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On Nov. 15, Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora declared a three-month state of siege in order to "guarantee" peaceful local elections on Dec. 3. Police arrested at least 700 people in an attempt to break a public school teachers' strike. The state of siege allows police to arrest and hold someone without charges for 48 hours without a judicial order. Rules governing public meetings and other activities are to be specified by state governments. Over three weeks ago, some teachers began a hunger strike that evolved into a strike. Two weeks ago, the government closed schools when tens of thousands of workers demonstrated in solidarity with the Union of Education Workers, which represents 80,000 public school teachers. In recent days, teachers have clashed with police in La Paz. On Nov. 14, negotiations broke down between the government and the Union. The teachers earn about $75 a month. They demand a $103 bonus to compensate for cost of living increases. The government says it cannot afford to pay the bonus. Education spending currently accounts for 18% of the national budget. Deputy Interior Minister Raul Loayza said that around 120 trade union leaders would initially be detained, while the others are to be released in the next few hours. Nearly all the detained were staging a hunger strike. As of Nov. 15, about 3,000 teachers across the country were participating in the hunger strike. A spokesperson for the Bolivian Workers Confederation (COB) cited by DPA said the number of arrests was in reality close to 3,000. Paz Zamora, of the Social Democratic Movement of the Revolutionary Left, was inaugurated Aug. 6. He has continued austerity measures of the previous government, including public spending cuts and a wage freeze. Officials said the state of emergency was also designed to facilitate the search for unidentified terrorists who carried out 10 bomb attacks in La Paz and the nearby town of El Alto on the evening of Nov. 13. There were no reports of injuries. The attacks targeted offices of the recently established rightist Citizens Solidarity Union (UCS). The UCS plans to participate in the Dec. 3 elections. (Basic data from DPA, AP, 11/15/89)