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PTQ8430

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ACTION DRL-02

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
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R 122110Z JUL 02
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9849
INFO NSC WASHDC
CIA WASHDC
DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 005529

DEPT FOR WHA/MEX, WHA/OAS AND ALSO FOR DRL
NSC FOR BROCK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/11/2007
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, KJUS, MX
SUBJECT: FORMER PRESIDENT APPEARS BEFORE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

FOR SECOND TIME

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CLASSIFIED BY J. CHRISTIAN KENNEDY, MINISTER COUNSELOR FOR
POLITICAL AFFAIRS, REASON 1.5D

1. (U) SUMMARY: FORMER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA REPEATED HIS SILENT ACT DURING HIS SECOND APPEARANCE JULY 9 BEFORE THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR. THIS TIME, HOWEVER, HE MADE AN UNEXPECTED FRONT DOOR EXIT TO FACE WAITING JOURNALISTS AND PROTESTORS, CAUSING A MEDIA FEEDING FRENZY. HE BLAMES FORMER PRESIDENT DIAZ ORDAZ AND FEDERAL DISTRICT HEAD OF GOVERNMENT MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ FOR THE EVENTS OF '68 AND '71 RESPECTIVELY BUT DISAVOWS BLAME FOR HIMSELF. MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ' SCHEDULED TESTIMONY FOR JULY 17 IS EXPECTED TO REFUTE ECHVERRIA'S CLAIM. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) FORMER PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ APPEARED FOR

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THE SECOND TIME BEFORE IGNACIO CARRILLO, THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR INVESTIGATING DISAPPEARANCES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES DURING THE &DIRTY WARS OF THE 60,S AND 70,S, THIS TIME TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS ROLE IN THE JUNE 10, 1971 KILLINGS, KNOWN AS &JUEVES DE CORPUS, WHILE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO.

3. (U) ECHEVERRIA REPEATED HIS JULY 2 SILENT ACT WHILE HE LISTENED TO THE CHARGES AND THE 159 QUESTIONS PUT TO HIM. IN CONTRAST TO HIS HURRIED EXIT BY CAR FROM HIS PREVIOUS TESTIMONY, ECHEVERRIA EXITED THROUGH THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING, WITHOUT SECURITY ESCORTS, INTO A WAITING CROWD OF PROTESTORS AND JOURNALISTS. HIS DEFIANT LAUGH WAS SEEN AS A PROVOCATION TO THE ASSEMBLED CROWD. HE WAS HUSTLED BACK INTO THE BUILDING BY SECURITY PERSONNEL AND WAS NOT PHYSICALLY HARMED.

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4. (U) THE FORMER PRESIDENT LATER ANSWERED JOURNALISTS, QUESTIONS AT HIS HOME. ECHEVERRIA NAMED FORMER PRESIDENT GUSTAVO DIAZ ORDAZ AS THE PERSON PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OCT 2, 1968 KILLINGS AT THE THREE CULTURES PLAZA IN TLATELOLCO (NOTE: ECHEVERRIA WAS AT THE TIME SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT (SEGOB).) LIKEWISE, HE BLAMED ALFONSO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ, AT THE TIME THE HEAD OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT (DF) GOVERNMENT FOR THE KILLINGS OF &JUEVES DE CORPUS.8 HE ALSO SAID, "LOTS OF PEOPLE WERE RESPONSIBLE." HE RECOGNIZED THAT SOME &MISTAKES8 MAY HAVE BEEN COMMITTED DURING BOTH EVENTS, BUT NOT BY HIM. HE ADMITTED KNOWLEDGE OF THE PARA-MILITARY/PARA-POLICE GROUPS NAMED "BRIGADA OLIMPIA" AND "HALCONES." HE AFFIRMED THAT HE ORDERED THE "HALCONES" TO BE DISBANDED THE DAY AFTER THE JUNE 10 ATTACK.

5. (U) ASKED ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INVESTIGATING BOTH EVENTS, ECHEVERRIA REPLIED THAT IN ,68, THE PRESIDENT (DIAZ ORDAZ) HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE. IN '71, WHEN ECHEVERRIA WAS PRESIDENT, HE FIRED ALFONSO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ FOR HIS RESPONSIBILITY. "DID THAT FIRING ATONE FOR 33 DEATHS?," HE WAS ASKED. "NO," HE REPLIED. ECHEVERRIA ALSO SAID HE NEVER SAW THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,S (PGR) REPORT ON THE INCIDENT. ALFONSO DOMINGUEZ MARTINEZ HAS ACCUSED ECHEVERRIA OF HAVING FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE EVENTS IN ,71 AND HAVING ORDERED THAT NO PHOTOGRAPHS BE TAKEN AND ANY BODIES BE DISPOSED OF. DOMINGUEZ IS SCHEDULED TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR ON JULY 17. (NOTE: DOMINGUEZ WAS LATER REINSTATED INTO POLITICAL LIFE AND LATER BECAME GOVERNOR OF NUEVO LEON.)

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6. (U) ECHEVERRIA IS BEING DEFENDED BY JUAN VELAZQUEZ EVERS, AN ATTORNEY WHO HAS REPRESENTED FORMER PRESIDENTS JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO, MIGUEL DE LA MADRID, AND CARLOS SALINAS. HE WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE KILLINGS OF JOSE RUIZ MASSIEU AND LUIS DONALDO COLOSIO. INTERESTINGLY, VELAZQUEZ'S THESIS DURING HIS LAW DEGREE STUDIES AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO (UNAM) WAS TITLED "GENOCIDE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW." ECHEVERRIA HAS AGAIN BEEN GIVEN 40 DAYS TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN WRITING ASKED BY THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR.

7. (C) COMMENT: THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE DISAPPEARANCES OF THE 60,S AND 70,S HAS PICKED UP STEAM AND HEADLINES WITH ECHEVARRIA'S APPEARANCES BEFORE THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR. ONE IMMEDIATE RESULT OF THESE INVESTIGATIONS IS THAT MEXICANS ARE FINALLY BEING ENCOURAGED TO FORMALLY DENOUNCE TO THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE THE DISAPPEARANCES OF FAMILY MEMBERS DURING THAT PERIOD. MANY OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE '68 AND '71 EVENTS ARE STILL ALIVE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT DIAZ ORDAZ, FORMER DEPUTY GOVERNMENT SECRETARY FERNANDO GUTIERREZ BARRIOS AND A FEW OTHERS. FORMER DF GOVERNMENT HEAD ALFONSO MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ IS THE NEXT MAJOR FIGURE INVOLVED IN THE EVENTS OF "JUEVES DE CORPUS" SCHEDULED TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR ON JULY 17. HIS TESTIMONY WILL VERY LIKELY IMPLICATE ECHEVERRIA AS HAVING HAD A MORE DIRECT ROLE IN THE "JUEVES DE CORPUS"

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EVENTS THAN THE FORMER PRESIDENT IS ADMITTING. NO OTHER
FORMER SENIOR OFFICIAL HAS BEEN SCHEDULED TO TESTIFY BEYOND
MARTINEZ DOMINGUEZ.

8. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: ALTHOUGH MANY LEGAL OBSERVERS SAY
THAT THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR CRIMES ALLEGEDLY
COMMITTED BY FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WILL LIKELY KEEP
THEM OUT OF JAIL, THE VISUAL IMAGES OF A FORMER PRESIDENT
BEING HAULED IN TO TESTIFY AND BEING OPENLY SCORNE AND
MOCKED HAVE HAD A STIRRING EFFECT ON MEXICAN SOCIETY. IN THE
WAR AGAINST IMPUNITY BEING WAGED BY THE FOX ADMINISTRATION
AND CIVIL SOCIETY, ECHEVERRIA'S AUDIENCE MARKS A TACTICAL IF
NOT STRATEGIC VICTORY FOR THOSE WHO SEEK A MORE TRANSPARENT
AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT.

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