him that, until his arrival, they had regarded the American embassy as a second home. And he thought that was wrong. It shouldn't be that way.

HENDERSON:

Well, Jack ~~Neil~~^{Neal} was a pragmatist. He dealt with things as they were. The focus of power in Peru was the upper class. Jack, by nature, felt himself to be *J* almost an aristocrat and he adapted very quickly to these circumstances. Since he was the chargé and had been there at that time *J* five or six years and had been chargé a number of times in the past he was in a position to set most of the tone for the political side of the embassy.

STERN:

So that Loeb's arrival makes a, *J* certainly meant a major change.

HENDERSON:

On the other hand, the economic section basically was dealing with quite different facets of Peruvian life.

I mentioned, of course, that it was difficult for me to

get at the upper levels of Peruvian governmental officialdom and also the upper levels of Peruvian society. But nonetheless I was able to function at the levels ^{at} ~~with~~ which I had contact. And these were quite different and my outlook was quite different from Jack's. I don't know what would have happened if Jack had been named ambassador. I am fairly sure that we would have worked out some kind of a compromise and I would have been able to continue to work. But it was no strain for me to transfer or to work with Jim Loeb. It was distinctly a strain for Jack and the people he had trained, to work with Loeb.

STERN:

Apparently Loeb became involved almost immediately in all sorts of little squabbles with ~~the~~ over ~~the~~. Well, I can recall one about the Soviet resumption of testing. Things of ~~the~~ a whole series of little things of that sort which did not tend to endear him to the ~~the~~.

HENDERSON:

Well, that resumption of Soviet testing is an interesting ~~the~~. It's really an anecdote but it illustrates several things. Jim talked to me about that and it was very clear to me that he was very upset about it. By that time I had become his counselor, which meant that I was his ~~principle~~ ^{or} principal advisor. And I said, "Well, I can understand that you're upset. I am too. And particularly upset by the apparent Peruvian indifference. But," I said, "you

must understand that the Peruvians see the world from Peru. And what is nearby is very large and what is far away is very small. And, it, it might be fine if the Peruvians readjusted their focus now that the world is becoming much more interdependent, but I don't think that they are going to do that." And I said, "not at least in our generation. And I think that if you want to talk to these people and argue with them, I think that would be fine but," I said, "I don't think you ought to take any official action. And particularly not a public official stand." And his reaction was that I was just like all the other foreign service officers that he had to deal with and that my philosophy was "don't make waves." And I said, "No I don't agree with that at all. But I do think, one, if you are going to take an official stand you had better clear it with the Department of State because it occurs to me that the U.S. government isn't all of one piece on this either. And it may very well be that, for reasons of their own, some parts of this government might welcome this resumption of testing and it might be in the U.S. interest. So you'd better find ^{that} out. And, in the second place, I haven't seen any instructions telling us to get up on our high horse about this." And both of these pieces of advice went down very badly with him. There was an, ^{and} a Peruvian, well-educated, head of the, ^{as} as I remember, the

engineering college of the University of San Marcos, and Jim thought that he had developed some kind of a rapport with him, and so he felt that this man, of all of the people he knew, should have spoken up and had not. Jim discussed at the staff meeting on a Friday morning the problem of making an official statement to the Peruvian government (of outrage.

STERN: What was the staff recommendation?

HENDERSON: The staff was cowed, but I was his counsellor and I repeated what I, and these two pieces of advice I had given. The staff basically, after all they were kind of caught; this was a man who had access to the president.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: And, he was a very volatile person, could get angry very quickly. And, being very intelligent, he was able to articulate his anger in such ways as to make it very difficult to deal with him. And, so the staff basically said nothing and I made the points I had to make. That evening Jim's staff aide, a very bright, young officer who had come to the embassy in my section first, in the economic section when I was economic officer and I had recommended him to Jim as his staff aide. The staff aide called me and told me that Jim had written this letter that he had proposed and had waited until I had left the embassy in the evening to get it typed up. And the staff aide thought that he'd signed it and sent it. I tried to find Jim

that evening. I called the residence and he was out, and I went around to the various receptions I knew and I couldn't find him. I finally tracked him down the next morning and I said, "I understand that you have sent this letter to this engineer." He said, "Yes, I have." I said, "I hope you haven't sent it to the newspapers yet, have you?" He said, "Yes, I have." I said, "Well, you know, it's going to be in the press before he has had time to read it, and even to think about formulating a reply." And I said, "That, in addition to being all the other things, in this very punctilious society, is the height of discourtesy." And I said, "Just on that basis alone, Jim, you shouldn't have done it!" "Well, I've done it and that's that."

Well, of course the storm blew. And it was one of the factors and that stuck in a lot of people's craw about Jim. Not only that he had, that he had written the letter. He perhaps could have gotten some sympathy for his point of view, but that he had been utterly discourteous in their protocol.

STERN: Right. And, of course, there were other examples, similar kinds of things. There is no need to go into them.

HENDERSON: Well, the worst one was the time that Jim we had discussed, of course, what would happen if the military took over the government, and we had gone

over it and gone over it and gone over it. But, Jim was called back for consultation and came back with his impression that he had direct orders from the president to tell the military that they would be in trouble with the U.S. government if they did, in fact, interfere with the election and if they took over second, first, if they interfered with the election and, second, if they took over the government.

to work for

STERN:

Right.

HENNERSON:

Now this, you have to look at this as a, an this facet of the problem in a series. The scene when Kennedy came into office was a whole series of civilian governments. But one by one, as you went from Ecuador to Central America to the Caribbean and then to Venezuela and then to Brazil and then to Argentina, the military had, in each of those instances, in a period of eight months come closer and closer to severing the constitutional thread of government. I don't want to get into that because it, although it's important, it stands on its own. You can examine it at any time. And it's ~~very~~ interesting to examine it. And, as this happened, the Kennedy administration began to develop a thesis about recognition. The classic recognition tests are effective control, and a willingness to abide by

got in America

international commitments already established. To that the Kennedy people, by the time the Argentine blow up came along, had added two more. One, that there should be a return to constitutional government as promptly as possible and two, that there should be a guarantee of the observance of civil rights.

The Peruvian government had or the Peruvian military particularly, and the Peruvian government in general had watched this government development as carefully as we had and they knew the tests as well as we did. And so, they also knew that if they met those tests apparently there could be no basis on which the U.S. government would withhold its recognition. So, Jim came back with this, as he thought it, instruction ./. 2

STERN:

This was in March ^{1962?} ~~sixty two~~

HENDERSON:

Yes.

STERN:

Right.

HENDERSON:

And his mission and he went to the various armed forces cabinet secretaries and gave them this, this message. As a as a matter of course he and I had been meeting with the various candidates for president: Haya de la Torre [Dr. Victor Raul Haya de la Torre] and with Fernando Bel^{au}man^{de} Terry] and with Odria [General Manuel A. Odria] and with Prado. And, after Jim came back, and started off to make these calls on these armed forces people for--I

don't remember why the timing worked out the way it did, ⁸ but I got an appointment with Haya de la Torre and his princip^ale aide at the home of ^a the well to do, prominent Peruvian citizen who was known to be sympathetic to the, ~~and~~ on the ^{Aprista} ~~cause~~ cause, ~~But~~ none the less was not so identified with the Apristas as to make it impossible for him to survive. The call came while Jim was out on this. ~~././.~~ he was calling on the navy secretary. I went down to the basement to get in the car to go to this rendezvous just as Jim came back. And he asked me where I was going, and I told him I was going to see Haya de la Torre. He said, "I'm coming too." I said, "Jim, you can't!" "You've just come back from talking to the navy secretary. The armed forces will have us watched. If you go from that call to Haya de la Torre, it will be certain that what you are doing is telling Haya de la Torre what you have ^{been} told. ^{And I said, "If I go} go, ~~and~~ after all, I'm a guy you can sacrifice. You can throw me out. But you can't throw out the ambassador. Not without some major problem." I said, "You can't ~~././.~~" He said, "Doug, I told you I'm going. I'm the ambassador. I'm going." Nothing to do. We went. And we got out of the car and right on the corner was a navy officer standing, watching us go in.

STERN:

They were ^{nt} very subtle about it.

HENDERSON: No, they weren't subtle at all. Neither were we by the way. [Laughter] These are the kinds of things that made it very difficult. It could have been handled. We could have gone on and everybody would have known what the game was. But it wasn't handled; it was just bulled through.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: And you can't do it.

STERN: It seems to me there's another side of the coin too. While on the one hand Ambassador Loeb was warning --if that's the right word-- the military about the possibility of overturning the government, he was at the same time, and it was very clear to the Peruvians, interfering in the election.

HENDERSON: Well, interfering because he had already interfered, that was their interpretation. It could just as easily have been the normal intelligence activities of any embassy. All the embassies were trying to stay in touch with ^{all} these people, become informed about it, and all the rest of it. So that our activities ./. [gap in tape] [Interruption]

STERN: ./. when he went to Washington in March of ^{'62} ~~sixty two~~ he had, of course, taken a very strong pro-Aprista line and had convinced the president to ^{allow} ~~or the~~ [Central Intelligence Agency] C.I.A. to spend a hundred thousand dollars to, ^{for} for a media campaign on behalf of Haya's candidacy. And, I guess that's interference.

HENDERSON: Approved For Release 1999/10/11 : NLK-00-005-1-1-6 well in the days that was

marginal interference. [Laughter] As a matter of fact it was really marginal. But it, ~~it~~ ^{even that} ~~it~~ ^{already} wouldn't have done too much harm if Jim hadn't ^{gotten} people's backs up about some of the other things that he had done. And, ~~it~~ ^{it} it really was a cumulative thing. It wasn't any one thing. On ~~the~~ ^{the} other hand, as you say, there's another aspect of this coin. One day when we were debating in the staff about the, ~~what~~ ^{what} what we would do if ^{in fact} the military took over. I had developed early in my career, because of another set of circumstances, a great belief in Elihu Root's dictum about ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ in foreign policy you cannot shake your finger after you have shaken your fist. And I had looked at this question of non-recognition ~~recognition~~ and said it is not a ^e implementable policy. It is intended obviously--non-recognition is intended--to overthrow the government you are not recognizing. But it won't do that. And it might very well be that it will bring the people to support the government which they might otherwise not have done. Consequently, I was philosophically opposed to non-recognition ~~recognition~~ and I said this. And, Jim said, "Well, it seemed to ^{us} him quite clear that, because of this, ~~this~~ ^{this} series that what we had to do was to make a continental example of the Peruvians. And that it wasn't just Peru we were addressing, it was the military estab-

of military cases referred to above

lishments in all of Latin America and warning them that we would not deal with them if they took over governments. I said, "Then the logical consequence of that determination, Jim, is that, if we are ~~going~~ to be believe~~able~~ we must start now to take the steps which we would have to take after we announced that we were not going to recognize the military government if it takes over. We have to start withdrawing our personnel." And I said, "Basically, that means ~~2~~ first, the marginal ones, the agricultural attaché and so on. But eventually what we have to do is to close down everything except our consular representative."

STERN: What about AID programs and things of that sort? Would you cut back on them?

HENDERSON: Either cut back, slow them, ~~slow~~ slow the negotiations, put a hold on everything. This is the, ~~this~~ this is the way this logic works. Well, he wasn't prepared to take those steps and yet those were inevitably the steps that should have been taken if in fact we were to go in that direction.

STERN: As a matter of fact there was ~~a~~ ⁶ a six-point plan which was developed during the March ~~sixty-two~~ ^{'62} meetings in Washington which included all of those points.

HENDERSON: Well, I was not aware of that, and you are telling me something I did not know but it was consistent with my own thinking on the matter. I'm not surprised. It was the inevitable logic of the, ~~of~~ of what we would have done.

STERN: The ./. .

HENDERSON: But Jim resisted it when it got to that point. When I told him he had to start impl^ementing his policy.

STERN: You mean before a coup took place, right?

HENDERSON: In preparation for a coup.

STERN: In preparation, ^{is} right.

HENDERSON: I said "Look if that's going to be our policy, we have to make it believ^eable and you say it is our policy, then we have to start now to take the steps to make it believ^eable."

STERN: ~~Did the . . .~~ did the ultimate. ./. . was the coup a surprise to you when it did come? He, ^{is} Ambassador Loeb, ^{is} suspected at least a few weeks before when the military began to make some claims that there were voter registration frauds, that this was. ./. . they were simply setting the stage for not accepting the election returns, particularly, of course, if Haya de la Torre was elected.

HENDERSON: That, ^{is} [laughter] that whole thing was quite something. Jim held a big party in the residence with all the staff there for election night and he assumed that the election returns would come in, be counted and we would know before midnight.

STERN: [Laughter] He thought it was the United States!

HENDERSON: Well, again you can see what I'm talking about.

STERN: Yes, it's a very good point.

HENDERSON: His, ^{is} his ^{is} his inability to understand the en-

vironment he was operating in. Because he imposed on it his own intellectual ^o preconceptions. Well, of course the election returns dragged on and dragged on and everybody was maneuvering and Haya de la Torre was maneuvering as much as anyone and he-[^]-^o my own personal thesis about Haya was that he never really wanted to be president of Peru, he was afraid of it. Maybe ./. .

STERN: That's fascinating.

HENDERSON: ./. not consciously but certainly his actions were such as to make me believe that he really frustrated his own ambitions. I can document that but perhaps this isn't the time to do it. In any case. ./. .

STERN: Actually, if you could give one or two examples, of that, I think that might be very enlightening.

HENDERSON: Yes. For example, at one meeting with Haya, we were talking about the military and I used the illustration of ^a ~~the~~ commander advancing toward an objective. And a fire fight breaks out on his flank. Now he has two choices: he can either disregard the fire fight, hope that it isn't anything big and advance to his objective, and then return to take care of it then, the threat to his flank. Or, if he estimates that the fire fight is serious, he had better take care of it first before he advances to his objective. And I said, "You, Don Victor, are precisely in this position. You've got a fire fight on your flank with the military and you have to choose whether you are going

to advance to your objective of being president, being threatened all the time by this fire fight, or take care of it, negotiate with them, work out some kind of an understanding with them because otherwise that fire fight can break out any minute." And he said, "Well, you just really don't understand the Peruvian military." He said, "They--and this is something that is very difficult to believe that he said but he did say it. He said "They are held up by myths. The myth of the Ecuadorian threat," he said, "is the greatest fraud ever perpetuated on..."

I'm not quoting. I am giving the thrust of what he said. "The greatest fraud ever perpetuated on the Peruvian people." And he said, "This is how they continue to maintain themselves. And they're not really the threat that you think they are." I said, "You're Peruvian, I'm not. But," I said, "That's the way I see it." He knew his his.

STERN: Considering his past experience with them, it's a strange thing to say.

HENDERSON: Well, certainly and his his lieutenant Gee, I wish I could remember his name, little fella. It's gone from me. His lieutenant came to me afterwards and said, "I wish you had been able to make Don Victor do what you asked of him." Whether this was conscious on his part or not, it could not have been more blatantly a refusal to accept the fact that,

until he had dealt with the military, he could not be
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president of Peru. He could not be president of Peru with military opposition. And yet he refused to take the step that would have eliminated them. And then in those, ~~in~~ in those absolutely confusing moments in June when he was dealing ~~with...~~ with everybody on the whole political spectrum including the military and making all kinds of deals, the deals that he was offering were such that they never could be effectuated. I'd have to go back and look at the details of our reporting at the time, but we reported on all the deals he was offering and every one of them had ~~contained~~ contained the seed of their own defeat right in them. And yet he was offering them as if they were real deals. A monumental self-deception and ~~that~~ that ~~that~~ that was only exceeded by Fernando ~~Belmonde~~ Belaunde ~~[Fernando, Belaunde Terry]~~ going down to Arequipa and throwing, ~~pulling~~ pulling up the paving blocks and throwing up barricades and saying he was going to barricade himself in Arequipa until the election was his, ~~was~~ was awarded to him. And, when nobody paid any attention to him and the alcalde [mayor] of Arequipa asked him who was going to put the paving blocks back, Fernando said he would. [Laughter] I never thought he would recover from that but he did.

STERN:

~~On~~ On Haya de la Torre for a moment. No matter how many sources I've read, whether secondary or primary, it, ~~is~~ is one thing mystifies me to a degree and that is why the military was so deeply

that very seriously. I don't think anybody can believe that.

HENDERSON: Oh, no, don't. Well, Jim said to me much later-- within the last five years-- that he was having a great deal of difficulty inside his own family with his son and his daughter-in-law convincing them that there was indeed an international Communist conspiracy at any time. Among other things, Jim himself was convinced that there was an international Communist conspiracy and he had been very close to some people who were involved in these things and so that he rather felt that he was in fact as sensitive as anyone could be to the possibility of a Communist conspiracy. He did not, however, believe that the Apristas were Communist, and nor do I.

STERN: The evidence suggests that they were not Communist.

HENDERSON: No. Certainly the Communists would have liked to have taken a free ride with them but the Communists themselves would have thrown out the Apristas very quickly if they had ever gotten into a position of control.

STERN: You don't think that the military. . . . Well, I realize that the reason you gave concerning the killing of the military officers was one major reason but obviously there are many others. Do you think that his general program concerning Indians and citizenship and equality, that that was part of it?

never. . . it was just one of the things that if you disliked Haya de la Torre, you believed it.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: That was just one more reason to dislike him. He may have been, I don't know. There would be, . . . ~~there would be . . .~~ somehow difficult to say that a man who had gone all his life unmarried and had no known associations with women didn't have some kind of a latent aversion to heterosexuality.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: But, to . . . there may be evidence in the CIA files.

A guy, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was later assigned to travel with Haya de la Torre in Europe and he was with him. . . .

No, no, no, I guess on a day-to-day basis, I don't, I never really knew but at any rate, for about six months he was very closely associated and he might know. I don't know. Nor do I believe necessarily that that was a, it would have been the stigma that they alleged it to be. Peruvian society was not all that free from that kind of thing and it it sounds to me very much as if they were appealing to American prejudices.

STERN: That certainly makes sense. One CIA operative in Peru claimed after, it just after the election, that had they been involved a bit earlier that they think they could have mustered a clear majority, or not a majority, a clear plurality, I should say. Do you

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think that that was not likely?

HENDERSON: Very unlikely. I was surprised myself that Haya did as well as he did given the fact that it is very difficult in remote areas and in ~~in~~ and remote areas include most of the cities outside of Lima ~~to~~ to avoid tampering with the ballot boxes. The fact that he came as close as he did and probably did have, if an honest count were taken, he probably had beaten both Odria and Belaunde who . . . *J*

STERN: Do you think there was widespread fraud in the election or, if widespread, more or less equally divided?

HENDERSON: About as widespread as in any Boston election.
[Laughter]

STERN: All right. That's a pretty clear answer. But not simply in his case probably, there were others as well.

HENDERSON: No, no. That's right. That's right.

STERN: Do you think that if he had won, ~~of~~ ³³ ~~of~~ ^{three} of course he got just, what was it, ~~thirty~~ ³³ percent, and you needed ~~thirty three and a third~~ ^{33 1/3} to be clearly the victor.

Let's say, just to speculate, let's say he had gotten ~~thirty nine~~ ³⁹ percent, do you think the military would have let the election stand?

HENDERSON: No.

STERN: No. Not in any case.

HENDERSON: In any case, no. That was the fire fight that he should have taken care of but he didn't and which guaranteed ^a

that he wouldn't be president and he knew it! As far as I'm concerned, he knew it.

STERN: Do you see something almost self-destructive in his behavior?

HENDERSON: I do. Yes, I do. Indeed I do. And, consistently self-destructive destructive if you . . . in terms of becoming president. Starting from almost from the very inception, if you trace the history of Haya and the Apristas, you will find that he almost seemed to do things which would guarantee that he wouldn't rule Peru.

STERN: And of course he never did. Although of course he's still alive! [Laughter]

HENDERSON: Well, yes, of course. But I don't think that these tendencies having been so well established are going to be overthrown now at his age.

STERN: He must be what, eighty, well over eighty now.

HENDERSON: Yes. Yes, yes, yes. Well, in those days he was, what, sixty-five, sixty-six, something like that.

STERN: Right. About sixty-six at that time, right. Let's turn to the . . . once the coup took place and President Kennedy made his very strong statement suspending diplomatic relations, then, very shortly thereafter, of course, Ambassador Loeb returned to Washington and, of course, never came back to Peru. This put you, as I think is very clear to me from [National Security Files] the NSF files at the library that you essentially ran the embassy from his departure to the arrival of Ambassador Jones [J. Wesley Jones] which was not until the very end of January. So essentially you ran the embassy for

seven months as I see it. Now this must have been a very difficult period given the fact that you were on the one hand in a state of suspended relations and on the other hand there were cables to show that, for example, Secretary Rusk^[Dean Rusk] was asking you to expedite a solution as quickly as possible. And yet technically [Laughter] you were not in a state of actual diplomatic relations so it's very, very . . .

HENDERSON: Well, let me point out first that they . . . we had resumed diplomatic relations . . .

STERN: Well, a month after the break, a month after . . .

HENDERSON: That's right, so that we could . . .

STERN: But the first month must have been particularly sticky.

HENDERSON: That was very sticky.

STERN: Right. And so I would like, I hope you can give some detailed description of what you went through at this point. Particularly during that first month.

HENDERSON: Well, yes.

STERN: When relations were suspended and then the next six months.

HENDERSON: Well, in the first place, when relations were suspended, I had^{to do,} to make a definition of what suspension of relations meant. Theoretically, it meant that all programs were cut off. But I felt that I could make a distinction between such things as Food for Peace programs . . .

STERN: Humanitarian programs.

HENDERSON: Humanitarian programs.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: And other programs and particularly military assistance programs. The military assistance programs, since we were dealing with a military junta which we did not recognize, we had to suspend all relationships.

Stern: Right.

HENDERSON: This was very difficult on my/. . . the military component of my staff and I had some problems with them from the very beginning. But let me back up a minute here. I should point out that the first statement that the military junta made after they took over the government and threw Prado out was the four-point statement. It is ignored in most of the accounts but in fact that was the first thing they did was to say that they would, they had control of the territory, that they respected international obligations of the preceding governments, that they would restore civil rights, and that they would hold elections.

STERN: *g*

Clearly they were aiming at ~~that they be~~
break in relations
~~offered a trade or . . .~~

heading off a

HENDERSON: That's right. And they ~~knew it!~~ ^{would.} The first . . .

STERN: Do you think, let me ~~get your comment on this~~ ^{interrupt you} for a moment. Do you think that President Kennedy was perhaps -- somewhat hasty in his *././.* [?]

HENDERSON: Well, after all, you know when the American government is like a dinosaur, you kick it in the tail and it takes two weeks for the message to get to its brain, you know, And another two weeks for the message to get back.

STERN: Ambassador Loeb said that his impression was that Kennedy was at first very pleased with the statement but very quickly would backtrack and was somewhat concerned and thought he had made a mistake. For example, though ^{perhaps} Rusk ~~Dean Rusk~~ should have said it or perhaps they should have waited and . . . This, I think, by the way, was a characteristic often of Kennedy in international relations. That he tended to act and then to worry a great deal and have a great deal of anxiety about the consequences of his actions.

HENDERSON: I don't know what happened but however it happened the people who disliked Jim Loeb, and the military were prominent among them, were going to get rid of him. And this complicated the first few days indeed. Jim did not want to accept the consequences of his ^{own} ~~own~~ actions in terms of retiring from the post. He felt that he was a commander in the midst of a battle and that he ought to continue in command. We, I had to work very carefully because he was super sensitive. . . I had to be very careful to, to separate myself

off from what was going on in this thing and what would happen if Jim left, because if he thought that it was my ambition that was talking, he certainly would not have left. I can't remember the various steps, in fact, but the, as I remember, the coup took place on the nineteenth and by the twenty-fifth the military, the military government, by various statements and because recognition had not been immediately forthcoming and because they felt very resentful of Jim and all his works, began to make statements that made it pretty clear that, one, that if he didn't leave himself, they would take the step of declaring him persona non grata; two, they felt that his position was untenable anyway since he represented a government that did not recognize them; and three, that, given the tense situation, they were not going to exert themselves. I'm not sure this is true but it started to look as if it might be true they wouldn't exert themselves to protect him.

STERN: In the event of violence?

HENDERSON: In the event of some, some wild man. Eventually, Jim decided that he did have to go back and get a reading. It was mostly that he withdrew on consultation, not that he was withdrawn nor that they declared him persona non grata, although these steps were certainly

there.

STERN: Technically he returned on the twenty-fifth to confer.

HENDERSON: To confer. That's right, as I, ~~as~~ as I remember.

STERN: That's what the documents show. Right.

HENDERSON: Yes. And that left me in charge as I would have been anyway as the counselor^e is in charge. Shortly thereafter, and I don't remember exactly how shortly thereafter, I was told that I was the only channel of communication which the Kennedy administration would have with the military junta, ~~And~~ that I was to negotiate with them for a resumption of relations on the basis of a statement which they would issue officially and formally on these four points.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: I had some friends in the foreign office but mostly they were new people. But ~~let~~ let me see if I can remember how this came about ~~and~~ and there was a newspaper editor. And I don't remember exactly how the word was passed to me but the word was passed to me that, ~~the~~ the word was passed to me that the military junta wanted to talk to me through an intermediary. The intermediary turned out to be this newspaper editor. He was very careful in sounding me out as to the extent of my authority in the matter and what exactly was the ~~the~~ basis on which the United States government would resume relations

with Peru, with the Peruvian junta. I made it quite clear to him and he asked me if I would be willing to meet again and repeat those ~~statement~~ that statement to the military if he could arrange a meeting. He did arrange a meeting. It lasted all, most of one night in a house out in Miraflores. Lindley [General Nicolas Lindley Lopez] was the senior officer present. Perez Godoy [General Ricardo Perez Godoy] was not there. And Lindley was there and several others of the military. ~~not.~~ . . Lindley was the only junta member present. They tested me in every way they could to. . . oh, yes, ~~Quispe~~ ^{Llosa [Luis Edgardo Llosa]} was there too, the, the admiral, who was the foreign, the foreign minister. They tested me every way they could to make sure that this was in fact an authorized position of the US ^o government and I assured them that it was. And they were finally prepared, after this all-night session, to issue the ^{at} statement on a Friday. On Friday morning the foreign office, ^{the} chief of protocol lived around the corner from me and he called me and said, "Look Admiral ~~Quispe~~ ^{Llosa} needs to see you immediately, urgently and we have set up a safe place down town and if you'll arrive there in some way so that you will not be identified and go to this room, he wants to talk to you." I went there. ~~Quispe~~ ^{Llosa} went through once again the whole test of whether I was in fact the only channel of communication and whether this ^C communication

was official and what was the communication. And I assured him on all points. And he said, "We have just received a message from our ambassador in Washington who has been there, as you know, a very long time and is very well connected . . ."

STERN: Berckemeyer? [Fernando Berckemeyer].

HENDERSON: Berckemeyer.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: . . . that in fact the, ^{the} the president really doesn't care whether we make this statement. As a matter of fact, we are told that we don't have to make the statement. I said, "I have no instructions to this effect and the only thing that I can say is that I will return now to my headquarters, to my embassy and I will be in touch with Washington immediately and find out if there is any basis for this. But as far as I know there is no basis whatsoever for this statement."

[Edwin McG. Martin]

I went back and I called Ed Martin and [Taylor G. Belcher] Toby Belcher and told them as best I could the message I had gotten. They were not surprised. They knew something about it. They said, "Wait it out. We will be letting you know. But you'll have to shift your grounds a little bit. And we'll see what we can work out here."

STERN: Did this have anything to do with the Charlie Bartlett [Charles L. Bartlett] negotiations with Berckemeyer?

HENDERSON: No. No, it was Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.]

STERN:

Oh!

HENDERSON:

Schlesinger had lunch with Berchemeyer and what he said to Berchemeyer I really don't have any proof beyond the fact of what ^{Lisa} ~~Quison~~ told me. But at any rate Schlesinger was sufficiently close to Kennedy so that Berckemeyer felt that he had pretty good evidence for what he said. So, I went back to my chief of protocol, the Peruvian chief of protocol, and told him, I said, "I have been in touch with Washington. I have been reconfirmed in what I've said. But", I said, "There may be room for some give in the position. But not very much. And I think that ^{the} junta would be well advised to go ahead and make the statement." Well, in fact then they did not make the statement as coming from the junta but rather they issued it through Bartlett. But it did contain So this was the way they got around. They bridged over the impasse. But, of course, it left me with my credibility severely damaged with the military junta. But that disappeared rather quickly because the first thing that happened, of course, was the Peruvian, ^{the} the Cuban missile crisis, in which I had to go then to Well, I had started on my rounds, being chargé I called on each of the members of the junta ~~and the~~ and the cabinet that they had established. And I tried to

plug in as rapidly as possible to reinstate all the programs except the military programs which I had been specifically told I could not resume immediately. And of course my reception from the junta members, /././.

the stiffest one was the air minister. I've forgotten his name but he was really, the only word is snotty. He was mean. The others said, Well, ^{Llosa,} ~~Quiosa~~ Well, also was difficult to deal with. After all, he had had to deal with me on that very difficult situation and he had seen me cut down and he tended then automatically that's out of his background as well as out of this instance not to deal with me if he could avoid it. The missile crisis came up. I was instructed to see the president immediately. I did. I told him what was going on according to the instructions which we had received. And asked for their support. They acknowledged the communication. They had said they would have to consult with each other as to the actions which they would take. The naval, the ranking naval officer in the junta had steamed up in his ships and was ready to sail. I think it was the air minister who prevailed and the ^{person favoring} ~~poor person~~ for an inter-American task force failed in his objective of getting the Peruvians involved. But the crisis was over before anything could come from that. And, of course, part of

the problem there was the fact that we had not resumed military assistance. I finally got authority to plug in the military assistance and we . . . The rest of the period was just gradually knitting up the severed strands of relationships, getting programs going again, trying to shape the programs, deal with the problems, the day-to-day problems that arose and hold conferences particularly with the finance minister as. . . and try to educate them. And basically it was an educational problem. We were telling them, letting them see what was available from us and if they would take the initiative. We could not take the initiative obviously but to let them see and let them take advantage of whatever there was to be taken, And to lower the temperature of the whole operation. And this was, this was what, that six months period until Johnnie Jones [~~G. Wesley Jones~~] was named, was what we did.

The other thing that I had to do, of course, was to rebuild the morale of the of the embassy staff which had been badly shaken by all these events and many people, perhaps by, just by force of habit. they had worked with Jim for so long that they felt that he had been treated badly. Back at the . . .

STERN:

HENDERSON:

They did not understand the consequences of a nonrecognition or recognition policy as I had, having been through it

several times, and, ⁹ I say several times, I had been through it twice in Bolivia from ^{244 to 247} ~~forty-four~~ to ~~forty-seven~~ when I was there so I knew more or less how the thing went together.

STERN: I see. Did you have any role at all in the negotiations that were going on between the candidates to try and resolve the crisis before the coup? I know there was almost and agreement between Haya and Belaunde which fell through at the last moment.

HENDERSON: Fell through precisely out of ⁹. . . . Yes, we were kept informed constantly. We were, ⁹ we were in touch all the time. Either I was in touch. ^{1.1} Sometimes they came to the residence, sometimes they got in touch through our station chief or one of his assistants who was assigned to that project. We got a number of things going. And of course the British, ⁹ the British had always been very strong in Peru. They had a fairly large economic stake there and they had a number of people who were cooperating very closely with them and they were very well informed as to what was going on, very well informed. And in some cases, their judgment was better than ours.

STERN: Did you feel ⁹. . . ⁹ I got the impression that your sense of the reason ^{that} ~~for~~ the agreement between Haya and Belaunde broke down had something to do with what you were talking about before.

HENDERSON: ^{The}~~an~~ impossibility which Haya would build in to any such agreement. He would just build in something that would make it ~~it~~ I don't recall in this instance, but if I saw it again I would spot it in a minute. I, I knew that he was making it impossible.

STERN: What about the reports that President Prado had essentially cooperated with the coup?

HENDERSON: Oh, I think he knew it was coming. Prado was no one to be deceived. ~~He was~~ ^{he} was very well informed and not rattled or shaken. He had his position in history and I remember talking to him one time, oh, long before in the period when ~~Jack~~ ^{Jack Davis Neal} was chargé and consequently I was second officer in the embassy and for some reason I ~~wasn't~~ Jack wasn't able to go to a certain occasion and I went. And, I've forgotten just exactly what scandal was in the front pages that week but I asked Prado, I said, "We all read the same papers, so what do you make of this one?" And he said, in essence he said, "Not to worry." He said, "A scandal in Lima lasts about three days." And he said, "Then it's replaced by ^[Interruption] ~~gap in tape~~ _o ././ with the tanks and all the rest of it. It was just a show of force, mostly for public relations, rather than because it was necessary to break down the palace gates. Prado would never have opposed the

armed forces anyway. Essentially he didn't believe either Haya de la Torre or Belaunde was of a caliber to replace him, with his vision and his understanding of Peruvian politics. He was in that sense, very much a realist. He just saw that it was inevitable but that the military would take over. And I'm quite sure that he had his agents in the military who were keeping him well informed of what was going on.

STERN: There were also some reports that Belaunde welcomed the coup also, or at least said that, that it was a justifiable response to election fraud. Something to that effect.

HENDERSON: Yes. Well, that was a political statement and, after all he was as well aware as anyone that the military were the strongest political gravitational mass, unified mass in the country outside of the Apristas. He himself had a very disparate group of supporters. Odria was not strong.

STERN: Well, he did fairly well in the election. He received, . . . he ran a close third.

HENDERSON: Yes, but it cost money. [Laughter] And after all, if I recall ~~now~~ now this is just pure memory and I may be wrong on this point and you might want to check it. But, if I recall correctly, Odria did best in the poorer sections of Lima which, APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] in the area where ~~APRA~~ should have been very strong, 7

Odria turned out very well indeed. And that always made me a little bit uneasy. Check that point but /././.

...

STERN: I will check that. It doesn't make sense.

HENDERSON: /././ but, but, it doesn't make sense on the face of it and therefore if I, you know, I have a strong feeling that that is exactly what happened. That is where Odria made his /././ Yes, then and beyond that I can remember that they had not cleaned up the electoral rolls (lists) for that since back in 1956 or some such thing as that. And it was only in the following election, in the following year, in those elections that they cleaned up those electoral rolls.

STERN: I see. I see. There were apparently some other, just some other minor things. But Ambassador Loeb, for example, claimed in one cable to the State Department that his telephone calls from the embassy were being monitored by the Peruvian navy. Did you have any knowledge of that or . . . ?

HENDERSON: Well, I just, I just went on the assumption that this was always the case.

STERN: I see.

HENDERSON: That these telephone calls were, after all they were /././.

let me see if I can remember how they went.

They went yes they went through Lima and later

I found out to confirm this point that, that

what was it? -- that the cable, that the Peruvians were very much opposed to any change of the communications channel from Panama through Lima to Argentina because it gave them an opportunity to find out a lot more about what was going on than they otherwise would have been able to do. This was at a time when I've forgotten the name of the international organization, the ^{United Nations} UN organization having to do with telecommunications, but ~~the~~ this organization was trying very hard to establish a fairly wide network of communications channels throughout South America. And the Peruvians were not, were dragging their feet on it. Because of this factor that they had been able to use it. But it had to be a, ~~an~~ an assumption at all times, that any international traffic was going to be monitored. And we always went on that assumption. I don't see why Jim made such a point of it.

STERN: Well, he did. Did. . . was there any. . . were you surprised at all when the general strike which Haya called failed right after the election?

HENDERSON: No.

STERN: Apparently it was a dismal failure.

HENDERSON: It was a dismal failure.

STERN: If anything it hurt. Right. From his point of view. To demonstrate it.

HENDERSON: Yes, but again, when I talked to him about it and

what was his, that fellow's name? Raphael, Raphael something - - it was Haya's real second in command. And I asked him what organizational measures they had taken to assure the success of this one. Oh, no, they had just called it! They had just called it out! They hadn't, they hadn't thought . . .

STERN:

No plan? No . . .

HENDERSON:

Well, no block lieutenants, no way to support the people who didn't have food. Nothing of that sort. They must have known, they must have known this was a possibility almost from the time they entered the election campaign, that they might have to do this. They made no plans for it. It was just a, almost an off-the-cuff, an involuntary reflex. Call a general strike!

STERN:

They seriously expected it to happen spontaneously, or at least that . . .

HENDERSON:

Yes, well, they . . . but after all, if you'd seen some of Haya's rallies and seen the enormous crowds and how they responded. Haya had a tremendous crowd appeal. And he knew how to play a crowd. The only other man I ever saw that was as good was Paz Estens^soro [President Victor Paz Estenssoro] in Bolivia. But, ^{Haya} ~~λ~~ was able by his personal appearance to really churn people up.

STERN:

Were you at that great June rally in . . .

HENDERSON:

I stayed away from it.

STERN:

You did?

HENDERSON: I was too easily identified. We had observers but I was, I was. . . .

STERN: Of course.

HENDERSON: But, I stayed away from it.

STERN: Three hundred thousand, I believe. That's the figure.


HENDERSON: Yes, well, it was a mass.

STERN: The CIA was very proud of that rally.

HENDERSON: Yes. Well, but again, as I say, Haya de la Torre was really the reason that they could put a thing like that together. But you could do that for, for a rally. You couldn't do that for a general strike.

STERN: For a general strike. That was a very different proposition, sure.

HENDERSON: Completely.

STERN: Well, one other,  just a few other things on the transition period. The seizure of those fishing boats which was November, I don't know if you recall that. That was two days before Loeb formally resigned. And I couldn't help but wonder if that wasn't some kind of attempt to get the United States to get rid of Loeb and name a new ambassador. Do you think there is no connection?

HENDERSON: No connection.

STERN: No connection at all. Why do you think it happened?

HENDERSON: Well, it had been going on. I mean, this was not a new thing. That. . . there, there were. . . .

STERN: I realize that it had happened before but I wondered if the timing of that was of any . . .

HENDERSON: But the timing wasn't unusual. It was just at the beginning of the fishing season, the tuna fishing season and they were there, and they were within the territorial borders and ~~it~~ it was done.

STERN: I see. I just wondered if it might have had anything to do with . . . trying to put pressure on the United States.

HENDERSON: No, no, it was just one other thing that we didn't need. [Laughter]

STERN: On the thirtieth of July there was a cable to you from Secretary Rusk [~~Dean Rusk~~], in which he expressed considerable anxiety that the United States might become isolated in its non-recognition of Peru, of the junta, of the ^{new} government, and that he hoped that you could expedite some kind of solution as quickly as possible.

HENDERSON: Well, I'll tell you why that came about and I found out about it much, much later. The Canadian ambassador to Lima when I first arrived there, whose name escapes me now, had been returned to the Canadian foreign office and at this time was in charge of Peruvian affairs, among other things, Latin American affairs. The Canadians very much wanted to get on with it, recognize the junta and stop all this nonsense. And, the British of course, were, they would

play along with us for a while but they weren't going to go on forever either. But the Canadians were particularly antsy because they had a number of investments there and they, they thought this was just foolishness. And, so this Canadian officer just got the Prime Minister to get a message to Rusk. According to him, as he told it to me, just telling them that if they didn't get off the, if we didn't get off the dime the Canadians were going to go ahead and they gave them a very short time limit. And I think that this was probably what moved Rusk to move. I think, I can't be sure of this be . . .

STERN: Apparently there were some reports that some other Latin American countries were also considering ~~making a move~~ recognition.

HENDERSON: Well, they probably would have held the line longer than the Canadians and British. But, if the Canadians went, then the Latins would have gone too. I don't think that the Latin defections would have made ~~some~~ much difference to Rusk but the Canadian one was ~~worth it~~ worrying.

STERN: Yes. One of your . . .

HENDERSON: As I understood it.

STERN: One of your cables which was, I think, a day or two before that, you essentially said to Rusk that you

were concerned that the very fact of non^grecognition would essentially force the junta into probably generating anti-American feelings or perhaps anti-American rallies or whatever and then perhaps violence and then it would make it even more difficult to recognize them.

HENDERSON: Yes, that is correct.

STERN: That we were creating a sort of . . . ^g

HENDERSON: This timing was, was very difficult. And I was very concerned about the timing. By that point it was quite obvious ⁽⁻⁾⁽⁻⁾⁽⁻⁾ well, by the time that I was instructed to negotiate recognition with them ⁽⁻⁾⁽⁻⁾⁽⁻⁾ we shouldn't have, we shouldn't have wasted any more time. It should have been done right then. I mean, the decision had been made obviously. If I was instructed to negotiate, the decision had been made to go ahead.

STERN: I see.

HENDERSON: And, the only sticking point was this one arising out of a, another announcement of acceptance of the four principles. Which was a, to me, a pretty intangible game ^{im.}

STERN: Now, by early ^{63,} ~~sixty-three~~ ^g, of course, you've got ⁻¹ there's an interesting almost kind of a test case here ⁻¹ that you've got new elections coming up as promised by the military government, ^b by the

summer of ¹⁶³~~sixty-three~~ and you've got a new American ambassador by the end of January of ¹⁶³~~sixty-three~~.
How differently, from your perspective in Peru, did the United States ^u pursue in ¹⁶³~~sixty-three~~ its relationship to the ¹⁶³~~sixty-three~~ elections from the way it had done in ¹⁶²~~sixty-two~~ under Loeb? My impression from the documents is that Jones was much more cautious.

HENDERSON: Well, Johnnie, after all, was a European school foreign service officer: ~~v~~ery protocol conscious, very correct, not likely to get involved in the internal affairs of another country. This would be completely incorrect and no European country would have stood for it for a second. So, all his instincts and training were to, to play this very straightforward. And, as you can see from what I have already told you about the way I tried to handle it, I, with Jim going as strongly as he did in the other direction, I tried to keep him from the worst extremes of his line of action. And, although I could sympathize with some of the things that he did and ^certainly from the point of view of being informed I wanted to be able to maintain contact with all, all the contending parties. When it came to committing the United States government to a particular support policy, I wanted to be very sure that this was cleared with our superiors in

Washington and they knew it and had authorized it. I was never that clear as to how specific the authorizations were that Jim was operating on. It might be worthwhile to point out that when I talked with Jim, oh, in about 1974 he was trying to write a book, Failure of Two Missions, and he was trying to recall and he was working in the Department archives, trying to recall all the, all the elements of that period and he asked me to have luncheon with him. Specifically, he wanted to pick my recollection of this. So I asked him, "Jim, are you absolutely sure that your mission was to prevent a military take-over?" I said, "Because it has always appeared to me that the mission was not so much to prevent a military take-over as to ^{show} the military the consequences of a take-over and then, if they did take over, to continue, to try to deal with them because they would be a fact of life then." He said, "Oh, absolutely not, Doug," he said, "My mission and my instructions were ^categorical: ~~to~~ prevent a military take-over and in case of a military take-over then we would break off all relationships because it was a, it was a hemisphere-wide problem and not just a Peruvian problem." I said, "Well, you were getting the instructions. I didn't see any instructions and I've gone back over the files and

I didn't see any such instructions." And I said, "From my experience and from my way of looking at it our mission was to maintain the American presence and support American interests, with whatever government the Peruvians eventually decided to accept."

STERN: Do you think that Ambassador Jones was closer to that position in ^{'63?} ~~sixty-three~~?

HENDERSON: Oh, there was no question he was. After all ^{he had} one, he had the ~~...~~ [Laughter] examples. He had the examples directly in front of him. But, but his own, his own way of doing, his own formal training, all his background was to move very carefully. And not to interfere. It would have been something. . . well, actually it was . . . it was almost like saying dirty words for Johnnie to even think ~~...~~ [Laughter] such thoughts as interfering with the internal political processes of another ^{government.} ~~country.~~

STERN: As far as you know was there any overt effort to aid one candidate as opposed to another . . . ?

HENDERSON: No.

STERN: . . . which had happened in ^{'62.} ~~sixty-two~~. I could find no evidence for it.

HENDERSON: No. There was not. We, we, what we did do was at my instigation with Johnnie's approval, we did meet with the candidates and their top lieutenants, all of them, and point out to them, we pointed out that

we had just been through a period of educating a military cabinet in what they could expect from the US^o government, and we thought that one or another of these candidates would be obviously the new president of Peru, and their lieutenants would become their cabinet and we felt that they ought to be informed, as fully informed as possible as to what resources were they had available to them from the American embassy.

STERN: I see. Well, that certainly is a major distinction.

HENDERSON: And, of course, inevitably in those discussions some of the elements of the political problem would be discussed but we tried to focus it very exclusively and to tell everyone what we were doing.

STERN: ^{For example,} Did Belaunde ever bring up the fact ~~that~~ I know he had accused the United States of aiding Haya and, of course, if that's true, it did happen in ^{'62.} ~~sixty-~~

~~two.~~

HENDERSON: Well, he knew about that before.

STERN: He ~~didn't go around~~ ^{never brought it up.}

HENDERSON: No, no. Fernando was, ~~he~~ he was a romantic.

[Laughter] And, he didn't, he just didn't think that way. That was in the past ~~of~~

STERN: My impression of his book was of almost a mystic.

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: That's the right word.

HENDERSON: Yes, yes, yes. There are in the family ^{not} not in

Fernando necessarily, but you can't help wondering
 the Belaunde family has a history of could you
 call it insanity? I don't think it's insanity but
 at least not quite normal patterns.

STERN: Eccentricity?

HENDERSON: Eccentricity. Well, it ^{had} ^{got} ^{ten} beyond eccentricity,

I heard somewhere. [Laughter] ~~_____~~ ^{delete}
~~_____~~ ₁₀

STERN: Just before Ambassador Jones arrived in January,
 which was, well, the end of your period as . . .
 the seven-month period, the junta declared a state
 of seige and announced that they had smashed a vast
 subversive plot sort of, which had been financed
 from Havana, to overthrow the government. And they
 arrested about eight hundred people including of
 course they did arrest many Communists but they
 also arrested many people who had nothing whatsoever
 to do with the party and who had contested the ⁶² ~~sixty~~
 election. I wonder what your response was to that.
 What you felt they were doing, although I think
 it's fairly clear what they were doing.

HENDERSON: This was just another headache that we didn't need.
 And they didn't need it. I had, wherever I
 could, I had been talking to military officers and
 pointing out to them that a military government

President of
Military Junta →?
in Argentina in
1963
Look up name (1)

could solve many problems except the one of how to transfer power without damaging themselves and the country. And I said it's inevitable no matter what Laluce in Argentina says that he's going to be there ten years or anything else, that sooner or later a military government has to get out of power. It can be longer, it can be shorter, but sooner or later you're going to have to learn to transfer power. Now, the civilians transfer power through elections more or less agreed. But, I said, it's far more difficult for the military and you ought to be thinking how you're going to transfer power."

And I think I may have hurt them a little bit by this but basically by that time the principles²¹⁵ Perez Godoy, of course, was rather full of himself he loved ~~to have~~ the perks of office which lead to his downfall but Lindley . . . I remember one time in his office we were talking along these lines. And he made a very surprising and revealing statement. He said, "You know, you're absolutely right. In the military we give a command and it's obeyed, and it goes down the line and it's obeyed down the line. In a civilian government we give a command, and the subordinates immediately think up sixty-five reasons why it can't be done. And⁴⁵ you said it never does get done." And he said, "The military cannot operate this way." And he said, "I guess you're right."

And he was probably at that time as influential a member of the junta as any of them. He ~~at~~certainly had been with ^{present} ~~Quiroga~~ ^{Liosa,} the one designated to talk to me at the very beginning.

STERN: Did the embassy put any credence in their claims in January of ¹⁹⁶³ ~~sixty-three~~ that the conspiracy was aimed at sabotaging American property and that sort of thing?

HENDERSON: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, the whole episode is rather vague in my mind but from that I deduce that we took it all with tongue in cheek and decided that they were playing some kind of game that was pretty obvious to everyone and that we even thought that perhaps they were trying to clean up the place before elections. No, we did not, as I recall, give the conspiracy theory very much credence nor, as I remember, did any of the, of the principle^{al} American investors.

Of course, what happened there in ^{Cerro de Pasco} ~~Somerset~~ in November was, was something quite different. Basically what happened was that, after I first arrived as economic officer, one of the first things that I ran into was a series of, of squatters moving in on ^{Cerro de Pasco} ~~Somerset~~ land. And the ^{Cerro de Pasco} ~~Somerset~~ local management came to me and asked me what the American embassy was going to do. And I said, "we're

to the Indians and help the Indians build up their pastures and improve their sheep and what not. And this was working very well until the junta took over. And then the ~~S---~~^{Cerro} people came back to me and said, "Now, wise guy, all bets are off." And I said, "Well, you will recall that one of the conditions I made when we undertook this program was that there would never be a ~~time when~~^{point at which} all bets were off because if that point came all I could say to you was that you were going to be hurt worse than you ever thought possible by ~~losing~~^{losing} your land." And I said, said well, and ~~They~~^{They} said, "Well, the military are taking over now and they'll uphold our rights." And I said, "The time is long past when a Peruvian military unit will fire on Peruvian Indians." And I said, "Don't rely on the Peruvian military any longer. They will not uphold your rights." "Well, you just don't know. You've only been here a short time. You don't know." "So," I said, "All right, if you pull out, that's your business. But don't come back to me afterwards because I say you're really going to get clobbered."

Well, they had a strike up there at ~~S---~~^{Cerro} four months later and the strike turned violent and destroyed about three million dollars worth of machinery. And Bob ~~König~~^[Robert P. König], the ~~S---~~^{Cerro de Pasco} man from

New York came down to talk to me afterwards. I said, "Bob, I'm sorry, that you lost three million dollars but you lost it by your own actions. Don't look to me for much sympathy. You could have saved yourself and you didn't."

STERN: There were a number of incidents along these lines of Indians seizing land, large ~~tracts~~^{tracts} of land and there were ~~44~~⁴⁴. Yes. there was some bloodshed, I know.
HENDERSON: Did the embassy, did the ~~US~~^{US} government have a specific policy on how to handle this or did you pretty much stay out of it?

HENDERSON: I have just talked on ~~the~~^{that} policy.

STERN: That was it essentially.

HENDERSON: I was the key person and I, I just told them that they could either be miners or they could be large landowners.

~~END OF TAPE II.~~

BEGINNING OF TAPE III.

STERN: I'm talking about now in cases other than the Cerro corporation. I mean, you took essentially . . .

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: That was essentially your policy. Okay, I think only one or two more minor things from the Peruvian period. For example, President Tito's [Josip Broz ^{'63.} -Tito] visit in September of ~~sixty-three~~^{'63.}. Is there anything about that that you might remember that might be interesting?

I left Peru in August of 63, so that I was not there for the Tito visit.

HENDERSON: No, no, no. That. . . I was so busy with trying to run an embassy and do all that . . .

STERN: You had no contact with him? The embassy had no contact with him?

HENDERSON: No, no, we didn't. I can't even remember. I suppose there was a reception and I suppose I went, but that is the extent of my. . . . It doesn't stand out in my mind at all.

STERN: Well, unless you have anything to add then, I'll be ready to move on to Bolivia now. Okay?

Well, why don't we start at the beginning which would be the background of your appointment as ambassador.

HENDERSON: Well, the first that I knew that I was even being considered, obviously, when Johnnie Jones came in I would not remain for too long a time, because I, one, some of my credibility in Peru had already been burned up on this episode. Second, obviously I was being replaced as the chief . . . as the Acting Chief of Mission. ^{Three,} Johnnie ~~who~~ would presumably want his own team. So that everything pointed that I would probably be replaced and so I started thinking about where I would go next. And I really had no clues. After the episode with the foreign minister calling me in while we were negotiating recognition, both Ed Martin and Toby Belcher were aware of the difficult situation for me, and they were as supportive

as they could be and they had already been aware of some of my problems under, with Ambassador Loeb because they themselves had some of those problems too. So they would certainly have wanted me to have a good assignment. But just at this period the Cornell University was looking around for what they called a campus coordinator for their ^{VICOS} ~~Vicos~~ project. Now, I won't try to describe the ^{VICOS} ~~Vicos~~ project but it's well written up so you can find it easily enough.

STERN: That's spelled V - I . . . *(handwritten mark)*

HENDERSON: VICOS.

STERN: . . . C - O - S. Okay.

HENDERSON: It's in Peru. And, Ed Martin called me in and Ted, the Puerto Rican . . . *(handwritten mark)*

STERN: Moscoso? [^Theodoro Moscoso]

HENDERSON: Moscoso. Ted and Ed Martin called me in to Washington and Ed was very impressed with the fact that a university would ask for a foreign service officer to coordinate a project like that. And, they were offering me some very serious inducements ~~not~~ not only financial inducements ~~but~~ but it was a thing that I was very much interested in and it would have been a case study in development ^{and so on}. And I would have liked to have done it. But it did impress Ed that a university would ask for an officer. And I was working on this when I got a telegram asking me where I had last filed my income taxes. Well, in those days that was a clue that you were being con-

sidered for a presidential appointment because after Kennedy had appointed a district commissioner who turned out not to have paid his income taxes Kennedy was very careful about his appointments.

STERN: I can't think of his name off hand, but in any case.

HENDERSON: Yes. And then there was another case in the department. So that put me on the list. But I was just on a list and the lists were made up of usually ten names that went forward. But I had already made up my mind, and Johnnie Jones had accepted and the department had named a replacement for me and so I decided I'd go off on leave no matter what. On home leave. I was due home leave. It was coming up in August and I wanted to get back. My oldest boy was just entering Trinity College in Hartford. He had been away and I wanted to be there when he got started and so on.

Well, there were a lot of reasons why I wanted to leave, whether I had an assignment or not. So, I left. And I was here here in this house as a matter of fact when I was called by the department and told that I was, that an ~~exit~~ ^{exequatur} order had been asked for Bolivia. There were good reasons, in my estimation, for me to go to Bolivia. I had been assigned there from forty, the end of forty-three until about the middle of forty-seven. I knew the country pretty well. The Peruvian ex-

perience had given me a lot of insights. I was ready to move into an assignment like that. I had run an embassy. I had handled it during a crisis and Bolivia's always a crisis. And so, I had thought that I would like it and that it would be a natural for me. Ed Martin, when he came down on the mission to the inaugural ~~of~~ Belaunde's inauguration ~~had~~ talked to me about it too and had said that he was supporting it. And since he was Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs, that was a very strong plus.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: A close friend of mine in George Ball's [George W. Ball] office ~~and~~ and George Ball was really the key person in all of this ~~also~~ also was supporting me. In the foreign service, in order to get ahead, you have to take three things. One, you have to be able to produce, but that's a given. Second, you have to be in a position where you can produce and do a good job. And three, you have to have somebody notice it. And in this particular instance, those three things came together. So that I was ~~and~~ ^{then} and Ralph Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan] also came down on that mission to Belaunde's inauguration. I got to know Ralph and I liked him very much and he apparently liked me and ~~there~~ ^{there} ~~that~~ was another person supporting me.

Well, that's the background of how I

was named. I had the qualifications and I was supported.

STERN: You were named, as I recall, on the ninth of October, early October . . . *oe*

HENDERSON: Yes. *163.*

STERN: *././.* of ~~sixty-three~~.

HENDERSON: That's right.

STERN: And President Paz came to visit the United States very shortly thereafter.

HENDERSON: That's right. But I was not yet . . . *e*

STERN: You were ambassador-designate at that point.

HENDERSON: At that point. So I could sit in on the meetings but I could not travel with him. My predecessor, *pha [Ben S. Stephansky]* Ben ~~Stepansky~~^{Stepansky} travelled with, with . . . *oe*

STERN: I wonder if you can, *if* if you recall the meetings and . . . *e*

HENDERSON: Yes, I remember the meetings very well.

STERN: Was that, by the way, your first personal contact with President Kennedy?

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: It was.

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: I have some of the items that were discussed at the meetings if that would help to jog your memory.

HENDERSON: Well, that would be *o*. . . . No, I remember them. The principle. *././.* there were two things going on at that time. The Bolivians very much, as a national aspiration, had always wanted to smelt their own tin. And there had been a lot of give, to and fro

on this with the American government, which, for various reasons really was not totally enamored of the idea of Bolivia smelting its own tin. And Paz put this forward as a principle objective. And, said that it had been delayed and President Kennedy turned to me and said, "As one of your first charges, your first responsibilities, you will take this on and see what we can do to make this possible."

This was kind of the central issue in. . . there were a lot of other things that were being talked about but they were basically not ones on which there would have been difficulties. That one I knew was going to be very difficult. The real reason for the meeting was so that Kennedy could size up Paz and reciprocally so that Paz could size up Kennedy.

STERN: In terms of the ⁶⁴~~sixty-four~~ election did this help Paz do you think?

HENDERSON: Very much so in Paz's case and in Kennedy's case when I, when I called on him. I called on him after I had been sworn in. It's always customary, or had been customary up until that time that the new ambassador would make a formal call on the president and get any last instructions from the president. And this was an opportunity to meet informally so he could really size up his new man.

Kennedy very much wanted to visit Bolivia. He realized, as Paz had told him, that no American president had ever visited Bolivia and Kennedy wanted to go. So that a good bit of my conversation with him that day was about Bolivia, about what he could expect, what kind of accommodations were available, what effect altitude would have, a whole series of things and it was quite obvious that Kennedy was planning a state visit, a reciprocal state visit, probably in January.

STERN: What was your impression of President Kennedy?

HENDERSON: In the first place, let me say that I, I had liked him so much from the very beginning that I really was prejudiced in his favor anyway. Furthermore, basically, although foreign service officers are apolitical, I was a democrat to the point that in the Kennedy election in Peru, the American colony always held a big party. let's see, where was it? I think it was out at the golf club but I can't be sure of that and they had beer and crackers and they had big slates and, you know. Oh, it was out at the, out at the, out at the airport. ^{Air} ^{Panama} Panama had a big communications facility out there and so they could get the latest results as they were coming in. Well, the business community was thoroughly republican.

STERN: The American businessmen in Peru? Right.

HENDERSON: Yes. And I was about the only democrat there and I

was cheering Kennedy on. My wife finally took me home. She said, "You keep going like that and you will have nothing left to work with tomorrow. ^u You were really alienating everybody ~~off~~." I was very, very happy when Kennedy won. I was disappointed later in some of the things that happened, to which I ^{was} ~~was~~, of which occasionally I was victim. But nonetheless I found him, in the first place, a very attractive person personally, A person that you could talk to. Many people think that great men make you afraid. The really great men don't make you afraid at all. They have a facility of dealing with you as a person which inspires confidence in yourself. And Kennedy had that ability to a remarkable extent. Secondly, I was thoroughly in sympathy with the basic thrust of his policies in Latin America. Thirdly, I thought that the United States was being, was being given a chance to show its best qualities with Kennedy. The day that I called on him however, and as I reflected afterwards, I realized that Kennedy was in deep political trouble in his own country. That his program in congress, however attractive it might be to me, was probably, had very little chance of ^e ~~success~~ in any large way and that there was a very real question as to whether, at least on the basis of the political / . / . / .
[Interruption]
~~[gap in tape]~~ And I still feel that, of my personal

experiences, Kennedy was the most promising leader I have. . . I can think of. Now, clearly there have been other and greater leaders. Kennedy's was mostly in promise rather ^{than} in realization at that time.

STERN: Did you feel, for example, that you also had this impression when you sat in on the meetings with President Paz and you had. . . did you feel that. . .? Well, for example, did you ever have any evidence from President Paz as to his reaction?

HENDERSON: President Paz was just. . . he liked him but Paz was a manipulator. That was the essence of Paz. And he saw a man whose basic sympathies ~~were~~ ^{were} such that he could probably manipulate him. Or he thought he could. And so Paz, both because he liked him, he really genuinely liked him, but as a Bolivian politician he also had to look to the main chance, and he saw a chance to do some of the things that he wanted to get done. And so from two points of view he was very strongly attached to Kennedy.

STERN: Yes. Do you have any recollection of some of the other issues that were discussed during those talks? For example, I remember there was the. . . I'm ^{not} certain ~~do not~~ ^{you} remember the possibility of, the problem of coups in Latin America?

HENDERSON: This was not a big thing.

STERN: Cuban subversion? A number of other things that did come up.

HENDERSON: These were things which were in the agenda to make a point but they were not matters of great discussion on either side. The problem, if it, . . . the hidden part of that kind of an agenda was the fact that ~~the~~ the Cubans had an embassy in Bolivia. The Czechs had an embassy in Bolivia, and the Yugoslavs had an embassy in Bolivia. And this worried some elements of the Kennedy administration. So that what they ^{were} pushing at him, ^{was} through these various ploys, was the fact of this diplomatic representation in Bolivia. And the possibility of a Trojan horse kind of operation going on for the Russians.

STERN: I see. Paz also tried to get more military ~~more~~ aid. For example, ^{he} pointed out to Kennedy that the military assistance program in Chile was six times the size of what it was in Bolivia.

HENDERSON: That was just another ploy. [Laughter] That was the manipulative part of Paz operating. Paz did not trust the military. He was always careful to keep three, three military operations going: one, the militia; two, the carabineros; and three, the armed forces.

STERN: Hoping that they would sort of balance each other?

HENDERSON: ~~They~~ ^{he} tried to keep them roughly in balance. If one got strong, the other two would counter-balance it. But, sure, Paz would get whatever assistance he could for the military. It would be parcelled out and Paz would have some supporters.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: That's all.

STERN: Back to your meeting on November twentieth with President Kennedy. He did authorize you, I gather, to inform the Bolivian government that he would come?

HENDERSON: I asked, ^{al} I asked him specifically if I was authorized first to let the department know and secondly was I to tell Paz Estenssoro. And he said yes.

STERN: And that was also in . . . You may be aware of the fact that the very next day he told the Bolivian ambassador that he would . . .

HENDERSON: Well, the Bolivian ambassador at the time was a, was a close friend of mine and so we were exchanging notes all the time.

STERN: Right, and so that was . . . Well, you were still in Washington, I gather, on the twenty-second?

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: You were.

HENDERSON: Yes. I was in ~~the~~ the International Bank. I

was having lunch at the International Bank. The World Bank had a stake in Bolivia because they were trying to help the Bolivians rebuild their railroads. And I was trying to get the World Bank more involved in Bolivia, as a sup^epl^ement to our own aid programs and I. . . so I had this appointment and we were having lunch and because the World Bank was on the FBI ^[Federal Bureau of Investigation] hot wire ~~we~~ we were among the first to be notified.

STERN: Yes. Did you find that when you got to Bolivia that the fact, of course, that this event had occurred and there was now a new American president and all sorts of uncertainty as to where American policy might go, did that complicate your taking up your new position?

HENDERSON: No. ~~No~~ The tragedy of Dallas was so much in the Bolivian tradition that they could sympathize with it immediately and at all levels. And the Bolivians were deeply ^a affected by Kennedy's death. But they were also . . .

STERN: That's virtually a universal fact. I think it's almost in some ways inexplicable.

HENDERSON: Yes. That's true. But there was a current flowing there. ~~The~~ The fact of the death, however, was a fact and the Bolivians and particularly Paz, as I said, was prepared to deal with it as such and to

adjust his thinking to whatever was necessary. And so that fact and the fact that I was coming, although named, nominated and confirmed under Kennedy, that I was reconfirmed by Johnson was all that they, the Paz government needed to know.

STERN: Okay.

HENDERSON: And, of course the, the hostage crisis erupted before . . .

STERN: Right. I was just about to ask you about that. There you were virtually in your first weeks when this whole thing blew up.

HENDERSON: In the first week! I was . . .

STERN: The very first week.

HENDERSON: I arrived on the seventh and that was what that must have been about a Friday.

STERN: I can give you the day if I can . . .

HENDERSON: I think it was Friday the seventh. I may be. . . yes, it probably was Friday.

STERN: Correct.

HENDERSON: And, and I. . . the question of those people going into the mines was brought to me on the following Wednesday. Their mission was explained to me. I asked if there were any problems that the staff could see with it. They said no, it was a . . . it was a venture but they thought that the risks were minimal. And, of course, I was engaged in learning

the ropes in this new assignment and also getting prepared for my presentation of credentials and so on. So that on Wednesday I gave the okay. On Thursday the Bolivian government arrested some delegates from the mines who had come out of the mines to a conference.

STERN: Were those the two union leaders?

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: Pimentel and Escobar? [Irineo Pimentel] [Frederico Escobar] Yes.

HENDERSON: Yes. And, they, . . . our people were already in there and of course, the door shut! So that, . . . but we didn't, we didn't have a confirmation that the door was shut until the morning that I was to present my credentials. And so when I presented my credentials I told the president that I was not going to make the usual speech with respect to our mutual hopes for close and fruitful relationships but rather to ask him, ~~to~~ to tell him, that I expected the Bolivian government to be fully responsible for the safety of American citizens in Bolivia and that we would look to him for whatever steps would be required and that in a sense hold his government responsible. And he replied that that had been the subject of the discussion prior to my arriving to present his credentials, my credentials, and that the foreign minister would be calling on me at one o'clock

at the residence to discuss further steps. So that we never really had any problem of deciding whether ^[Lyndon B. Johnson] Johnson was as good a man as Kennedy or anything like that at all. We went immediately to this issue and the next seven days we got thoroughly immersed in it and I began to deal with all the people who, with whom I would later have to deal, ^[Alfredo Ovando Candia] Ovando, Lechin ^{Ogundo} [Juan Lechin ~~Ogundo~~], Paz, ~~[Victor Paz Estenssoro]~~, his cabinet and the miners and so on and so forth.

STERN: Do you think it would be fair to say that to a degree that perhaps President Kennedy had underestimated the seriousness of the situation? Because in the communiqué . . .

HENDERSON: You mean . . . ?

STERN: The mine situation.

HENDERSON: President Kennedy had . . . ?

STERN: Yes. Because when Paz had visited the United States, in the communiqué, the joint communiqué that was

→ [Corporacion Minera de Bolivia — Mining Corporation of Bolivia] COMIBOL
issued, he had endorsed very specifically, I can find the wording here, "The efforts through ~~Control~~

to restore more efficient production of Bolivia's principal export, tin." In other words, the re-organization of the mines. And then when . . .

HENDERSON: That's boiler plate.

STERN: Well . . .

HENDERSON: Strict boiler plate.

STERN: Okay. And when he met with the Bolivian ambassador

the day after he saw you on the twenty-first, he said that he thought that the ~~the~~ "I'm quoting him now ~~the~~ "that the mine situation was improving and that the Pimentel-Escobar problem was not critical." It seems to me that perhaps he had under ~~the~~ estimated how serious it was and then it just did blow up.

HENDERSON:

No, my recollection of that is that they, ~~the~~ that it was probably accurate and that the Bolivian government had just ~~the~~ and why they did this, now. At that time I was so concerned to resolve the problem that I never analyzed the why of their seizure of Pimentel and Escobar. And I haven't really gone back to try to examine it. Who ordered it, why it was done, why it was done in that way, whether they fore-saw the consequences of having done it. None of this have I ever really thought about or tried to figure out. I was presented with a problem in my first week. I tried to resolve that problem without trying to figure out why I had the problem. If I had been there longer I would have certainly have been trying to figure out why I had the problem but no, I. . . . The. . . I rather suspect that ~~the~~ and this is just a guess on my part that the head of ~~Comibol~~ ^{COMIBOL} Bedrigal, who was a very tricky, a very tricky person with all kinds of unexpected quirks and different elements of his character. Very bright but ~~the~~ very slippery and I kind of suspect that Bedrigal for his own reasons

might have done this.

STERN: Without the government's knowledge, of course.

HENDERSON: Possibly, possibly, very possibly. He was a power in his own right and he operated pretty independently of Paz. Why he did it, I really don't know. But I, knowing Bedrigal, I suspect that he was the guy that did it and that he was playing his own game.

STERN: What were your first impressions of the major figures, particularly Lechin, in this situation? And the telegram you sent to him and the whole . . .

HENDERSON: The telegram was sent to Lechin?

STERN: . . . saying ^{that} you would hold him responsible for the safety of the American hostages.

HENDERSON: Well, I did this with Paz's knowledge. But I had known Lechin for, I had known him before, when I was in Coch~~abamba~~^{abamba}. I knew him for an opportunist. Not very bright. He thought he had a bigger power base in the mines than he really had. The myth of the mining militia had been exploited thoroughly but it was a myth. I just knew him pretty thoroughly for what he was. A guy who liked the good life and this was the way he got the good life. And without any particular convictions and he was just struggling to establish himself as the worthy ^csuccessor for Paz.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: You see the . . .

STERN: He had visited the United States, I know to try to mend some bridges and . . .

HENDERSON: Oh, well, yes. Paz you see, there were four. The original four were Paz, ^[Hernan Siles Suazo] Siles, Lechin and Walter ^[Walter Guevara Arze] Guevar~~a~~. And there was to be a rotation in the same way that the ~~on~~ on the Mexican pattern.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: They, they were all very influenced by the Mexican pattern. ~~But~~ Paz allowed ^S Siles to replace him but he interfered when Guevar~~a~~'s turn came up and threw Guevar~~a~~ out. And then when Lechin was to come up in ^{'64} ~~sixty-four~~ Paz was not about to let Lechin replace him.

STERN: Do you think that that was one of the perhaps, perhaps, an unwritten part of the agenda for his going to Washington in ^{'63} ~~sixty-three~~ was to kind of /././.

HENDERSON: Feel out?

STERN: . . . feel out American support for his running again?

HENDERSON: I have no evidence that that's so. I think he'd made up his mind. I'm sure he had made up his mind, even before that and what the Americans would do about it for him was of no consequence.

STERN: Yes. You think his motivation was his own . . .

HENDERSON: Well, after all, he would have been a constitutional president, more or less.

STERN: Well, he did have to rig the constitution ~~with money~~ ^{to run again.}

HENDERSON: Oh, sure! Oh, sure! But he rigged the constitution
[Laughter] and so it was a constitutional move . . .

De
STERN: Agreed.

HENDERSON: . . . and there was nothing in the American precedent
to say that a man cannot succeed himself as
president so Paz was not too worried about our
position on that. He felt that we would recognize
a constitutional and duly elected president and he . . .

De I don't think that bothered him very much
at all. Matter of fact . . .

STERN: I think he probably assumed that the administration
would prefer to see him ^{rather} than Lechin as president.

HENDERSON: I guess so. But that would have been mostly a re-
flection of Paz's own prejudices about Lechin. He
didn't think very highly of Lechin and so he, he
wasn't going to . . .

STERN: Well, neither did the United States government or
the State Department from the evidence I've seen.

HENDERSON: Well, yes. But mostly I don't think Lechin just
wasn't of the caliber. Never was and never would
be. There were, there were two, you know, there
were half brothers, ^{Juan} ~~one~~ Lechin Suarez, who was the
colonel.

STERN: Who ~~was the~~ ^{succeeded him as the} . . .

HENDERSON: Who was a colonel in the armed forces and Juan
Lechin Oquendo. And we used to call Juan Lechin
Oquendo the bad and Juan Lechin Suarez the mediocre.

[Laughter]

STERN:

I wonder if we could digress for a minute back to the kind of question I asked you at the beginning about Peru. If you could give just a brief description of what the daily routine was like for an ambassador, particularly this ambassador in this country, of course.

HENDERSON:

Well, I had developed my own theory of how an embassy should be run and I felt that the biggest problem in any embassy was effective communications up and down, ~~And so I had~~ and also out into the community. So I developed a series of staff meetings. And since I believe that nobody can work more than a certain length of time, I like to keep my days orderly and I like to keep my weeks fairly orderly even though I know that there will be crises and that I will have to work late and so on. But, in spite of that, I like to have a structured operation going. So I set up a series of staff meetings and I felt that you had to have your staff meetings at a time when your attenders would have had time enough in their office as to get oriented as to the day. So, what I did was to, ~~I~~ I would start my day at the residence and I usually walked to the office, read the newspapers and the cable take. My secretary always had the incoming and the outgoing cables. I

insisted that all cables had to be cleared by me or the deputy chief of mission. I didn't mind so much about the others but all cables had to be cleared and this was a check on that. And the incoming cables, and the newspapers. And by that time I'd have a ten o'clock staff meeting. And the staff meeting on the Monday morning I would have a staff meeting with my senior officers to look at the week ahead and to plan about the week ahead. Tuesday morning I alternated between the ^[Agency for International Development] AID mission with a couple of my senior staff officers beside and the USIS [United States Information Service] and Peace Corps so that I would have one or the other every week on Tuesday mornings and they would have their crack at me. Wednesday morning I had a meeting of a group that I pulled together of the people that I thought were most capable, irrespective of their rank. And in that meeting we looked at our problems from the point of view of Washington and tried to figure out why Washington couldn't understand us. ^[Laughter] And then write the answers so they would understand. Thursday morning. . . Thursday morning what was Thursday morning? was the administrative group of the embassy including the consulate so that we could have a fairly good view of what the internal proceedings -- oh, no, wait a minute

that, that would be one and then the other would be the military group. Both the attachés and the military assistance group. And then on Friday I held a meeting in which the senior officers nominated someone from their immediate staff down the line to come in and in that meeting I preferred to take some problem that we were dealing with and put it out in front of them and discuss it with them so that they would have their own input into policy formation and work with me on it.

I had a . . . I had a maximum^y about meetings and that was ~~o-o~~ (it was given me by my air attaché. He said a man's mind can absorb what his ^{arse can} ~~asked and~~ endure, ~~and~~ so I tried to keep my meetings about an hour long. So that by eleven o'clock I would be free and then I would receive callers until lunch time. Usually I had a working lunch. I tried as much as possible, for example, to hold a meeting with the development minister of the Bolivian government with our AID people over lunch. And we tried to have on the agenda a problem which we could solve as well as some that we weren't going to be able to solve and to stick to an agenda. And, I tried to have lunch at least once a month at the residence with representatives of the American business community, to get their point of view as to what was happening and also to tell them why we

were doing some of the screwball things that we were doing. I would rest for about half an hour after that and then I would go back to the embassy and by that time whatever material had been generated out of the machinery would be ready for my signature. And I would look it over and, and clear it or not and send it back for drafting and so on. If there were any emergencies, the staff knew that they could always come in on very short notice. If I wasn't tied up I would meet with them immediately. I tried to keep as open a mission as possible. I would. . . if any ceremonials that had to be performed and the ~~amb~~assador is always a figurehead for ceremonial purposes. I tried to keep in the late afternoon and then from that go on to the evening's receptions and dinners. This, of course, there was always opportunity to adjust this for ceremonial calls or business calls or calls on the foreign office or going to the palace or to receive important visitors or anything like that. But this pretty well made up my day. This was the framework within which all the other things happened.

STERN: That's very interesting. How often did you have contact with President Paz either by telephone or in person?

HENDERSON: I could have it at any time I wanted it. I tried

not to abuse it and he was very sticky about procedures most of the time. But I could call him and get through to him. He knew me well enough by that time so that he knew I wouldn't just call him lightly for small things. My predecessor had been on very close, perhaps almost too close, relationships with him. I told him at the very outset. . . . Coch^{abamba}~~abamba~~ has always had the reputation in Bolivia as being the, the place from which all the very smart Bolivians come. Smart in every sense of the word. They are the entrepreneurs, they're also the men with the fast shuffle. They were also, ~~I~~ they supplied most of the presidents of Bolivia. When Paz first met me there at the White House and he kind of smiled and he said, "Embajador." And then he said in Spanish, "I understand that you're a Cochabambino." And I said, "Yes, yes I have been called a Cochabambino." And he said, "Well, you know, I am from Tarija. And in Tarija they tell the story about the Cochabambino who stole a mule and painted it with zebra stripes and sold it back to the owner as a zebra." And I said, "Yes, Excellency, I'm a Cochabambino."

Well, we had sufficiently informal relationships so that I could if I wanted to go in at any time. On the other hand, I also had to tell

him, I said--(In one of our first serious discussions--
I said, "You know, I have looked through history fairly carefully from time to time and I cannot find an example of a man who made the revolution who was able to thereafter preside over the reconstruction!" And I said, "You are trying to do this." And I said, "I will be very interested to see if, in fact, you can do it." And I said, "It will be a historical first. But" I said, "I think you should know what I think about this." And I said, "I also want you to know that my first responsibility is my accreditation to your government. But my second responsibility is to my own government to keep them fully informed and that will require me to talk not only with your government but to every source of information available to me in Bolivia including your opponents. And I will ask you to understand that I will be talking to your political opponents." He said, "You'll never learn anything from them anyway." [Laughter] "After you've got all through come to me and I'll explain it to you."

STERN: So I gather then that you thought he was making a mistake in trying for another term in 1964 ?

HENDERSON: I really thought he was. I really thought he was.

9 And I was further confirmed in that when General O'Meara
[Andrew P. O'Meara] [Commander in Chief U.S. So. Command]
~~Meara~~ who was ~~CINCSOUTH~~ at that time came to Bolivia
and for reasons which are not vital to this story

he flew down to the interior of Bolivia, to a town called Guayaramerin. And, Ovando went with him. And I got on the plane too, and they had this executive type plane with a table. ^{O'Meara} ~~Omara~~ didn't speak Spanish and Ovando didn't speak English so I interpreted. And ^{O'Meara} ~~Omara~~ said, as one soldier to another, "General, tell me what you ^{think}" he said, "It's important to us in my military command to know what you foresee as the political evolution in the next six months to a year." And Ovando said, "Well, General, Paz Estenssoro will present his candidacy. It will be against all ^e ~~pre~~cedent and we in Bolivia set a great deal of store by ^e ~~pre~~cedent, and Paz will be in office about three months. He will be elected, he will be in office about three months, and then there will be an uprising and he will be thrown out of the country."

STERN: Incredibly accurate!

HENDERSON: Well, after all, he was calling the shots. But I think that you will find that this ~~is~~ there is my report on this. And this is exactly what he said. I ^{recorded} ~~reported~~ that. Well, so I knew where the armed forces stood. But then I was faced with a problem. I knew what would happen if they took over. I knew there would be a period, ~~in~~ an interim, when the United States government wouldn't recognize them and that would be the time when they were most

vulnerable and I wouldn't be able to help them. So I had a long conversation in my office with both [René Barrientos Ortuno] Barrientos and with Ovando when I knew that they were probably ~~to~~ I had known all along that they were, it was very likely that they were to stage a coup but it didn't become increasingly obvious and this was much later ~~and~~ and I just told them. I said, "I have no authority to tell you what you can do in Bolivia. None whatsoever, I cannot say yes, I cannot say no, I can't say perhaps. But I can tell you the consequences of certain actions which you might be thinking of taking." And I told them the consequences of a military take-over in terms of US_o government policy and the fact that they could expect a delay in recognition.

Well, I've gotten off the track of the story.

STERN: No, that's fine. No problem at all.

HENDERSON: Where were we? We were . . . ?

STERN: You were talking about the ~~the~~ events leading up to the coup. Oh, no, excuse me, you were talking about whether or not you felt that Paz was making a mistake in running for office another time.

HENDERSON: Yes. I did. I did. But on the other hand, I couldn't see any of the other candidates either.

STERN: There was a real . . . ?

very concerned about the possibility that Lechin might engineer an assassination attempt against Paz so that he could succeed to the presidency before the election. Thus, of course, he would be an incumbent which would give him, I suppose, a certain advantage. And there were very explicit references to what might be done to head that off including American safety experts to advise ^{him} ~~to~~ additional military equipment which might be helpful. And most interesting, and I'll quote this to you, "appropriate elements of the country team" [REDACTED]

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"should prepare documents which might be used to link Lechin to any assassination attempt against Paz," and things of that sort. So obviously, of course, the department clearly did not want Lechin as president but wasn't entirely sure that Paz could . . .

HENDERSON: Could swing it.

STERN: . . . could swing it and could stay in. Right.

HENDERSON: Well, all that time they were looking at what I thought was a phony, because I was watching Barrientos. Everybody tended to underestimate Barrientos including a guy that I didn't think would ever underestimate anybody, and that was Bedrial. But Bedrial just thought Barrientos was a clown!

STERN: Well, he did give that impression in some ways.

HENDERSON: Some times. Some times.

STERN: As sort of a/. . . yes.

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HENDERSON: And certainly unpredictable, ^e erratic and doing dumb things or what appeared to be dumb things.

STERN: I think the impression of Barrientos was very similar to the one that was held of General Ky [Nguyen Cao Ky] in South Vietnam. Both of them air force and the same kind of flamboyant but not too . . .

HENDERSON: Yes. I remember, I remember the analogy. But as I got to know Barrientos I realized that this was probably at least as able a politician, at least as able a politician as Paz. A man who had to work a lot harder at it but who understood the responsibilities of government, knew the limitations of what he could do. I remember one time after he had been in office for a while, I was urging I've forgotten what course of action, but I was urging a course of action on him and he said, [^]in Spanish, because we always spoke in Spanish [^]that in the president, in the . . . once he had become president, he had to walk with feet of lead, pies de plomo. He knew, and you had to know that. And he sandbagged a lot of people who thought he was a clown including Bedrigal. They underestimated him and he played up to their underestimation of him. And in a way, he sandbagged Paz too.

STERN: Yes. I think it's clear that Paz did not expect him to ~~to~~ if the word betray is the right word - which

HENDERSON: Well, that's a complicated story, a very complicated story but basically, ~~basically~~ basically, Ovando's scenario was the correct one and *Alfredo Ovando* wrote it himself. Wrote the script and everything.

STERN: Yes. I'd like to get back to Ovando in a little while but one other question I wanted to ask you was that Victor Andrade, ^{who} was, of course, the Bolivian ambassador to the United States.

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: He was critical of the United States government arguing that, for example, Ambassador ~~Stefansky~~ ^{Stephansky} and, I believe, you as well saying that you identified yourselves too closely . . .

HENDERSON: With Paz.

STERN: With Paz. Travelled ^{etc.} around the country with him, ~~etc.~~ and tended to, ~~etc.~~ give the sense of Bolivia as a dependent colony of the United States. I mean, that kind of thing.

HENDERSON: Well, when Paz started his campaign I had a staff meeting and I put to the staff meeting this propo-^ysition. Paz is going to run for office and he's going to be elected if he runs. If we are not with him now, if we are seen to be not with him now we will have a great deal of difficulty staying in close to him afterwards.

STERN: Right. Right.

HENDERSON: If we are with him now we will be seen as supporting him and as being identified with him. And I said,

"I know that my predecessor was so identified and wanted to be so identified and it had its advantages and its disadvantages." I said, "I am at the point where I have to make a decision, which way to go. There are risks both ways. There are disadvantages both ways. If I take this decision, I want first that you, and I want you to understand why I'm doing it and although I take the responsibility for it, because it is my mission, you will also have to bear the consequences of being associated with me in this mistake if I make a mistake. So I need your advice." And we talked it over on that basis and we decided that there really was no alternative. If Paz asked me to go with him, I could not turn him down. And that's why we went that way.

STERN:

Which may have helped to, and well, at least certainly contributed to his belief on the eve of the coup that he would have had more support than he actually got. At least I suppose that might have helped.

HENDERSON:

[Long sigh] I don't know. I've got enough evidence which I didn't have at the time but I have some evidence now that Paz while he was telling me and Bill Dentzer [William T. Dentzer, Jr.] who had come down from Washington, and we went and called on him on Monday afternoon. And he was telling me that he had all the support he needed and that I should tell Barrientos to stop playing games and come back and take his place as president and so on. If I

had any influence with Barrientos, he said. And while he was acting confidently, he was moving all his treasured possessions out into the care of a Canadian Roman Catholic mission up the street. And he had his wife and children out of the house already in custody with the nuncio.

STERN: It was hardly a surprise though. That's clear.

HENDERSON: He quite evidently had already made his plans. The next morning at ^eseven o'clock the telephone rang beside my bed and I answered it and a voice said, speaking in English, "Bad news, Ambassador. . . ." [^] what is the name of that regimental, [^] the military regiment down in . . . [^]

~~END OF TAPE III.~~

BEGINNING OF TAPE IV.

HENDERSON: "Bad news, Ambassador, this regiment has revolted." Now Paz never spoke to me in English and to call and give me a message in English didn't sound like Paz so I [^]but other, I had other people who might [^]and so I said, "Who is this?" And he said, "Victor Paz." He didn't say the [^]President or anything else. He said "Victor Paz." And I said, "Well, Excellency, what are you going to do about it?" And he said, "I don't know yet." Well, I made up my mind right then that he probably was a goner. But

I couldn't see it all that clearly ~~among~~ ^{and} all the other things that I had been working with pointed in another direction so that I wasn't ready to commit myself to a prediction that he was a goner.

My Yugoslav colleague and, although we pursued different courses, my Yugoslav colleague was a very bright and very literate guy ~~as~~ as a matter of fact he was an author ~~but~~ but he was also ^{a very} ~~under~~ ^{er} astute military observation ~~and~~ and he consulted with me that same day and told me, "Paz is through."

? He said, "I came up from ~~Dagobraques~~ ^(a suburb of La Paz) and there was no attempt to try to put the revolutionaries in their place." And he said, "If Paz doesn't move now, he's through." So I had two inklings on that Tuesday that he was through. But, as I say, there were a lot of things that pointed in the other direction including our interview ~~with~~ Dentzer's interview with me present ~~with~~ with both Paz and with the commanders in chief, the commander, with Ovando and with the commander of the armed forces, the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, all the military commanders. And Rodriguez, the Chief of Staff, consulted the other commanders in our presence and Ovando turned to him and said, "Colonel, you have /././." ^o

~~.....~~ [Interruption by Mrs. Henderson] "Colonel, you speak for the armed forces. Tell the gentlemen what we will do." And Rodriguez said ~~and~~ and he was a good soldier and a very correct man. ~~He~~ He said, "The

armed forces has^{ve} sworn an oath of fealty to this government and we will support and protect it." And no one said no. And we could report this. But, at that very instance^{te}, Ovando and the others were already well into their plan to throw^g Paz out.

STERN: Why did Ovando have to abandon the position as ~~co~~^{president} president in those first hours after the coup.

That's a little . . . *(e)*

HENDERSON: He got booted off the balcony! You have to understand about Ovando that he was a man who was really a physical coward. It took an effort of will for him at any time to face a confrontation.

STERN: It's been very hard for me to get much hard information on him. He's a very elusive character and the . . . *(e)*

HENDERSON: I think I wrote a bio on him. I think but I'm not sure. Or else I had a bio prepared and I contributed to it.

STERN: Well, the problem is in this case that the, *(e)* much of the documentation on the Bolivian period is, of course, at the Johnson library, as opposed to the Kennedy Library.

HENDERSON: Oh, yes, yes, yes. Well . . . *(e)*

STERN: So I'm on less secure ground.

HENDERSON: Well, I'm sure^{if}. . . Well, ~~at least~~ you have access to the Johnson Library. You can negotiate access. I am sure you will find a bio of Ovando to which I contributed and to which I gave my best shot

to figure this man out. But, among other things, he was a physical coward and . . . *be*

STERN: That's very interesting.

HENDERSON: And developed very bad ulcers or had bad ulcers which bothered him continuously and which flared up any time that he got into a confrontation.

STERN: What about his relationship with Barrientos who was the boss? Or is it not that simple?

HENDERSON: Well, let me finish off why he dropped off.

STERN: Okay.

HENDERSON: They had had all this *soo garaw* ~~confusion~~ and then on the day of the revolution and then ~~and~~ a number of people were killed. And *y* . . . [Interruption] ~~-----~~
~~And his character.~~

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: There were several things about Ovando, in the first place he *3* had a different sense of time from most Bolivians. Most Bolivians it was either now or tomorrow. Tomorrow meaning indefinitely, and maybe never. But Ovando, he could wait indefinitely but he never . . . if he selected an objective, he never gave up. He would wait. And it would come about. The second is, as I say, he was a physical coward, hated confrontations and, but, with a sheer effort of will, *would live* ~~get~~ through them and do what he had to do. He was unbelievably subtle in many of his thought processes and unbelievably naive and straight-

forward under some circumstances. For example, when John Gunther was in Bolivia, Barrientos asked me to bring him down to a luncheon that he was giving. This was at the point at which Barrientos was beginning to think in terms of an organized campaign for election as president . . .

STERN:

In ¹⁹⁶⁶ ~~sixty-six~~ ⁹

HENDERSON:

In ¹⁹⁶⁶ ~~sixty-six~~. At the conclusion of the luncheon,

Ovando took me by the sleeve and drew me off to one side and said, "You know, elections are costly. They are a costly business." I said, "Well, I don't know too much about that." And he said, "We had hoped that the United States government would help us." And I said, "Well, I can always relay your request for assistance but", I said, "It would be helpful if you would give me some idea of what you had in mind." He said, "Two million dollars."

STERN:

That's specific enough!

HENDERSON:

[Laughter] This is another clue to his character. He was incredibly venal and yet he had absolutely no idea of magnitudes in money. He said two million dollars but it didn't mean anything to him. It just was a figure. He had no idea what two million dollars meant in terms of purchasing power, for example. And he knew absolutely nothing about money management. Nothing about money management! And, finally you have to say that he was at least as good a politician in

Bolivian terms and in his own terms as either Paz or Barrientos. He knew what the national aspirations were, how he could capitalize on them, what he could do. He was in La Paz, running the show in La Paz while Barrientos was in Cochabamba during the revolution, during the overthrow of Paz. He was the one that escorted Paz to the airport. He came back from the airport . . .

STERN: Is this, is the story, as far as you know, true that he offered Paz "I'll either take you to the morgue or to the airport. It's your choice."

HENDERSON: I think that's apocryphal. It sounds so pat!

STERN: It sounds . . . It's a great story! [Laughter]

HENDERSON: It sounds so pat! I can't vouch for that one but I can vouch for a few more. One, that he saw Paz off, he started down from the airport. At the midpoint on the road down from the airport, you have to go through the factory district. His car was surrounded by, by a mob from the factory district. Ovando was really scared but a civilian who was travelling with him got out and stood on the hood of the car and said, "Compadres, he's your new leader. Let him through." And this let Paz through. I mean, let Ovando through. Ovando went to the palace, thinking that he was, the first man into the palace was the man who was going to rule Bolivia. But the palace

came under attack and some of the military officers stayed in the palace. But Paz, I mean Ovando, had himself smuggled out of the palace in an ambulance on a stretcher and carried over to the Estado Mayor, the headquarters, their military headquarters. Lechin, who also thought that the first man into the palace would be president, got a mob together and started to attack the palace. The mob was driven off, I don't know just how. I guess there was some firing. I don't think there were many casualties from it. But in his haste to get out of there, Lechin lost a shoe. He made his way to the Estado Mayor for some reason ~~and~~ to talk to Ovando to see if he couldn't make a deal with Ovando, and Ovando offered him a pair of shoes. And gave him a pair of American parachute trooper's boots and said to Lechin, "How do you like to stand in the Americans' shoes?"

Now these are stories I will stand by. The others, . . . the other one I'm not sure of. But, they're all illustrative of certain aspects. So you think essentially that he ^{withdrew as} ~~was~~ ^{co}president simply because of opposition? Right.

STERN:

HENDERSON:

Well, the next day when Barrientos landed and came into La Paz with a great popular acclaim and they went to the palace and they stood out on the balcony overlooking the plaza, and Barrientos was proclaimed

president and the crowd cheered and then Ovando was proclaimed co-president and the crowd just booed him. Just . . . and I don't know, maybe they started throwing vegetables or something. At any rate, he left the balcony and went in and resigned.

STERN: Yes, for the moment.

HENDERSON: For the moment, for the moment. But Ovando, Ovando was not a great man. He was just a very . . . ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~was a . . .~~ he was a plotter. That was the essence. . . .

STERN: Gunther called him a veritable Richelieu.

HENDERSON: No

STERN: I don't know if that ^{perhaps} isn't giving him too much credit.

HENDERSON: I think so. I don't think that he was that much, but he was a . . . he was in the tradition of the plotters.

STERN: Gunther mentions, by the way, being brought to a meeting of the president's cabinet at which, he says, of course, Ovando was there and you were there. I wonder how common it was for you to be at a meeting with Barrientos.

HENDERSON: Well, ~~what meeting?~~ ^e quite common.

STERN: A cabinet meeting, a cabinet meeting.

HENDERSON: Yes, yes. But things were pretty informal. I tried always to be very careful and particularly in front of other people I tried to keep my relationship with Barrientos as formal as possible. With Barrientos

that wasn't always possible but because he was a very genuine person. If he liked you, he couldn't help but show it and we liked and admired and respected each other very much.

STERN:

There was, of course, I think. . . well, actually I'd like very much to have your assessment of this, that the tendency is to think of all military coups in Latin America as being pretty much of a piece. But that in this case there was a major difference in that Barrientos was at least ^{a child} of the ~~MNR~~ ^{MNR} revolution. He had been close to Paz. He had brought him to take over in ^{'52} ~~fifty-two~~ flown him in and did not think of himself as being a representative of the oligarchy who was just going to restore things as they had been. I mean that was impossible. That could never happen again and that in his own way conceived of himself as continuing the revolution while I think Ovando might very much have been closer to the other kind of revolution, the military type coup.

[Movimiento
National
Revolutionario -
The National
Revolutionary
Movement]

HENDERSON:

Well, . . . *2*

STERN:

I wonder how accurate you feel that is.

HENDERSON:

I think that's fairly accurate. Anyone who came to Bolivia ^{after 1952} had to deal with the reality that Bolivia was basically a leftist society in its thinking. It had, it had overthrown a *2* small group of wealthy people who had run the country. And, it was a society which had cut free, if it had ever had any real ties to a . . . the best code word is rightest philosophy.

You see, when I went to Bolivia in ~~forty-four~~⁹ '44, serfdom was still a fact in Bolivian life. Indians were sold with the land and they occupied a very low position. Actually they were excluded both from the social and the economic life of the country.

STERN:

Certainly from the political life.

HENDERSON:

And the political life. And in ~~fifty-two~~^{52,} whether it was effective or not, a new philosophy was enunciated making the Indians not only co^g-equal but in some senses advantaged over the other elements of the society. This was carried to its logical extreme in the Cochabamba area because that was where the olig^garchy really had its strongest seat except in the mines, of course. But the mines were a separate case and a special case. So that there was no, no way that anyone could pretend to public office in Bolivia any longer moving from a position on the right. Any more than before that there had been any way for anybody to move into public office from a position on the left!

STERN:

The revolution had simply become a part of the fabric of the country.

HENDERSON:

That's right. That's right. And it was. . . it had been in place for long enough so that it became part of the essential thinking of anyone who was thinking politics. So that ~~and~~ and Barrientos certainly by temper^dment was predisposed to think in

these terms and to think how to consolidate the revolution and to make it yield more benefits for the Bolivians.

STERN:

What was the relationship like between Barrientos and Ovando? ^{It} must have been a very interesting one. Co-presidents tend not to work very well together. It's not . . . ^{el}

HENDERSON:

Well, this was another example of Barrientos. /././.

Well, I'll tell you a story that illustrates what Barrientos was. In April of ^{1965,} ~~sixty five,~~ the ninth of April was the day of the MNR revolution.

So the MNR, the remnants of the MNR said that they were going to take to the streets for the parade, publicly announced. The falange, sworn enemies of the MNR, and now feeling that they had a position to operate from for the first time in a long time, made a public statement that if the MNR took to the streets the falange would also take to the streets. And then the government issued a statement saying that although the ninth of April was a day of national celebration in Bolivia because it signified the liberation of the Bolivian people and the government would honor it, it would honor it by, not by military parades but by a day of national dedication. Well, then everybody issued press releases. And there was a whole battle going on and in the midst of this I had to go up to see

Barrientos about something. And after we had done

more Socialists
Boliviano (FSB)

our business, I said to him, "René, look, I'm just a poor dumb gringo and I don't understand Bolivian things at all." I said, "But, looked at from a gringo point of view this has all the potential for a very messy situation in La Paz. The MNR goes out on the streets, the falange goes out on the streets. There's a big riot and the government has to move in and then everything is up for grabs." And he said, "Well, yes, gringo, you're right. You don't understand Bolivian things." He said, "This is very simple. The MNR has said that they are going to take to the streets. So they've made their point! They've said that they are going to take to the streets. The falange says that if the MNR takes to the streets, they will take to the streets. So they've made their point. And the government says it's going to be a peaceful day of national dedication. So, so that everybody's made their point. So there really is no sense in fighting about it. It'll be very peaceful. A cup of tea."

STERN: What happened?

HENDERSON: It was a cup of tea! [Laughter] Nothing happened! If we had gone by what we could read in the papers and what our people in the MNR and the falange were saying we'd have been reporting all kinds of drastic

things but nothing happened. I took Barrientos's advice. He was sitting in the key position.

STERN: Did Barrientos fear, did he ever voice to you any concern that Ovando might try to overthrow him or . . . (?)

HENDERSON: No, he knew Ovando very well indeed. He knew he was too cowardly to face a confrontation. But Barrientos also knew that he couldn't afford to alienate any considerable sector of the armed forces. And Ovando represented a strong element of the armed forces. So Barrientos wasn't about to force a confrontation and neither was Ovando. The classic example of that came when ~~and~~ and I've forgotten the exact date when this happened, but at any rate what happened basically was that ~~COMIBOL~~ ^{COMIBOL} was running rapidly into a desperate financial situation and I had warned them that they were and that we weren't going to be able to bail them out. And the miners were being very irresponsible. And so ~~on~~ on a week end Barrientos and Ovando were out of town, pre-planned. They hadn't told ~~COMIBOL~~ ^{COMIBOL} anything about this so ~~COMIBOL~~ ^{COMIBOL} had sent the miners' salary to the mines, and then the government moved in and seized some leaders and shipped them out of the country. I have a feeling that Siles and Lechin were among those who were shipped out.

STERN: Is this the May ^{'65?} ~~sixty-five?~~

HENDERSON: Yes. That would be ~~that~~ that would be about right,

STERN: The big outburst.

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: Virtual civil war.

HENDERSON: Yes, that was right. That's it. Well, then Barrientos and Ovando came back to La Paz and tried to figure out what to do next. And, the students, the university students were threatening and the miners were threatening and the myth of the miners' militia was very heavy on the land. And right in the midst of this the taxi drivers went out on strike. They didn't like the traffic, the chief of traffic police. And, there were demonstrations in La Paz all that week. Well, there's a mine, a privately owned mine, outside of La Paz over the mountains, over the first ridge out of La Paz to the northwest and it sits astride, its location is right astride both the water supply for the city of La Paz and the power supply for the city of La Paz. So that theoretically the mining militia in that camp have the city of La Paz hostage. Well, that whole week went on and there were marching in the streets and the carabineros did a very effective job in controlling the worst of the public demonstrations, but nonetheless it got more and more tense. And the university students said that they would negotiate for the government with

the miners and they sent a delegation out to the mines. So Monday morning ~~---~~ this went on all one week. On Monday morning I got some very confused reports. Well, I'll tell what happened not how they were reported to me but what happened. What happened was that Barrientos and Ovando finally understood that their problem was going to be with this mine out here. So they decided to send their best unit out to take over that mine. So the unit, very well prepared, went up, straight up and over to the mine, starting out about four o'clock Monday morning. The militia, for some reason, the mine militia at the same time decided that the way to show, have a show of force which would impress La Paz was to take over the airport.

Well, they could have come straight over this ridge and down to the airport but instead ~~---~~ this ridge kind of tapers out toward the end and then, being an undisciplined mob, they went around the ridge and back this way to the airport. Well, the result was that the troopers going up and over missed the militia, and the militia missed the troopers. But as they went over the ridge, the troopers lost radio contact with La Paz. So Ovando sitting down in the command hears first that the militia had taken over the airport and he's lost contact with his troops in the mine. And he gets

panicked and he sends reinforcements out through the factory district on the direct route once again. Well, by this time the troopers have taken over the mine. They have reestablished radio contact. And the people in the mines are in contact with their people at the airport and they tell them, "Your base is gone. You'd better get the hell out of there!" So these people, this militia starts fading back through the factory district just as these reinforcements come up through. And so they have a big donnybrook up there and about eighty-five people get killed. Completely useless. But meanwhile, all kinds of shooting going on, scaring the hell out of the good citizens of La Paz. And the taxi drivers and the students decide that this is the time to drop their ultimatum on Ovando.

So Ovando, lying on his cot, suffering agonies with his ulcers, authorizes the students to go out and negotiate with the miners, fires the traffic chief and makes other concessions to the taxi drivers and suddenly finds that the whole thing was unnecessary and that he had the whole bit in his hand if he had only waited. Which is one time when he should have waited and he didn't. Well, the newspapers got a picture of him laying on his cot, you know, completely incapacitated in the midst of this serious crisis, and they plastered it all over the

newspapers. And, so I went down to talk to Barrientos about the whole situation and ask him what was going to happen. And Barrientos said, "Oh, there's no question. Ovando's showⁿ up absolutely poorly in this whole situation and he's got to go. He's got to go." So I went to bed on the assumption that Ovando had to go.

The next morning I wake up and the news in the newspaper was that we had co^{pr}presidentes. Well, I didn't want to make Barrientos loose face but they still had the problem of the other mines and the students who were up there negotiating with them. But I had inside information that the mine leaders in the other mines, when they heard that this other one had gone down, that the whole . . . and that the militia had fallen apart, the whole myth of the mining militias^(s) invincibility was blown up. And so they decided to leave the country in a hurry on their own steam. So I asked for an appointment to see Barrientos and he said that he'd see me at eight o'clock that evening. So I went down and he and Ovando were sitting there at dinner. So I asked them what they were going to do now and they consulted with each other in very collegial fashion and told me that they were now preparing an expedition -- against the mines. And I said, "It's not necessary." "Well, what do you mean it's not necessary?" I said,

"The mine leaders who might have done anything have all left the country." They said, "Oh, no, that's impossible! Your information's wrong." And I said, "Well, I don't think so. I think that they are in Chile right now." And just then an aide came in and handed . . . [Laughter] . . . a note to them saying that in fact they ^{were} . . . Well, a couple of days later I had an opportunity to ask René what had happened, how had it come about. I'd already gotten the story from another guy who was at the meeting. Well, they had had a long meeting that night in the palace in which several people had reproached Ovando with his lack of foresight and his giving away all the positions and all the rest of it. And Ovando made a very eloquent defense of his position. He said, "It's all very well for you to stand here in the palace, safe and secure. But you ~~are~~ ^{were} not in the command post with me. And I was in the command post and I had to make command decisions. And I made them in what I thought to be the best interests of the country." He said, "I had the authority and the responsibility to make those decisions and you did not. And I made them." And he said, "Now if you want to have my commission as ~~Commander~~, ~~Chief of Staff~~ of the armed forces, you may have it." And he said, "I think that every

soldier will know that I did my duty." And, of course, they were all military officers sitting around the table and they could all put themselves in his position and they said, "Yes, you're right." And so they found that the solution was to make them co-presidentes. And that was how they became co-presidentes.

STERN: Did they get along fairly well while they let's see, that was from ^{'66} ~~sixty-six~~ to ^{'69} ~~sixty-nine~~ until Barrientos was killed.

HENDERSON: No, no, no. It wasn't from ^{'66.} ~~sixty-six~~. It was a very short period. It was a period of about six months . . .

STERN: Oh, that's right!

HENDERSON: . . . and then, and then they went . . .

STERN: That's right. I'm sorry.

HENDERSON: . . . And then they went for the election.

STERN: That's right. Then . . . That's right. I'm sorry. Then Barrientos was elected in his own right. That's right.

HENDERSON: That's right.

STERN: That's right. Sorry.

HENDERSON: They . . . Well, before I left Bolivia in ~~sixty~~ ^{'68,} ~~eights,~~ I asked René what he saw as the future. And he said, well, that he was going to, ~~not~~ not going to run for reelection, that Ovando would be the next president but that Ovando would pretty much

have to do what René wanted him to do, and that René would always be a threat in being if he didn't. And he thought that Ovando would pretty well carry out his policies and that he, René, would then come back after that and, and take another crack.

STERN: Do you have any doubts that his death was an accident?

HENDERSON: No doubts at all.

STERN: No doubts at all.

HENDERSON: I know. . . I told. . . René pushed me very hard to get him some helicopters. And I told him that, as far as I was concerned that, if an airplane was a machine that almost didn't fly, a helicopter was that tripled. And I said, "It's held up in the air by a whole network of ground support mechanisms." And I said, "Very sophisticated ground support mechanisms and you don't have any of it." And I said, "There will be an accident. And, for one reason or another and I will feel that I have killed you." And he said, "Look, I am not only the president of Bolivia but I am also an aviator." And he said, "You are neither the president of Bolivia nor an aviator. So you cannot tell me what to do nor can you tell me anything about helicopters."

Well, we finally got him some helicopters.
But I was right.

STERN: Indeed. And it all happened after you left La Paz.

HENDERSON: It happened after I left.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: But we got him, as I remember it, four helicopters and three of them were out of commission most of the time for one reason or another just because they didn't have the ground support mechanism. And, of course, what they didn't have, too, were pilots who had so many hours in the air that they wouldn't make the mistakes. And what happened, there was something that had happened once before. Barrientos had a great habit of flying out to these little villages, setting down, leaving the rotors going, running out from underneath, embracing the local authorities, slipping them a few thousand bills for a football field or something and rushing back on to his helicopter and taking off like a bird.

And one time when he was doing this one of his aides who had been following in another helicopter was standing on the ground waiting for the president's helicopter to take off and the crowd rushed in. Now, Barrientos was always careful to tell them to stay back while he was taking off but the crowd rushed in as they would. And the helicopter started going up. And the stabilizing propellor on the back, the aide was pushed forward and the stabilizing propellor just cut him right across the scalp. And we had to ship him up to Panama

to get mended. Well, this time what happened was that in this little village which is between Oruro and Cochabamba there's a telephone-telegraph line that goes down there it's up pretty high, up about between thirty and forty feet because of the particular conformation. The pilot was watching the crowd to make sure he could clear the crowd and he didn't watch his air space. The rotor caught the wire and pppft, flipped it. And, of course it exploded on impact and that was it.

STERN: Was the United States pretty much committed to Barrientos's reelection in ^{'66?} ~~sixty-six~~? I mean . . .

HENDERSON: You remember I told you about a Wednesday staff meeting in which we tried to figure out what Washington was wondering about and then answer it.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: We spent about three of those Wednesdays trying to figure out what Washington was thinking about this and what Washington was thinking actually materialized in the ^{form of} ~~fall~~ a question saying why should we in any way support an election at this time if as many factors are negative as you seem to think? Well, we had been thinking along these lines and so we had an answer ready and the answer was this. In the first place, quite unexpectedly Ovando one morning had asked me to come down

and had asked me if I thought there was going to be an election. If I thought there would be general abstention, what was the climate for an election? And he put me on the spot so I said well, I didn't know very much about politics but that I had from time to time gone to horse races. And I ~~noticed~~ noticed that at horse races, if there was only one horse running, people didn't tend to bet. And furthermore, *that* if you put up a horse against mules people seemed to stay away from the betting too. And he looked at me and said, "Well, I take it what you mean is that Barrientos has to have some real opposition." And I said, "That's horse races, not politics. That's your game."

So they did in fact put up some candidates. So my first answer was that the habit of elections was something that had to be carefully cultivated. And that this was the first time in the history of Bolivia that there was an election in which candidates might be fairly freely chosen. I said there was no doubt in my mind as to the outcome but, I said, at least they will get into the habit of campaigning. The second thing is that the political parties had become completely unable to function as political parties and an election would force them to function as political parties. And

perhaps they would learn something from this. And, the third answer was the one that I had given Lindley in Peru, that the military must find some way of transferring power peacefully and without loss to itself. And I said, this affords them that chance. We never ~~gap in tape~~ [Interruption]

STERN: Was there any major reaction in Bolivia to the American intervention in the Dominican Republic in May of ~~sixty-five~~^{'65} April, ~~of~~ May of ~~sixty-five~~^{'65} that may have contributed to some of the unrest of that period? One of the . . .

HENDERSON: No, no. That was looked upon as an aberration on the part of the United States government.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: The OAS^[Organization of American States] was persuaded eventually to cover for us and so Bolivia was not going to fall out of step on that. But it, it, if anyone thought about it at all they thought about it as completely an aberration.

STERN: I see. I know that one ~~an~~ an interview I read with a member of the Bolivian Communist party mentions a demonstration being held outside of the American embassy but I suppose that's pretty routine.

HENDERSON: That was routine. [Laughter] That was with something /o/o/o.

STERN: And he mentions that the embassy was closed up. Maybe it was there ~~or~~ or locked up, I should say.

HENDERSON: Well, we had our security precautions.

STERN: Right. Okay, one other small thing. An American U-2 plane crashed in Bolivia in 1966. Did that create any problems for you?

HENDERSON: That was another, another headache that we didn't need but it wasn't a major problem at all. If we had had either the Cubans or the Czechs there by that time we might have had some problems but the only ones left were the Yugoslavs and I don't think they were very active by that time. They, they had been very close to Paz but they were not close to the military group. So, no, it was just a routine. We had to retrieve the black boxes and so on but we were able to do this and we . . . It was a one-day story and gone.

STERN: I see. Okay. Finally the last item which, of course, is far more important because the whole ^{'67} sixty-seven . . .

HENDERSON: Guevara. [Ernesto "Che" Guevara]

STERN: . . . episode on Guevara. Right. I suppose the best way is to just begin at the beginning. The discovery of the bases

HENDERSON: ^{that wasn't} They ~~were~~ from the beginning

STERN: Well, I meant in terms of ^{'67} ~~sixty seven~~.

HENDERSON: ^{Yeah} Well, we have to go back to

STERN: Sure, it goes back before that.

HENDERSON: Yes. We didn't, ^{we} we were not aware of anything

going on until . . . August of ^{'66} ~~sixty six~~ when we started getting rumors about a Cuban intervention, which at first we tended to discount.

STERN: Apparently Barrientos discounted it too.

HENDERSON: Oh, yes, yes, yes.

STERN: He didn't take it too seriously.

HENDERSON: He didn't take it seriously at all. And we didn't take it too seriously. It was the kind of thing, you know. In Bolivia your problem in intelligence is not to get information. You have too much information. What you have to do is to sort out . . . ^{cal}

STERN: What's true.

HENDERSON: . . . the most likely. So we noted the fact that it was being reported but we, we just put ⁱ⁺ in our follow-up register. By November we began to hear stories about Guevara being there, but since Guevara was a name, was a Bolivian name too and Walter Guevara was a prominent Bolivian politician and so on and we wondered if they were getting confused with this Guevara. There was another Guevara who was a mine leader.
 STERN: ^{Right.}
 HENDERSON: ~~mine leader~~ We began to wonder about that. But by, oh, about by February, we sort of pulled the whole thing together once and looked at it and it occurred to me that rumors in Bolivia usually box the compass. But that there were, these rumors all seemed to be pointing in one direction. So I said, "Well, we

don't have any evidence but let's. . . if you, if the CIA picks up anything, let me know right away because it could be the beginning of something."

Then, the seventeenth of March Barrientos called me at the house, at the residence, and asked me to come down. I went down. It was about eight o'clock. He was very relaxed and said that something had happened down around Camero, that ~~was~~ a small group of soldiers, new recruits under a junior command, had stumbled into something and had been shot up. He himself was, tended to discount it but his military personnel felt that this was a great chance to shake down the United States for a whole lot of equipment and they were prepared to ~~do~~ he said, "It's a Christmas list."

STERN: Right, those requests came very quickly.

HENDERSON: Well, this was at eight o'clock. I had asked him if I should bring an advisor with me and he said bring your military attaché. So I had taken my military attaché down. Ordinarily I would have taken my deputy chief of mission. So when we left Barrientos's house at about nine-thirty, we drove up to the [^] ~~house~~ ^[Deputy Chief of Mission] DCM's house and we were sitting there reviewing this and discussing how we would go about it when my wife called from the residence and said Barrientos wants you to come back immediately. She had guessed

where I was. So I went back to Barrientos and we waited for about half an hour and then he came storming in very upset, very agitated and said, "Doug, you've got to get us that military equipment. We've got to have that military equipment." And I mildly objected that he had just called it a Christmas list. And he said, "Doug, don't talk to me about that." And he said, "We've got to have that equipment." So obviously between, between eight o'clock and eleven o'clock something . . .

STERN: Did he say why?

HENDERSON: He did not say why.

STERN: He did not say why.

HENDERSON: But he did say that this is a, yes he, yes he did in his own way, he said, "This is a guerilla intervention led by Cubans and" he said, "This is probably a concerted strike and none of us is safe tonight." And when I left he had his own bodyguards follow me back to the residence just to give versimilitude, I suppose, to what he was saying.

STERN: Well, obviously that was an over^greaction but he was trying to make his point.

HENDERSON: He was trying to make his point.

STERN: Sure.

HENDERSON: Well, the military performed according to specifications-- and did try to shake us down and sent a mission up to the United States although I advised them not to do it. I said that "you have to prepare the way for

these kinds of things. You're going to get up there and nobody's going to pay any attention to you. You're not going to get anything." And I talked with René and I said, "Now look, René, if this is in fact a military intervention or a guerilla intervention from Cuba," I said, "The first thing you'll do if you send unprepared troops in there is to give them a present of all the latest equipment that we've given you." And I said, "I'm not going to do it. We do have a plan for a ranger battalion to be trained in Santa Cruz. And we will train that, and that is just ~~in~~ consistent with what we've been doing all along. This is not a new thing. All I have to do is to, to move up the scheduling on this a little bit and we will just train a ranger battalion."

STERN:

One, if I may interrupt you just a moment, one source quotes you as having been deeply concerned that if they got what they wanted immediately in a sort of panic reaction, that they might over-react in the use of such materiel. They might, for example, start bombing areas and killing ~~ing~~ civilians and . . .

HENDERSON:

Exactly!

STERN:

And with Vietnam as an example, that you were very concerned about avoiding that sort of thing.

HENDERSON: Exactly! I mean, what they would have done certainly would have been to turn the local populace completely against them. For, and among other things, they wanted napalm. And I told them that they would never get any napalm through the US_o embassy. Later they got some from Argentina and they stored it up ~~up~~ up in the air force hangers, right next to the gasoline supplies and it started leaking. ~~leave it to~~ ^{With the luck of} the Bolivians!

STERN: Where did the Argentinians get it?

HENDERSON: Well, the Argentinians were finally turned off on this whole shake-down operation because they got shaken down too. The Argentine counsel^{or} told me that they sent in a supply of officer's pistols to Camⁱ ~~arg~~ and the chief of staff of the armed forces started handing them out ^{down there} as if they were lollipops! [Laughter] Well, at any rate, Barrientos having recovered from the first shock went into his mystical phase and said that he could put himself in the position of those people and he knew just what they were going to do. They were going to go up the ravines up into the mining area and take over the mining area and use that as the base against him. In fact, they never did this.

STERN: Although one can see why he ^{was afraid of} ~~would~~ trade ~~or~~ that kind of route, sure.

HENDERSON: Yes. But let me say what I think about this whole

operation. I think that Guevara, being an Argentine had always in his mind to take over Argentina. He ././. look, in the first place they had failed in Venezuela, they had failed in Peru, Chile was far away and a tough nut to crack; Brazil was obviously too tough. Central America wouldn't take them anywhere. They had two choices: Ecuador or Bolivia. Ecuador would have been much easier for them. They could have taken over Ecuador without any problem at all and have access to the sea all the time. Bolivia was landlocked. There would have been,/. . . it was a very difficult operation and they chose the worst part, the physically worst part of Bolivia to operate from. But it was closest to Argentina.

STERN: Yes. Right.

HENDERSON: And if . . .

STERN: It was a very strategically located area too. Close to the borders of all those . . .

HENDERSON: If Guevara could establish a base camp there and raid out into northern Argentina and gradually build up in the area and northern Argentina, he might very well have pulled it off. This is why they chose Bolivia I think. Secondly . . .

STERN: Apparently he also had some, some bad advice from /././.

HENDERSON: Debray. [Jules Regis Debray]

STERN: Debray and from some Communist Bolivians who said that the regime was ripe for being overthrown and that kind of thing.

HENDERSON: Well the . . . ~~that~~ . . . I think that Guevara probably would have discounted that. But he was fascinated by Debray, I think, kind of hypnotized. Debray had looked at the Cuban situation and had given a philosophical rationale to the Cuban situation which made them appear like real Communist pioneers. The orthodox Communist theory is that a Communist revolution occurs only when the objective conditions are present. The Cuban situation analyzed by Debray results in the proposition that Communism occurs spontaneously when the proletariat is engaged in fighting the exploiters. And therefore the business of revolutionaries is revolution and therefore you should make revolution at all times. And this was Debray's contribution which the, which the orthodox Communists were at all times combatting including some articles in Czechoslovakia.

Well, the second thing is that Guevara had a mystique about the hardening experience of a guerilla. You had to expose yourself to terrible physical hardships and in this proving ground you became the equivalent of at least sixteen men, ordinary soldiers. And so he took a group on one

of these hardening expeditions to the north and left his base there under minimum security with a few Cubans. They had recruited some Bolivians. And the Bolivians thought, you know, well, this is the revolution and we're all going to eat strawberries. And they got to this camp and the Cubans used them as the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. And they didn't come to a revolutionary camp to do that! So, when they saw their chance they absconded and being what they were, they absconded with something to earn their future livelihood which was a couple of guns, of rifles /././.

~~END OF TAPE IV.~~

BEGINNING OF TAPE V

HENDERSON: . . . which they ^{took} went to Caméré and tried to pawn. The pawnshop operator told the local commander about this. He picked these two fellows up and rattled them a little bit and they told a story about Guevara being there and great communications equipment and these people being able to subside, ~~subside~~ subsist on no rations and could walk on water and a great number of things. And so the local commander decided to make himself a hero and he sent his detachment out, ten men under a junior lieutenant, I think he was. And, in order

to make this a real expedition, they had a mortar. And the mortar, you know, has to be carried by three people; the tube, one guy carries the tube; another guy carries the base plate and tripod; and the third guy carries the ammunition. Well, of course, the base plate was swinging like this and clanging like church bells on every rock that they came across. The guerillas, situated up above this draw, watched them come up, disobeyed Guevara's orders, opened fire, killed several of them and sent the rest back after a day.

When Guevara got back a few days later he was furious, realized that his cover was blown, that he would have to get out of there. He had two, he had an Argentine and a . . . and Debray in camp with him. He decided he had to shake them out so he made a circle to the south, shook them out and they were immediately picked up. Then he turned north and then there was the great expedition through the north in which only at one other time before their final confrontation did they hit the Bolivian armed forces with Guevara there. That was about a week later. But again the guerillas ambushed the armed forces and scared ./. .

HENDERSON: They were trainers.

STERN: . . . to train the Bolivians. Apparently they did a very effective job.

HENDERSON: Well, it was a high class operation under forced draft. It was my substitute for everything that ~~INC~~SOUTH, not so much Washington but ~~INC~~SOUTH really wanted to put a big operation in there and I said no way. And, I said, "The Bolivians./ . . this is a Bolivian problem. The Bolivians have to handle it. We'll train them, but the Bolivians have to handle it." Which had been my thesis from the beginning, that Bolivian problems were for Bolivians to handle.

STERN: Give them small arms, train them in how to use . . .

HENDERSON: Well, even train them with rifles. You don't give them, ~~you~~ you don't give them everything but they have to know enough not to throw their rifles away when they get into combat. Well, so Guevara's wandering north and our people are trying to shake down Debray and Debray thinks that the whole story is known so he tells a little bit of what he knows. But still, there was real doubt in Washington whether Guevara was in fact there. And I came up in April and I had lunch with Fitzgerald [Desmond Fitzgerald] who told me that he didn't believe that Guevara was there. He thought that Guevara had been killed in the Dominican Republic and . . .

STERN: Debray, of course, kept denying that Guevara was there even after he was captured.

HENDERSON: Yes, but at the same time there was always a little bit of, of the kind of saying that if I could tell you, ^{you} ~~it~~ would be a surprise kind of thing. There was enough there so that we could deduce something. And we felt pretty strongly on the evidence that he was there. But Fitzgerald, Des Fitzgerald, absolutely couldn't believe it, said that we could have no better luck than to have Guevara leading a guerilla troop there because he knew nothing about guerilla operations and would botch everything but that he just didn't believe it. He ^[Fitzgerald] died in July of a heart attack.

Then, ^{and} and Guevara appeared one more time in a village in south, ^{of} north Cochabamba, north and east of Cochabamba to get some supplies because of his asthma. Then, in August ~~oh~~ oh, by the way, by that time this Argentine who was a pretty good artist had been drawing us pictures, had been drawing pictures of some of the people. And we could, . . . he identified one as Guevara. So we did have these pencil sketches but we still didn't have anything. Then in a complete mishmash, one night a Bolivian troop was advancing from south to north to meet another troop advancing north to

south, they came to a stream which wasn't on their map. They didn't know how wide it was. They camped. At first light they could see that they could cross it. They crossed it. They saw a light, a camp fire. The commander of the troop said that was their rendezvous group. The soldiers said, "the hell it is, that's the guerillas and we're not about to get shot up." So the commander said, "well, I'll show you," and he goes striding into the camp and here's a sentry huddled by the campfire with his poncho over his head, rifle like this, and the fellow, the commander thinks well, this is a Bolivian operation all right and he calls out the password and suddenly the whole thing goes into a Chinese fire drill and everybody escapes. It was the Guevara, it was the Guevara group.

Well, the Bolivian soldiers, having been held in one place and not moving in so, then they saw an opportunity to make themselves rich and they went in and seized everything in sight. But when it finally got back to headquarters they had Guevara's passport, they had a diary, they had pictures, they had his, his communications in clear and in code and a lot of things. So then we had the evidence. But that was still in the hands

of the Bolivian armed forces and we had to induce them to turn it over to us to make sure that it was authentic.

STERN:

Was Barrientos satisfied with the cooperation and the aid which you were giving him in terms of the training of the special forces and such, or did he still want a little more. . . what word would I use?

HENDERSON:

Well, he was always under pressure from the armed forces to shake me down for more equipment. But he could see the logic of what I was doing. Furthermore, they had talked, ~~and~~ ^{INC}INC SOUTH had ^{take}taked about a special strike force and I said, "Who's going to be in command of the special strike force?" And they said, "Well, the armed forces." And I said, "Well, the armed forces will then, after they use it against this guerilla incursion, will have a special strike force to do anything they want to in the country and it will be the best strike force and consequently they can run the country. Do you want that?" "Oh, no. Well, probably it should be under the president's command." I said, "You put that weapon in Barrientos's hands and he will be invincible and then we'll have trouble with Barrientos, and I don't want that either. We will do what I say."

We will, we will prepare these rangers. They will be part of the total plan we have for the armed forces, and that's the way it will be."

Well, so in the training, however, and you probably know this, I had been concerned from the beginning that the armed forces by themselves would be heavy handed with the local people and would turn them against them.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: So I said do we have any resource by which we can advise these rangers and keep them out of trouble. And we finally got four Cubans who had particular reasons to be unhappy with Guevara, and we trained two of them directly with this ranger batallion, and we had two more, one in the Ministry of the Interior, and I've forgotten where the fourth one was.

STERN: 

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: The, the two that went out with the rangers were able to keep the rangers under control and prevent any looting or heavy handedness with the armed, with the civilian population. And they were able to elicit information from the civilian population and track Guevara down. And that was how they finally cornered him in this ravine. The fire fight broke out in the morning, on Sunday morning.

Guevara was wounded, not heavily wounded but wounded. His rifle had been destroyed by a hit and a glancing blow hit him in the thigh. He surrendered, identifying himself and saying he was worth more to the Bolivians alive than dead. They took him to the little village and had him prisoner there while they consulted with the commanders. One of the Cubans ~~was~~ on Monday morning talked with him from about eight o'clock until just before his execution. That record is available somewhere. It really didn't, ~~was~~ it really wasn't anything that was too pertinent to anything we needed to know. And another ^{was} man, another of the Cubans had been captured with Guevara. He was executed first and then Guevara was executed.

STERN:

Can I interject one point? Apparently there was the/. . . Barrientos, Ovando, etc., met to discuss what to do, ~~whether~~ or not he would be tried, or imprisoned or whatever, and the decision was that there was no choice but to kill him because, execute him because if he, ~~was~~ a trial would center a lot of attention on Bolivia. If he were imprisoned on the other hand, it might stimulate people to try to resume the effort or free him or whatever, *and that* execution was the only way and, of course, to say that he had been killed in the original confrontation. Was there, ~~was~~ did you have any say at all in that

HENDERSON: No, wait a minute! It was ^{'64!} ~~sixty-four~~ It was '64. ~~sixty-four~~. Yes, indeed, it was ^{'64.} ~~sixty-four~~. But, at any rate, Debray was alive because I had intervened.

STERN: And they were determined to avoid that sort of /././.

HENDERSON: And so I, we knew nothing of the capture and execution of Guevara until the, ^{one of the} Cubans came in and reported [redacted] and [redacted] came in and told the DCM and the DCM came in and told me. And that was Tuesday afternoon. And . . .

3.4.
(b)
(1,6)

STERN: It would probably be safe to assume that they didn't tell you until it was a fait accompli.

HENDERSON: They didn't tell me then!

STERN: Because they didn't want you to possibly differ with their ^{own} solution.

HENDERSON: No, no, it's absolutely . . . No, no, there is no question. Because I had intervened on Debray's behalf . . .

STERN: On Debray's behalf . . .

HENDERSON: . . . that wiped me out of the picture completely. I could no longer operate in that area at all.

STERN: That's what I mean. They'd fear that you would counsel them in the same direction and what they wanted was to simply act on their own.

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HENDERSON: They sure, ~~---~~ ³ They sure did. On their own, absolutely. And that's what they did. And so. . . . And they never did inform me. I never was officially informed of what happened.

STERN: Do you think they made a mistake?

HENDERSON: Yes. Yes, I think they made a bad mistake. And then they made a worse^e mistake trying to cover it up.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: Of course Ovando, in his usual slick way, said that Guevara died of his wounds and that is true. He sure did.

STERN: Well, not in the sense that. . . . [Laughter]

HENDERSON: But that, that whole episode didn't affect the Bolivians as badly as it, as it made Guevara a martyr and a hero. Which wasn't^{it}. . . Well, I would have liked to have known Guevara. He would have been an interesting person to know and ~~---~~ ³ he had some good ideas and some bad ones, ~~As~~ we all do. But, in any case, it was done and I had no way of avoiding it. And then, of course, the worst part of it came when the armed forces exposed Guevara's body to the press . . . ³

STERN: All those pictures.

HENDERSON: And those pictures and one of our Cuban friends, not the one who had interviewed Guevara, but the other one lost his head, tried to take charge of

the operation, yelled out in English, Well, we had to pull him out of there and get him a/. . . I think it was the fastest evacuation ever from Bolivia. [Laughter] We got him out but he'd blown, he'd blown his cover. He'd blown, he'd pretty well blown everything. But nonetheless, we got him out and the cover story still holds. It's been under attack and I have been questioned about it but I have never been put on oath and questioned so I have refused to answer.

STERN: Yes.

HENDERSON: But this is the story.

STERN: I see. In the brief time we have left, the episode over the diary, with the interior minister.

HENDERSON: Yes, now that is another one. In the first place Arguedas^u had been a sleeper, planted on Barrientos very early on by the Communists. We warned Barrientos about it almost immediately after he took over in '64. ~~sixty four~~. He denied it and Arguedas^u denied it and said that he would, he would be willing to take a lie detector test. We took him down to Lima, put him on a lie detector test, broke him apart, his story fell apart, [REDACTED] I didn't like it. I was always uneasy about it but it was done.

3.4 (6)
(1.6)

And he became a pretty effective guy and

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he was a good minister of the Interior. The armed forces. ¹¹ Ovando I told you was venal and he thought he was going to make a mint off this diary. He had a number of people including Juan ^{de Onis} ~~Barra~~ ^{of} ~~Spain~~ the New York Times down there bidding. But they would only go to a certain point and then they weren't about to be interested any further. Ovando saw his gleams of gold go glittering, ^g and go glimmering and he, I am sure, offered it to Castro, and he probably got a pretty good sum for it. And his go-between was another colonel, general but I don't recall his name at the present time, but at any rate. There were a lot of people, a lot of people in the armed forces who knew what the story was. The diary surfaced and the Bolivian press started asking where, who gave that diary away? And the trail led right back to the Estado Mayor. And they were about to blow it and/. . . I think, now I'm just constructing, the armed forces, the top people went to Barrientos and said, "It's either us or a goat. And we pick your minister of the Interior. He is the most likely goat. Get rid of him."

^u Argedes had been, that evening had been carrying on business as usual. At ten o'clock he got a telephone call. And the next morning he's on the Chilean frontier, in his shirtsleeves. I think that he was selected as the cover.

STERN: And yet he came back.

HENDERSON: Well, by this. . . I think this was never a particularly emotionally stable person. He had been, ~~he~~ was stable under conditions where he was sure of his environment. But when his environment folded on him, he became very unstable. Just as I was surprised he would go down to Lima and he folded very quickly there. Well, ^{then} he, then his ^eper~~gr~~inations became absolutely, you know, irrational.

STERN: Right.

HENDERSON: And he went here and he went there. I never did know why or how he was killed. I don't know anything about that. I don't think he would have talked particularly, any more than he had talked. But he might have. Maybe somebody, maybe he knew something and was about to blow the whistle. So they then tried to get rid of him. The assassination of the, of the editor of El Diario which happened about the same time was quite different. As nearly as I can ^{ie}peice that together what happened was that the Israeli representative in La Paz was very close to the editor of El Diario. This was known. Some Arab terrorists put up a bonbon box and gave it to a Bolivian messenger and said to take it to the Israeli attaché with the compliments of the, of the editor of El Diario. The messenger got it reversed. Took it to the editor of El Diario from the Israeli attaché. It happened to be either his

birthday or their wedding anniversary. It was something that could have been expected. They opened it up and it blew up on them! That's a construction but I think it's a fairly accurate construction. But what happened to Arged^u^a I suspect that he knew something. He might have been ready to talk. Somebody eliminated him, at least the risk. But I am fairly sure that that is what happened.

STERN: Last point. Barrientos visited President Johnson in Texas in ^{'68.} ~~sixty-eight.~~⁹

HENDERSON: Yes.

STERN: You weren't there though.

HENDERSON: Yes I was.

STERN: Oh, you were!

HENDERSON: Yes, I was there.

STERN: I wasn't sure about that.

HENDERSON: Yes, I was there.

STERN: Can you tell me briefly about the meeting?

HENDERSON: Yes. Barrientos and Johnson got along very well. They liked each other very much but Johnson was adept at, you know, filling in with fluff to take the place of substance if he didn't want to talk substance. So, we had a nice lunch and the routine toasts were exchanged and then he took us out in his Lincoln Continental, Barrientos and I in the front seat and Johnson driving. ^[John Goodwin] ~~Oliver~~ and

the Bolivian ambassador in the back seat. And we

Covey
Asst. Secretary of State for Public Affairs

John Goodwin
Asst. Secretary of State for Public Affairs

went all over the countryside and finally, just as we were driving back, Johnson said something to the effect well, you didn't come here to see this. What is on your mind? Barrientos asked for a number of things. All of which he had asked me for and which I had had to tell him I couldn't get, including software for the armed forces of Bolivia which we had no, no, appropriation for whatsoever under any conditions. Johnson turned to me on each case and he said, or turned to ^{Covey} ~~Gubby~~, one time he turned to ^{Covey} ~~Gubby~~ when I said that I wasn't sure what had been told Barrientos on this point, he turned to ^{Covey} ~~Gubby~~. But in each instance we had to turn Barrientos down as I had told him would be done because they hadn't done their homework in advance and hadn't prepared the way. And Barrientos went away a very disappointed man and very angry with me.

STERN:

^{Is} ~~Was~~ that the last time you ever saw him?

HENDERSON:

No, no, no. I . . .

STERN:

^{I mean} Because you left. . . it wasn't long after that you left.

HENDERSON:

That's right. I. . . my wife. . . ^{Covey} First I was, [Robert M. Sayre] I was with ^{Covey} ~~Gubby~~ Oliver and Bob Sayre and that whole hierarchy there at the ranch. They said nothing to me about a replacement. I had been told by Dean Rusk that I would be there until the change of administration at least. I got back to Bolivia on the fifth. On the seventh in the morning I was going

down to Santa Cruz. I went up to the airport and I got a call at the airport from Bob Sayer saying, "Doug, before you read it in the papers, I want to tell you that President Johnson has asked for an ~~agreement~~ ^{agreement} for ~~Raoul Castro~~ ^[Raul Hector Castro]." And I said, "Well, that's all right. Ready to go but where am I going to go?" And he said, "Your orders will follow." Three weeks went by and no orders and then my wife was diagnosed as having an incurable cancer and we were brought back to the United States. And that was the ~~end~~ to all intents and purposes ~~the~~ the end of my career.

STERN:

I see.

HENDERSON:

Although I continued on but under conditions which were so bad that I was ashamed of myself for even putting up with them and I finally resigned.

STERN:

Did,/. . . It occurs to me that Barrientos was probably in a very weak position trying to pressure Johnson at that point since Johnson of course was leaving office and he knew it.

HENDERSON:

Well . . .

STERN:

And it might not be the ~~one~~ ^g one to make . . . ^g

HENDERSON:

Johnson was just trying to, you know, put on a last show and he still had command. He made a show of putting Barrientos aboard a army helicopter and then pointing over to another helicopter and he said, "This is a president's helicopter. That one

over there is a private person's helicopter, ~~o~~
mine! But Barrientos, . . . they held very firmly
to the conviction, myth that they had saved the
hemisphere from a Communist take-over by defeating
and executing Guevara and they felt that they had
been very badly paid for it. And so they were going
to try anything they could to get what they con-
sidered just remuneration for the expenditures which
they had been put to in this effort. ~~and~~ ^{And} the cost
to Bolivia.

STERN: Do you have anything else to add?

HENDERSON: No, I don't think so. I think we've exhausted the
subject.

STERN: Well, ^{Thank} ~~that~~ you very much!