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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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7/31/68
Mexico 6255

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ACTION ARA 16

INFO CU 04, CIAE 00, DODE 00, GPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,
P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, AID 28, NIC 01, SCA 02, SCS 04, O 02,
SY 03, PER 02, FBO 01, OPR 02, OC 06, CCJ 00, RSR 01, IO 13, PC 04, /154 W

P 311832Z JUL 68
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7120

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6255

SUBJ: STUDENT DISTURBANCES

1. DESPITE SPORADIC INCIDENTS JULY 30, RELATIVE CALM RESTORED IN MEXICO CITY. MAYOR CORONA DEL ROSAL MET WITH NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC STUDENT LEADERS. HE AGREED TO CONSIDER THEIR PETITION CALLING FOR POLICE CHIEF REMOVAL, INDEMNITY FOR "FALLEN COMRADES," STRICTER REGULATION OF POLICE, RELEASE OF STUDENT PRISONERS, AND WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY. AS SIGN OF GOOD FAITH, ORDER THEN GIVEN FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY FROM OCCUPIED SCHOOLS AND RETURN OF MOST UNITS TO BARRACKS. HOWEVER, DEFMIN BARRAGAN ALSO ISSUED STATEMENT DECLARING ARMY WOULD MOVE AGAIN IF SUMMONED TO DO SO. LARGE NUMBER OF MINORS RELEASED FROM JAIL. UNIVERSITY CLASSES HAVE RESUMED.

2. LOCAL PRESS SEEKING TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT WORST IS OVER BUT EMBASSY BELIEVES DANGER REMAINS STRONG OF RENEWED DEMONSTRATIONS WITH EVER PRESENT POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE. SEVERAL GROUPS AT NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC DISAVOWED DEAL WITH MAYOR ALTHOUGH THEY INSISTED THEY WANTED ONLY TO DEMONSTRATE PEACEABLY. TWO MAJOR ISSUES NOW AVAILABLE FOR READY EXPLOITATION BY RADICAL GROUPS: (1) POLICE BRUTALITY; (2) UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY. WHEN EXTENT OF STUDENT CASUALTIES BECOMES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE, FIRST ISSUE WILL BE REVIVED WITH INTENSITY. SECOND ISSUE HAS BECOME CORE OF INCREASING PROTESTS AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAM), WHOSE STUDENTS WITHERTO HAVE GENERALLY BEEN ON SIDELINES. UNAM RECTOR, BARROS SIERRA, IN SHREWD EFFORT TO FORESTALL INVOLVEMENT HIS STUDENTS, AGREED

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WITH THEIR PROTESTS AGAINST VIOLATION OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND PERSONALLY LOWERED THE SCHOOL FLAG TO HALF MAST. (UNAM AUTONOMY VIOLATED WHEN TROOPS OCCUPIED UNAM-CONNECTED SCHOOLS IN DOWNTOWN AREA; NO TROOPS EVIDENTLY ENTERED MAIN UNAM CAMPUS.) WHETHER MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN UNAM (WHO ARE SPOILING TO GET INTO FRAY) PREVAIL, TO BE DECIDED IN MEETING JULY 31. FREEMAN

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