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By SAJ Date 3/21/02

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

13346

*Pol 13-8
Students*

October 3, 1968

TO: The Acting Secretary

THROUGH: S/S DL

FROM: ARA - Covey T. Oliver

CTO

SUBJECT: Mexican Situation - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Last night's serious violence in Mexico City seems to have been the result of provocation by student extremists and gross over-reaction by the security forces. We see its significance as follows:

1. It was a sharp blow to President Diaz Ordaz and his Government, both because of the excessive force used and because it underscores the GOM failure, after 11 weeks, to eliminate violence.

2. It reopens the question of whether the Olympics can be held. An International Olympic Committee decision to postpone, or cancel, the games would have serious political consequences for the Diaz Ordaz regime.

Issues for U.S.

The continuing violence raises two concerns for the U.S.:

- 1) the safety of U.S. athletes and visitors to the games and
- 2) U.S. participation in scientific and cultural activities associated with the Olympics.

Thus far, the violence has been contained in certain areas of the city, has not been directed against the U.S., and has not threatened any visitors exercising reasonable caution. Therefore we do not feel a warning to our citizens is warranted at this time.

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Our participation in the scientific and cultural activities is still going forward as planned, with the exception of the space and nuclear energy exhibits, whose installation at university sites has been delayed at GOM request.

We believe it important to avoid any indication that we lack confidence in the GOM's ability to control the situation. Accordingly, in responding to press questions today the Department's spokesman said that we believe the GOM will provide security to visitors and that we are not warning against visiting Mexico City during the Olympics.

ARA/MEX:MY^mohn:md 10/3/68 Ext. 8855

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