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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 CU-05 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-20 RSC-01 L-04 PRS-01  
CIAE-00 INR-08 NSAE-00 P-03 USIA-12 DODE-00 /094 W  
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R 260030Z JUN 71  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7927

Mexico 3578  
6/26/71

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Declassified Authority: 21973  
By: Dorothy Johnson Date:  
06-19-2012

SUBJ: CURRENT STUDENT SITUATION

REF: MEXICO 3504

BEGIN LOU

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAS PROMISED THAT GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE WILL BE OPEN TO STUDENTS AND THEIR IDEAS, AND, ALTHOUGH NOT CATEGORICALLY, THAT FUTURE DEMONSTRATIONS WILL BE PERMITTED. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S INVESTIGATION OF JUNE 10 EVENTS CONTINUES WITH GOM EXPRESSING WILLINGNESS TO HEAR STUDENTS' TESTIMONY. STUDENTS THEMSELVES ARE SHARPLY DIVIDED ON STANCE TOWARD CONCILIATORY GOM POSTURE.

2. ECHEVERRIA RECEIVED GROUP OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FROM SINALOA JUNE 24, ALMOST BUT NOT QUITE PROMISING THEM GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT SUPPRESS FUTURE DEMONSTRATIONS. "I BELIEVE NEITHER WHAT IS SAID WITHIN UNIVERSITIES EVERY DAY, OR LESS, THE SPORADIC DEMONSTRATIONS, SHOULD BE OBJECT OF REPRESSION," PRESIDENT SAID. HE ADDED HIS HOPE THAT ALL DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD REMAIN WITHIN THE LAW. PRESIDENT MAINTAINED THAT ALL GROUPS, EVEN THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IN MEXICAN REVOLUTION, HAVE CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE OF RIGHTS TO EXPRESS IDEAS AND EXERCISE FREEDOM. HE WARNED STUDENTS NOT TO ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE MANIPULATED, HOWEVER. HE CONTINUED THAT AS LONG AS NO DICTATORSHIP EXISTS IN MEXICO, DOORS WILL ALWAYS BE OPEN TO PROMOTE UNDER-

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STANDING AMONG MEXICANS, PARTICULARLY FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN STUDENTS AND GOVERNMENT, "SO THAT CITIZENS, ABOVE ALL THE YOUNG, CAN ALWAYS EXPRESS THEIR POINTS OF VIEW."

3. ECHEVERRIA POINTED TO POSITIVE ACTIONS TAKEN ON BEHALF OF STUDENTS SINCE HIS INAUGURATION. HE SAID EVERY MONTH SINCE DEC 1, MORE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM JAIL. (ON TELEVISION JUNE 15, PRESIDENT HAD SAID NO MORE STUDENTS OR TEACHERS FROM 1968 REMAIN IN CUSTODY; A STATEMENT STUDENTS CONTEST -- MEXICO 3306.) ALSO, HE HAD ACCEPTED RESIGNATIONS OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ AND FLORES CURIEL WHEN ATTORNEY GENERAL TOLD HIM IT WAS NECESSARY TO INVESTIGATE CITY GOVERNMENT. FURTHER, ECHEVERRIA TOLD STUDENTS THAT WHEN AUTONOMY OF UNIVERSITY OF NUEVO LEON WAS PUT IN DANGER AND BOTH SIDES REQUESTED HIS MEDIATION, HE HAD SENT SECRETARY OF EDUCATION WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO SOLVE CRISIS IN SUCH A WAY AS "TO KEEP INTACT PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY."

4. DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL DAVID FRANCO RODRIGUEZ SAID JUNE 23 THAT INVESTIGATION OF CITY HALL WAS CONTINUING AND OVERALL INVESTIGATION WOULD INCLUDE ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT JUDGED NECESSARY. HE PROMISED THAT NO STUDENTS WHO APPEARED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS WOULD BE DETAINED. ONLY ONE HAD SO FAR SHOWED UP TO TALK WITH ATTORNEY GENERAL SANCHEZ VARGAS, OTHERS CALLED HAD NOT APPEARED IN SPITE OF THEIR HAVING BEEN GIVEN IMMUNITY FROM ARREST (AMPAROS) BY FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE. FRANCO RODRIGUEZ SAID HE COULD NOT YET GIVE DATE FOR TERMINATION OF INVESTIGATION.

5. STUDENT LEADERS QUARELLING AMONG THEMSELVES, REPORTED MEXICO 3398, CONTINUES. HEBERTO CASTILLO AND TOMAS CERVANTES CABEZA DE VACA, LEADERS FROM 1968, WANT TO FORM NEW POLITICAL PARTY OF MEXICAN YOUTH. ANOTHER PRINCIPAL 1968 LEADER, GILBERTO GUEVARA NIEBLA, DISAGREED JUNE 24, CONTENDING THAT SUCH MOVE WOULD "INSTITUTIONALIZE MOST ACTIVE DISCONTENDED SECTOR OF MEXICAN SOCIETY: STUDENTS." BESIDES, GUEVARA ADDED WITH IRONY, "WE DOUBT VERY MUCH WE COULD DEFEAT PRI

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IN ELECTIONS." HE SAID STUDENTS DID NOT WANT TO TAKE POWER. GUEVARA ACCUSED CABEZA DE VACA AND CASTILLO OF BEING APOLOGISTS FOR REGIME, SOMETHING GUEVARA SAID STUDENTS COULD NOT DO "AFTER THEY (THE REGIME) HAVE KILLED 30 ASSOCIATES." GUEVARA ACCUSED GOVERNMENT OF HAVING ALLIED ITSELF WITH AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND GAVE SALINITY ISSUE IN MEXICALI VALLEY AS EXAMPLE, SAYING GOVERNMENT HAD PASSED IT OFF AS SIMPLE TECHNICAL PROBLEM RATHER THAN A GRAVE MATTER, CLEARLY PROVOKED BY THE NORTH AMERICANS." IN MEETING JUNE 24 AT UNAM, THREE OTHER STUDENT SPOKESMEN, ALL OF WHOM OPPOSED FORMATION OF NEW POLITICAL PARTY, ALSO CRITICIZED CASTILLO AND CABEZA DE VACA.

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6. COMMENT: PRESENT STUDENT SITUATION, [REDACTED] IS HIGHLY CONFUSED. OVER EARLIER ISSUE OF WHETHER STUDENTS SHOULD ENTER INTO DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENT, THERE HAS NOW BEEN SUPERIMPOSED IDEA OF NEW LEFT-NATIONALIST, STUDENT-BASED, POLITICAL PARTY. THERE APPEARS TO BE SEVERE FACTIONALIZATION ON BOTH SIDES OF BOTH QUESTIONS, AND REPORTS OF WHO IS ALIGNED WITH WHOM ARE CONFLICTING. BY DESIGN OR NOT THE GOM APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DISRUPTING UNITY AMONG THE STRUGGLE COMMITTEES THAT HAVE DOMINATED STUDENT AFFAIRS AT UNAM AND THE IPN SINCE 1968. RENEWED UNITY MAY BE HARDER TO ACHIEVE IN FACE OF GOM CONCILIATORY POLICY THAN WHEN STUDENTS WERE CONFRONTED WITH GOM REPRESSIVE STANCE. GP-3  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7928

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7. ECHEVERRIA'S SPEECH TO SINALOA STUDENTS JUNE 24 WAS CLEARST PUBLIC INDICATION TO DATE OF NEW GOM POLICY FOR DEALING WITH STUDENTS. IT CONFIRMS

[REDACTED] WHICH REPORTED ECHEVERRIA INTENDS EXTREMELY TOLERANT ATTITUDE TOWARD STUDENTS, NOT ONLY REFRAINING FROM SUPPRESSING FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS BUT ALSO GRANTING ANY REASONABLE STUDENT DEMANDS. THE PRESUMED RATIONALE IS THAT STUDENT SUPPORT FOR HARD-LINE ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTION WILL DIMINISH AS THEY ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE SOME REFORMS AND SOME ACTION ON DEMANDS. IT IS NOT NOW CLEAR THAT GOM CAN GO VERY FAR IN MAKING ANY REAL CONCESSIONS TO STUDENTS, NOR THAT THEY WILL BE SATISFIED WITH TOKEN GESTURES.

8. THIS MAY EXPLAIN REPORTED, HIGHLY SENSITIVE, INFORMATION THAT GOM IS SUPPORTING FORMATION OF NEW YOUTH-LED POLITICAL PARTY

[REDACTED]  
STRONG NATIONALISTIC ORIENTATION OF PROPOSED PARTY MAY BE ATTEMPT BY GOM TO DIVERT STUDENT PROTEST FROM DOMESTIC ISSUES TO INTERNATIONAL. GIVEN LEFTIST ORIENTATION OF MOST STUDENT LEADERS, A NEW PARTY ALONG THESE LINES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY DIRECT PRINCIPAL ATTACK AGAINST ALLEGED US IMPERIALISM. WHETHER BULK OF STUDENTS WILL GO ALONG WITH THIS

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PLAN, IF SUCH IT IS, IS DOUBTFUL. MANY SEE NEW PARTY IDEA AS SIMPLY PART OF CONTINUING GOM EFFORT TO COOPT AND CONTROL STUDENT MOVEMENT. AT MINIMUM, AND AS REPORTED REF CAS MESSAGE, IT MAY BE GOM ATTEMPT DIVIDE STUDENT MOVEMENT.

9. PRESENT DEGREE OF GOM INVOLVEMENT IN STUDENT AFFAIRS, IF ANYTHING MORE INTENSE THAN PRIOR TO JUNE 10, RAISES QUESTION WHETHER ECHEVERRIA REALLY INTENDS ALLOW STUDENTS GREATER FREEDOM. FOLLOWING STATEMENT YESTERDAY HE APPEARS COMMITTED TO PERMITTING STREET DEMONSTRATIONS, AND MEXICO CITY STUDENTS MAY NOT DELAY LONG IN TAKING UP THIS OFFER. HOWEVER, GOM MAY ATTEMPT TO EXERCISE INFLUENCE OVER WHO DEMONSTRATES, AND FOR WHAT.

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