

## Severance of Diplomatic Relations

The Bolivian Government on March 17 broke off diplomatic relations with Chile on the grounds that the Chilean Government had not shown sufficient flexibility over the problem of granting Bolivia access to the Pacific Ocean[see 28757 A;28135 A; 26512 A], although a Chilean communique' said in response that there was no particular development to explain this "unusual decision which disturbs hemispheric coexistence". Relations between the two countries had initially been broken off in 1962 over a dispute about the waters of the Lauca river [see 18771 C] but were restored in February 1975 [see 27012 B]. The Bolivian ambassador to Santiago was withdrawn in October 1977 only a few months after his appointment in May of that year, although the Chilean authorities had stressed that his withdrawal did not signify a worsening of relations.

La Paz radio (Bolivia) reported on April 4 that President Banzer had the previous week expressed his decision to redefine Bolivia's maritime strategy with the help of prominent Bolivians, in order that the new Government which would take over after the general elections due to be held in July 1978 p[see 28757 A] would be prepared to deal with the question.-(Times - Le Monde - Latin America Political Report - BBC Summary of World Broadcasts), (*Prev.rep.* 28757 A; 28135 A; *Map and Historical Note*, 26512 A; *Diplomatic relations, Rupture*(1962, 18771 C; *Restoration* (1975), 27012)