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R 170122Z JUN 71
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7785
INFO AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ UNN
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AMCONSUL SAN LUIS POTOSI UNN
AMCONSUL CHIHUAHUA UNN
AMCONSUL MATAMOROS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 MEXICO 3332

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN 3332 VICE 3331)

SUBJ: JUNE 10 AND THE RESIGNATION OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ

REF: A) MEXICO 3306 B) MEXICO 3317

1. THE RESIGNATION OF FEDERAL DISTRICT REGENT ALFONSO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ, JUNE 15, CAN BEST BE VIEWED AS A MOVE ON THE PART OF PRES ECHEVERRIA TO ESTABLISH HIS UNDISPUTED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, A DESIRE COMMON TO ALL MEXICAN PRESIDENTS. THAT THE RESIGNATION SATISFIES A PRESIDENTIAL NEED TO FIND A HIGH-LEVEL SCAPEGOAT FOR WHAT HAPPENED ON JUNE 10 IS PERHAPS A RELATED FACTOR BUT NOT IN ITSELF AN EXPLANATION.

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2. IT WAS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD WHEN ECHEVERRIA ENTERED OFFICE THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ WAS AN INDEPENDENT FORCE IN THE CABINET. TO SOME DEGREE THE APPOINTMENT MAY BE ATTRIBUTED TO PRESSURE FROM OUTGOING PRES DIAZ ORDAZ. EVEN MORE IT CORRESPONDED TO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ' OWN POLITICAL STRENGTH. THERE WAS WIDE SPECULATION THAT ECHEVERRIA WOULD EVENTUALLY MOVE TO DIMINISH MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ' INFLUENCE, IF ONLY TO ALLOW HIMSELF GREATER FLEXIBILITY AS THE TIME APPROACHED FOR CHOOSING A PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSOR. FEW EXPECTED THE ACTION WOULD COME SO SOON, AND SOME THOUGHT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ HAD THE POLITICAL ABILITY (AS WELL AS POWER) TO PROTECT HIMSELF.

3. THE DEPARTURE OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ GOES BEYOND THE DESIRE OF ECHEVERRIA TO HAVE A CABINET FULLY LOYAL TO HIM AND, WHAT IS MUCH THE SAME THING, ONE WITH NO OBVIOUS STRONGMAN. MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ IS THE MEXICAN POLITICIAN PAR EXCELLENCE, A MASTER OF COMPROMISE, POLITICAL DEALS AND SUBTERFUGE. HE IS AT LEAST, AND PROBABLY MORE, CORRUPT THAN MOST. HE HAS THE REPUTATION OF A "DIRTY POLITICIAN," ONE WHO IS NOT ADVERSE TO USING FORCE WHEN THE NEEDS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OR HIS OWN INTERESTS SO DICTATE. MOST OF THESE TRAITS ARE AT VARIANCE WITH THE LEADERSHIP IMAGE THAT ECHEVERRIA HAS WORKED HARD TO PROJECT DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. THERE IS INCREASING REASON TO THINK THAT THIS IS NOT PRETENSE ON ECHEVERRIA'S PART, THAT HE REALLY BELIEVES MEXICO CAN BE GOVERNED IN A MORE OPEN AND LIBERAL MANNER.

4. THERE IS IN THIS CONFLICT OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES A BASIS FOR THE THEORY, BEING ADVANCED BY PERSONS CLOSE TO ECHEVERRIA, THAT THE JUNE 10 REPRESSION WAS A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT ON THE PART OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ TO EMBARRASS AND, IN A SENSE, COMPROMISE ECHEVERRIA. HE MAY HAVE JUDGED THAT A NEW REPRESSIVE ACT SIMILAR TO TLATELOLCO WOULD HAVE PERMANENTLY ENDED ECHEVERRIA'S EFFORTS AT RAPPROACHMENT WITH STUDENTS, MODERATE LEFTISTS AND OTHER MIDDLE CLASS ELEMENTS DEMANDING A MORE OPEN AND HONEST POLITICAL SYSTEM. IT MAY HAVE APPEARED AS A GAMBLE IN WHICH THE PROBABLE LONG-TERM GAINS TO HIS OWN POLITICAL SECURITY AND AMBITIONS OUTWEIGHED POSSIBLE

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SHORT-TERM RISKS.

5. A VARIATION OF THIS THEORY (FOR WHICH THERE IS SOME CAS REPORTED SPECULATION) IS THAT THE MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ INSPIRED REPRESSION OF JUNE 10 WAS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST INTERIOR SECRETARY MOYA PALENCIA, IN AN ATTEMPT BY IMPLICATION TO REDUCE HIS PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES. THE ANALOGY IS WITH 1968 WHEN THEN INTERIOR SECRETARY ECHEVERRIA WAS PARTIALLY BLAMED FOR TLATELOLCO. BUT, QUITE OBVIOUSLY, IT DID NOT PREVENT HIM FROM BECOMING PRESIDENT. AND, IN THIS PRESENT INSTANCE, IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ COULD HAVE HOPED TO HIDE THE FEDERAL DISTRICT'S LARGE ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP OF THE HALCONES. THE MIS-TREATMENT OF NEWSMEN MAY HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT, BUT WAS CERTAINLY ILL-CONCEIVED.

6. WE CANNOT ENTIRELY DISMISS THESE THEORIES. BUT NEITHER ARE THEY FULLY CONVINCING. THE FIRST IS HARD TO RECONCILE WITH THE WIDELY CIRCULATING RUMORS OF A FEW WEEKS EARLIER THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ WAS ONE OF THOSE BACKING THE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NUEVO LEON. IT IS DIFFICULT TO CREDIT THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ, WHO MUST HAVE BEEN AWARE OF HIS TENUOUS POSITION IN THE ECHEVERRIA CABINET AND WHO HAS HIMSELF BEEN AN INSTRUMENT IN THE DOWNFALL OF MANY POLITICIANS (AMONG THEM FEDERAL DISTRICT REGENT URUCHURTU IN 1966) WOULD CONSCIOUSLY FORMENT A CRISIS IN WHICH HE WAS HIMSELF IN SUCH AN OBVIOUSLY EXPOSED POSITION.
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7. WE BELIEVE THERE IS RATHER MORE REASON TO THINK THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGURZ WAS, EITHER A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES OR, IN SOME SENSE, SET UP FOR HIS FALL. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO ASSUME AN EXTREME CONSPIRATORIAL THEORY (EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS TO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ OR OTHERS, TO CONDUCT THE JUNE 10 SUPPRESSION WITH GREAT SEVERITY, POSSIBLE OFFICIAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATION EVEN AFTER THE OSTENSIBLE ISSUE HAD EVAPORATED FOR THE LATTER TO BE THE CASE. GIVING A MAN ENOUGH ROPE TO HANG HIMSELF IS A TIME-TESTED MEXICAN POLITICAL TACTIC. IT IS WELL ESTABLISHED THAT THE HALCONES ARE AN OFFICIALLY FINANCED, ORGANIZED, TRAINED AND ARMED REPRESSIVE GROUP, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF WHICH

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SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN SEPTEMBER 1968 HAS BEEN THE CONTROL OF LEFTIST AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT STUDENTS. ITS EXISTANCE AND FUNCTION WERE WELL-KNOWN TO ALL TOP GOM LAW-ENFORCEMENT AND POLITICAL OFFICIALS. ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT BE QUITE SO SURE OF THIS, IT APPEARS THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ WAS THE CABINET OFFICER WITH MOST DIRECT CONTROL OVER THE HALCONES. IN THE TACIT MANNER OF MEXICAN POLITICS IT WAS HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO USE THEM IN THE MANNER THAT HE CONSIDERED MOST IN KEEPING WITH PRESIDENTIAL WISHES. THEY AND THE RELATED (IF NOT IDENTICAL) FRANCISCO VILLA GROUP HAD BEEN USED TO INTIMIDATE (AND SOMETIMES KILL) STUDENTS DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS. THESE ACTIONS HAD BROUGHT NO OFFICIAL REPROOF AND WE HAVE SEEN NO OTHER INDICATIONS THAT ECHEVERRIA HAD WARNED MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ OR OTHERS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE POLITICAL DANGERS OF A SEVERE CONFRONTATION. IT STRETCHES THE IMAGINATION TO BELIEVE THAT ECHEVERRIA COULD NOT HAVE FORCED THE DISBANDMENT OF THE HALCONES HAD HE SO DESIRED. OR THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE OF PLANS TO SEVERELY REPRESS THE JUNE 10 DEMONSTRATION, WITH CONSEQUENT DAMAGE TO MANY OF HIS POLICIES SINCE TAKING OFFICE. EVEN IF WE MAKE THE EXTREME ASSUMPTION THAT THE HALCONES WERE TIGHTLY CONTROLLED BY MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ AND THAT THEY WERE IN SOME SENSE A SOURCE OF HIS OWN POWER (AND, HENCE, THAT ECHEVERRIA COULD NOT SIMPLY ORDER THEIR DISBANDMENT) IT IS BEYOND CREDULITY THAT ECHEVERRIA, THROUGH INTERIOR SECRETARY MOYA PALENCIA, DID NOT HAVE HIS OWN SOURCES OF INFORMATION WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE HALCONES.

8. ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE, BUT PERHAPS ALSO WITH ENCOURAGEMENT, MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ MAY HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT STRONG REPRESSION WAS CALLED FOR IN HANDLING THE JUNE 10 DEMONSTRATION. EARLIER SCATTERED DEATHS INFLECTED BY THE HALCONES OR THE FRANCISCO VILLA GROUP HAD CLEARLY NOT HALTED STUDENT AGITATION. STUDENT LEADERS FROM THE 1968 MOVEMENT, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM CHILE, HAD ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ ORDERED OR INTENDED THE NUMBER OF DEATHS THAT OCCURRED (IN A SENSE THE HALCONES PROBABLY RAN AMUCK) BUT IT IS HARD TO ESCAPE THE CONCLUSION THAT SOME DEATHS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, AND THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A CONSCIOUS DECISION.

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SION THAT THIS WAS THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT A REPEAT OF THE TEN WEEK LONG DEMONSTRATIONS THAT OCCURRED IN 1968 AND ENDED IN THE EVEN BLOODIER REPRESSIVE ACTION AT TLATELOLCO ON OCT 2 OF THAT YEAR. HE MAY HAVE THOUGHT HE HAD ECHEVERRIA'S BACKING. AT A MINIMUM, HE MAY HAVE REASONED THAT ECHEVERRIA WOULD BE ABLE TO DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THE ACTION ONLY AT GREAT COST TO HIS CREDIBILITY. IF SO, IN RETROSPECT, IT WAS A GRAVE MISCALCULATION.

8. WHILE THE IMMEDIATE DAMAGE TO ECHEVERRIA'S IMAGE AND POLICIES CAUSED BY WHAT HAPPENED JUNE 10 WAS GREAT (AND THEREFORE PROVIDES GROUNDS FOR THINKING THAT HE DID NOT ANTICIPATE THE NUMBER OF DEATHS THAT OCCURRED), HE MAY POSSIBLY NOW VIEW THE LONGER-TERM PROSPECT WITH SOME SATISFACTION. WHETHER BY DESIGN OR ACCIDENT HE HAS ALREADY SUCCEEDED IN REMOVING MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ, THUS STRENGTHENING HIS OWN LEADERSHIP POSITION. MANY STUDENTS AND LEFTISTS WILL, INDEED, VIEW MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ AS NO MORE THAN A SCAPEGOAT, AND REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT ECHEVERRIA WAS NOT HIMSELF A PARTY TO WHAT HAPPENED ON JUNE 10. BUT MORE MODERATE OPINION MAY BE IMPRESSED BY THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE HANDLING OF THIS EVENT AND ITS EARLIER PARALLEL ON OCT 2, 1968. THIS TIME THERE HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITY, THERE HAVE BEEN RESIGNATIONS. ECHEVERRIA, WHO IS STILL HELD PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR TLATELOLCO, HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONVINCe MANY THAT IF HE HAD BEEN PRESIDENT AT THE TIME: A) THERE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN A TLATELOLCO; AND B) AT A MINIMUM, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED AND GUILT ASSIGNED.
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9. BUT THE RESIGNATION OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ ALSO RAISES SOME LONGER-TERM DANGERS. IF MODERATE STUDENTS ARE IMPRESSED BY THE APPARENT FRANKNESS AND DESPATCH WITH WHICH ECHEVERRIA HAS ACTED, THE RADICALS ARE JUST AS LIKELY TO SEE IT AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS AND AN INVITATION TO RENEWED AGITATION AGAINST THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEM. IF, AS NOW SEEMS INEVITABLE, THE HALCONES ARE DISBANDED, WE MAY WONDER HOW THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CONTROL SUBVERSIVE STUDENT GROUPS. IT IS WORTH RECALLING IN THIS REGARD THAT THE HALCONES WERE FORMED AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE OF THE 1968 STUDENT DEMAND THAT THE UNIFORMED RIOT

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POLICE BE DISBANDED. MANY RESPONSIBLE MEXICANS DOUBT THAT ECHEVERRIA'S CALL TO NATIONAL UNITY WILL SWAY THE MORE POLITICIZED STUDENTS. UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES THAN HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE ADMINISTRATION TO DATE. AND BELIEVE THAT REPRESSIVE FORCE WILL BE AN INEVITABLE FEATURE OF THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

10. SECOND, THE DEPARTURE OF MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ, WILL STRAIN ECHEVERRIA'S RELATIONS WITH PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS IN GENERAL, NOT JUST THOSE AROUND MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ. AN EVENTUAL MOVE AGAINST MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ WAS EXPECTED, BUT MANY POLITICIANS WILL VIEW THE PRESENT ACTION AS PRECIPITOUS, AS IN SOME SENSE A MOVE BY THE TECHNOCRATS AGAINST THEM, AND, AT THE EXTREME, A DANGEROUS EAGERNESS ON THE PART OF ECHEVERRIA TO CENTRALIZE ALL POWER IN HIS OWN HANDS. THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM IS NOT VERY OPEN, BUT IT HAS HISTORICALLY INCLUDED SUBSTANTIAL GIVE AND TAKE AMONG THOSE WITHIN THE POLITICAL CASTE. ECHEVERRIA'S MORALISM AND HIGH-MINDED RHETORIC ABOUT POLITICS AS A PUBLIC TRUST MAY WELL APPEAR THREATENING.

11. FINALLY THERE IS AT LEAST SOME DOUBT ABOUT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY'S REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS, REGARDLESS OF WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CHOSEN. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AS YET THAT BUSINESS (OR RIGHT WING) GROUPS ENCOURAGED MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ IN THE ACTION OF JUNE 10, BUT WE MAY SUPPOSE MANY SHARE HIS HARSH VIEWS ON THE NEED FOR FORCE IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. THEY MAY FEAR THAT ECHEVERRIA'S APPARENT DECISION TO DISPENSE WITH SUCH FORCE, AT LEAST IN THE CONTROL OF STUDENTS, DOES INDEED PRESAGE MORE RADICAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES. ALSO, BUSINESSMEN, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT PART OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY, HAVE A BARGAINING INTEREST IN THE MAINTENANCE OF COMPETING FACTIONS AT THE UPPER ECHELONS OF GOVERNMENT. GP-3
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