

South American Leaders Back Morales and launch probe into Unrest

by Bill Faries and Sebastian Boyd via reed - Bloomberg *Monday, Sep 15 2008, 10:43pm*

international / imperialism / other press

[US covert ops are failing in Central Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Pacific and Australia -- everywhere in fact. The LAWLESS, murdering, terrorist, American PIG is failing on every front from energy wars to economic (globalisation) wars. What happened to turn the tables in such a short period of time? The same modus operandi that proved successful against the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia no longer 'works,' as the experience in Georgia and Latin America highlights, but why? Wouldn't the Americans love to know; I'm not about to spell it all out -- "we're at war," remember, dubya's moronic refrain! Let's just say digital information moves faster than covert ops these days and everyone is now familiar with the ugly face of American mass murder incorporated -- BIG problem! Ed.]



Murdering CIA targets indigenous leader, Evo Morales

Sept. 16 (Bloomberg) -- South American presidents declared support for Bolivia's leader Evo Morales and announced plans to investigate unrest in his country that took as many as 30 lives in the past week.

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, speaking to reporters after a meeting in Santiago of the Union of South American Nations late yesterday, urged the two sides in the dispute to talk, while she said Morales had to be recognized as the elected president. She offered no details of plans to probe the violence that's wracked Bolivia's eastern region.

"We call on all the political and social actors involved to take the measures necessary to bring an immediate end to violence, intimidation and lack of respect for the constitution," Bachelet said.

Bachelet called the meeting of Unasur after protesters opposed to a new constitution blocked roads, seized government offices and severed a pipeline to disrupt natural gas supplies to Brazil last week. Morales and the leaders of Venezuela and Ecuador accused the opposition of trying to provoke violence and overthrow an elected government.

Chile, which holds the first rotating presidency of Unasur that was founded in May, hosted eight regional heads of state including Morales, Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and

Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. They were joined by Jose Miguel Insulza, secretary-general of the Organization of American States, who said he was "profoundly worried" about Bolivia.

No Troops

After the meeting, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez reiterated previous comments that "if they kill Evo, if they unseat Evo, I would consider myself to have a green light to support any attempt of the Bolivian people to recover the path of democracy."

Chavez said he had never suggested he would send his own troops into Bolivia.

Opposition leaders, including Santa Cruz province Governor Ruben Costas, are chafing at Morales's plan to hold a referendum on a new constitution in January. Opponents say the proposed charter is illegal, deprives energy-rich regions of the autonomy they deserve and would force the breakup of large landholdings.

The protests in Tarija state led Bolivia to cut its natural gas shipments to Brazil by about 10 percent on Sept. 10 following an attack on a pipeline.

'Decisive Moment'

"Bolivia is approaching a decisive moment," said Erasto Almeida, a Latin America analyst at the Eurasia Group in New York. "The opposition clearly decided it was time to show Morales that he has to negotiate or they can impose a very high cost on him, not just in terms of gas exports but in terms of his political future."

The 12 governments will reject any attempt to break up Bolivia, Bachelet said.

Morales won 67 percent support in a national recall vote last month, more than he garnered in his election run in 2005.

"After the referendum, the government probably thought it had the upper hand," Almeida said.

At the same time, his strongest opponents, including Costas and Tarija Governor Mario Cossio, took the majority in their states, underscoring the country's divisions.

The dispute between Bolivia's central government and regional leaders has racial as well as economic overtones. The opposition, based in the eastern lowlands, draws more support from a wealthier, European-descended population than Morales, a western Bolivian of indigenous Aymara descent who took office in 2006.

Gas Reserves

"We've reached a point in which there's an immediate end to hostilities and problems, and we pass on to negotiations, or else the situation could become irreversible," Insulza said in an interview on Chile's Radio Cooperativa yesterday.

Bolivia, South America's poorest country, has the second-largest reserves of natural gas on the continent after Venezuela. Most of its daily gas production of about 32 million cubic meters is exported to neighboring Brazil and Argentina.

Chavez and Correa warned last weekend of efforts to overthrow Morales, the first president elected with a majority of the vote since democracy returned to Bolivia in a 1952 revolution. Chavez challenged the head of the Bolivian military General Luis Trigo to defend the government.

"I've been saying these days that they are overthrowing Evo, that they want to push Bolivia to a civil war and that I'm not going to stay with my arms crossed," Chavez said last weekend on his weekly television program. "General Trigo, I respond: Show me I am wrong, fulfill the obligation imposed by the Bolivian constitution."

Morales and Chavez blamed the U.S. last week for supporting opposition leaders, a charge the U.S. State Department called "baseless." Both leaders expelled the U.S. ambassadors to their countries, a move that was immediately reciprocated by the U.S.

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