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Department of State *Pal 15-1 mep*  
**TELEGRAM**

*QUESTION #10*

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*Mexico 6878  
9/6/68*

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ACTION ARA 16

INFO GPM 04, H 02, NSC 10, CIAE 00, DODE 00, INR 07, P 04, RSC 01, USIA 12,  
NSA 02, CU 04, SIL 01, LAB 06, AID 28, OPR 02, EUR 15, RSR 01, 7115 W

R 061955Z SEPT 68  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7498

S E C R E T MEXICO 6878

*pal 13-2 mep*

REF: DEPT'S 230776, AUGUST 31, 1968

1. ANY ASSESSMENT FUTURE COURSE STUDENT DISTURBANCES AND IMPACT ON OLYMPIC GAMES MUST NOW BEGIN WITH DIAZ ORDAZ FORCEFUL STATEMENT IN INFORME SEPTEMBER 1 THAT GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO

UPHOLD JURIDICAL ORDER AND PREVENT DISRUPTIONS TO NATIONAL LIFE. WITH RESPECT SPECIFICALLY TO OLYMPICS, AND IN MORE GENERAL SENSE, PRESIDENT

HAS PUT NATIONAL HONOR AND THE PRESTIGE OF THE PRESIDENCY ON THE LINE.

HE HAS STRONG PUBLIC BACKING EXCEPT FOR IMPORTANT SECTORS OF ACADEMIC COMMUNITY FOR HIS POSITION AND WE ESTIMATE THAT HE HAS EFFECTIVELY BLOCKED SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS FROM OTHER SECTORS.

2. INFORME STATEMENT ON STUDENT PROBLEM PROVIDES BOTH A GRACEFUL OUT FOR STUDENTS AND A FIRM WARNING THAT CONTINUED AGITATION WILL BE SUPPRESSED. THERE IS NO INDICATION OF DISSENT FROM THIS POLICY WITHIN GOM, OR FROM INFLUENTIAL SPOKESMEN OUTSIDE. NOR IS THERE INDICATIONS, OR EXPECTATION, THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL GO FURTHER IN MEETING STUDENT DEMANDS THAN DID THE PRESIDENT IN THE INFORME.

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3. INITIAL STUDENT RESPONSE TO THE INFORME, AS VOICED BY THE CONSEJO NACIONAL DE HUELGA (CNH) IS NOT FAVORABLE TO A QUICK SETTLEMENT. (SEE EMBTEL 6830 OF SEPTEMBER 3.) HOWEVER WE BELIEVE, ON THE BASIS OF CAS AND NEWSPAPER REPORTS, THAT THE EXTREMIST LEADERS OF THE CNH ARE

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FACED WITH INCREASING INTERNAL DISSENT AND WILL HAVE TO AGREE TO TALK WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON ITS TERMS OR LOSE THEIR SUPREME POSITION AS SPOKESMEN. THIS IS, OF COURSE, THE GOVERNMENT'S HOPE, AND EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS TO LOCATE, AND DEVELOP IF NECESSARY, A VIABLE MODERATE LEADERSHIP GROUP. WHILE SITUATION STILL UNCERTAIN,

EMB BELIEVES LEVEL OF STUDENT AGITATION WILL RAPIDLY DECLINE.

4. THIS RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK FOR QUICK DISSOLUTION OF THE CNH AND ITS POWER TO ORGANIZE LARGE-SCALE DEMONSTRATIONS MUST BE TEMPERED BY THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT MANY OF THE LEADERS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN PROVOKING UNREST AND IN INVOKING POLICE MEASURES THAN IN RESOLVING SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. THE GOM THUS FACES A MINOR DILEMMA IN ITS USE OF FORCE; BUT WE SEE NO QUESTION AS TO WHICH WAY IT WILL MOVE IF STUDENT OBDRACY CONTINUES.

5. EMBASSY CAN GIVE NO CLEAR ANALYSIS AT THIS TIME OF DOMINANT ELEMENTS AND IDEOLOGIES WITHIN CNH. COMMUNISTS HAVE DOUTLESS ATTEMPTED TO INFLUENCE AND MANIPULATE MOVEMENT AND SEVERAL POINTS IN STUDENT DEMANDS. HAVE BEEN COMMUNIST SLOGANS FOR YEARS; BUT PCM ITSELF, WHICH IS SUBJECT TO GOM COERCIVE MEASURES, HAS MAINTAINED WARY AND UNCOMMITTED PUBLIC POSITION. MORE SERIOUS IN OUR VIEW IS EVIDENCE OF NEW LEFT ATTITUDES, AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN MEXICAN STUDENT ACTIONS AND THOSE ELSEWHERE IN WORLD EARLIER THIS YEAR. THIS ELEMENT HAS LESS TO LOSE, IF NOT MORE TO GAIN, BY KEEPING THE POT BOILING. AND IT IS OUR VIEW THAT UNPRECEDENTED ATTACKS ON PRESIDENT HIMSELF CAN MORE REASONABLY BE CREDITED TO THIS SOURCE THAN TO ANY OTHER. SUCH INCIDENTS WERE ISOLATED AND LIMITED. WE STILL FIND NO EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT OF STUDENTS BY LABOR OR ANY OTHER MASS SECTION OF POPULATION. WHILE THERE WERE SOME REPORTS OF

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HECKLING OF TROOPS IN SLUM AREAS, WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIVE SUPPORT OF STUDENTS BY SLUM DWELLERS.

6. WITH RESPECT TO PARA 3 DEPTTEL WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE THAT GOVERNMENT MISJUDGED STRENGTH OF STUDENT DETERMINATION AND ORGANIZATION.

HOWEVER, GIVING STUDENTS A FREE HAND HAS BEEN AN EARLY PHASE OF GOVERNMENT'S USUAL PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SERIOUS STUDENT DISORDERS (E.G. MORELIA AND HERMOSILLO). WHILE GOVERNMENT DOUBTLESS HOPED THAT PERIOD OF PERMISSIVENESS, COUPLED WITH END OF TERM AND EXAMINATIONS, WOULD PRODUCE EARLY RESOLUTION PROBLEM, THERE WERE OTHER REASONS FOR IT: 1) IT PERMITTED GOVERNMENT TO CREATE A PUBLIC IMAGE OF EXTREME RESTRAINT AND TOLERANCE IN DEALING WITH STUDENTS, AND 2) IT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS AND PSEUDO STUDENTS TO MOVE TO GREATER AND GREATER EXCESSES IN COMMUNITY AND TO CREATE IMAGE OF INCREASING INTRANSIGENCE. OBJECT OF MANEUVER WAS TO SWING PUBLIC SYMPATHY AWAY FROM STUDENTS AND TO SIDE OF

GOVERNMENT, WHICH WAS ESSENTIAL FOR GOVERNMENT TO MOVE VIGOROUSLY INTO REPRESSION OF STUDENTS. DEPT WILL HAVE NOTED FROM EMB'S REPORTING THAT DURING PERIOD END JULY UNTIL AUGUST 28 (PERMISSIVE PERIOD), GOVERNMENT REITERATED VARIOUS OFFERS TO MEET WITH STUDENTS, CAREFULLY REFRAINED FROM USE OF FORCE AND TOLERATED EXTREMES OF ABUSE AND INCITEMENT TO INSURRECTION WHILE STUDENTS BECAME INCREASINGLY STRIDENT IN DEMANDS AND INCREASINGLY DISRUPTED NORMAL LIFE OF CITIZENS. NET RESULT WAS THAT WHEN GOVERNMENT USED FORCE VIGOROUSLY BEGINNING LATE NIGHT AUGUST 27 AND THROUGHOUT REST OF WEEK, PUBLIC OPINION WAS ON SIDE OF GOVERNMENT.

EMBASSY CONCLUDES THAT PERMISSIVE PERIOD WAS DELIBERATE TACTIC OF GOVERNMENT SKILLFULLY USED TO ENSURE PUBLIC CLIMATE OF SUPPORT FOR ULTIMATE USE OF FORCE IF THIS BECAME NECESSARY. DANGER OF SUCH TACTIC LIES IN FACT MEXICANS EXPECT PRESIDENT ABOVE ALL TO BE STRONG DECISIVE

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PERSONALITY AND, IF PERMISSIVE PERIOD EXTENDED TOO LONG, GENERAL PUBLIC MIGHT CONCLUDE PRESIDENT LACKS MEANS OR COURAGE TO DEAL WITH STUDENTS. ENSUING LOSS OF RESPECT FOR PRESIDENT WOULD, WITHIN MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM, CREATE GRAVE DANGERS. SHREWD POLITICAL JUDGMENT IS NEEDED, THEN TO DECIDE WHEN POLICY OF PERMISSIVENESS HAS REACHED POINT OF MAXIMUM RETURN IN TERMS OF GAINING PUBLIC SYMPATHY WITHOUT CARRYING IT TO POINT IT UNDERMINES RESPECT FOR PRESIDENT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS ELEMENT, IN ADDITION TO THOSE CITED IN EMBTEL 6776 OF AUGUST 28 MAY HAVE INFLUENCED GOVERNMENT DECISION TO ADVANCE DATE OF CRACKDOWN ON STUDENTS.

7. WITH RESPECT TO FURTHER QUESTIONS PARA 3 REFTEL, EMB BELIEVES THAT INFORME MIX OF "CONCESSIONS" TO STUDENTS AND FIRM STATEMENT DETERMINATION USE WHATEVER FORCE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER IS WISEST POLICY GOVERNMENT COULD FOLLOW BOTH TO PUT END TO IMMEDIATE PROBLEM STUDENT

AGITATION AND LONGER TERM PROBLEMS AVOIDING STUDENT BITTERNESS. THE MORE RADICAL LEADERS OF THE PRESENT MOVEMENT ARE NOT GOING TO DISAPPEAR FROM THE MEXICAN SCENE, BUT WE ESTIMATE THEIR ABILITY TO CAUSE SERIOUS DISRUPTION AT THE OLYMPICS LIMITED. THERE IS NO SUGGESTION AS YET OF ANY MOVES, GROWING OUT OF STUDENT PROTEST, THAT MIGHT EFFECT U.S.

PARTICIPATION. ORGANIZING ASSEMBLY FOR NEW YOUTH ORIENTATED PARTY, ANNOUNCED LATE AUGUST, MAY STILL TAKE PLACE, BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER PRESS COMMENT AND THE MATTER IS GENERALLY DISMISSED LIGHTLY. FREEMAN

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