

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4780

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2025

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UY, US

SUBJECT: THE UNITED STATES AND EVENTS IN URUGUAY

1. FROM OUR REPORTING, DEPT. IS AWARE THAT A DECISIVE STAGE HAS BEEN REACHED IN URUGUAY'S CHRONIC POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISES. THE EXECUTIVE ACTING WITH AND AT THE BHAS NOW TAKEN STEPS SUCH AS THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS AND OF THE POWERFUL COMMUNIST-DOMINAED LABOR CONFEDERATION (CNT) FROM WHICH RETREAT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE. PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE GENERAL POPULATION SUCH AS SHORTAGES OF ESSENTIAL GOODS AND FOOD-STUFFS, INTERRUPTION IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND WORK STOPPAGES ARE ALSO BEING CONFRONTED WITH UNUSUAL AND UNEXPECTED VIGOR. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF ALMOST COMPLETE GENERAL WORK STOPPAGES, THE CITY IS RETURNING TO NORMAL. MOST INDICATIONS THAT WE HAVE ARE THAT THE POPULATION AT LARGE IS EITHER SUPPORTING THE ACTIONS OF THE MILITARY, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING THEIR DAILY NECESSITIES, OR IS APATHETIC TO THEM. **THERE IS A DISPOSITION TO ACCEPT THE ASSURANCES OF THE PRESIDENT THAT THE ILLEGAL MEASURES TAKEN WERE NECESSARY AND TEMPORARY** AND THAT THERE WILL BE A RETURN TO THE TRADITIONAL DEMOCRATIC FORMS. **THE OPPOSITION GROUPS, THE LEADERS OF WHICH ARE IN HIDING, ARE IN A STATE OF SHOCK OVER THE SUDDENNESS AND THE SWEEPING NATURE OF THE**
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GOVERNMENT'S MOVES, BUT SEEM TO BE ORGANIZING TO PRESENT A UNITED FRONT. THERE IS AS YET VERY LITTLE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED OPPOSITION, MOSTLY BECAUSE THE OPPOSITION PRESS ORGANS ARE NOT PUBLISHING. HOWEVER, IT IS MUCH TOO SOON TO DETERMINE WHAT THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME OF THIS HARDLINE POLICY WILL BE. WE HAVE

NO DOUBT THAT URUGUAY IS IN FOR MANY MONTHS - IF NOT YEARS - OF RENEWED SEVERE PRESSURES AND TENSION. THERE IS SOME CHANCE THAT THE GENERAL SITUATION WILL IMPROVE, EKNECIALLY IF THE URUGUAYANS ARE ABLE TO WORK AND PRODUCE IN PEACE.

2. AS WE VIEW THIS STILL DEVELOPING SITUATION, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ESSENTIAL FACTORS AND INTERESTS AT PLAY ARE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OF DOMESTIC URUGUAYAN CONCERN. SOVIET SUPPORT OF THE URUGUAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE URUGUAYAN LABOR MOVEMENT IS A SPECIAL FACTOR, BUT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM OUR VIEW THAT AT PLAY HERE IS AN ATTEMPT BY URUGUAYANS TO FIND URUGUAYAN SOLUTIONS TO URUGUAYAN PROBLEMS. THIS EMBASSY, THEREFORE, HAS MAINTAINED THE POSITION OF A CAREFUL OBSERVER OF DEVELOPMENTS. WE ARE REFRAINING FROM GIVING ANY INDICATIONS OR ANY GROUNDS FOR SUSPICION THAT WE ARE IN ANY WAY INTERVENING IN DEVELOPMENTS HERE.

3. THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TO FOLLOWING SITUATION WHICH COULD ARISE. ON MORNING OF JULY 4, IF THE NORMAL PRECEDENT IS FOLLOWED (AND THIS YEAR THERE WOULD BE EVERY REASON FOR IT TO BE BROKEN), I CAN EXPECT A CALL ON ME BY PRESIDENT BORDABERRY AND FOREIGN MINISTER BLANCO ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF OUR NATIONAL DAY. IN PAST YEARS, THE PRESIDENT AND FONMIN HAVE MADE A 15-20 MINUTE CALL AT THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE AN HOUR OR SO BEFORE OUR DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION BEGINS. ON THESE OCCASIONS, THE PRESIDENT AND FONMIN HAVE USUALLY CONVERSED ON MATTERS OF SMALL MOMENT AND IN PLATITUDINOUS TERMS.

4. SHOULD THE PRESIDENT WHO WAS INVITED WEEKS AGO DECIDE TO COME CALL DAY AFTER TOMORROW, I DO NOT SEE HOW REFERENCE TO THE MOMENTOUS CURRENT EVENTS IN URUGUAY CAN BE AVOIDED. I WILL LISTEN ATTENTATIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS. SHOULD THE PRESIDENT ASK ME HOW THE U.S. VIEWS CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS, I WOULD PROPOSE TO ANSWER ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

THE UNITED STATES IS TRADITIONALLY BOUND TO URUGUAY BY MANY
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STRONG FRATERNAL TIES BASED UPON OUR COMMON COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC IDEALS. THE TWO NATIONS SHARE COMMON ASPIRATIONS AND COMMON INSTITUTIONS. WHAT IS CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE IN URUGUAY IS A PROCESS ARISING FROM PURELY INTERNAL URUGUAYAN CONDITIONS AND IT WILL BE RESOLVED BEARING URUGUAY'S OWN BEST INTERESTS IN MIND. THE UNITED STATES IS FOLLOWING EVENTS WITH CLOSE ATTENTION AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT SOLUTIONS MEETING WITH THE APPROVAL OF A MAJORITY OF THE URUGUAYANS WILL BE REACHED.

5. REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT'S EARLIEST GUIDANCE.
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