

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

NOTE: This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Sec. 793 and 794. The transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
 (Classification and Control Markings)

This report contains unprocessed information. Plans and/or policies should not be evolved or modified on the basis of this report.

1. COUNTRY: MEXICO	8. REPORT NUMBER: [REDACTED]
2. SUBJECT: (U) Army Intervenes on Additional Occasions in Mexico City Student Situation	9. DATE OF REPORT: 24 September 1968
3. ISC NUMBER:	10. NO. OF PAGES: 5
4. DATE OF INFORMATION: [REDACTED]	11. PREPARED BY: [REDACTED]
5. PLACE AND DATE OF ORIGIN: [REDACTED]	12. APPROVING AUTHORITY: [REDACTED]
6. EVALUATION: [REDACTED]	
7. [REDACTED]	

15. SUMMARY:
 (U) Report furnishes information concerning use of Mexican Army troops on additional occasions in the simmering student situation in Mexico City. The military had first become involved in student disorders during the week beginning 29 July 1968. For ease of comprehension, information is given in chronological order, beginning 16 August 1968 [REDACTED]

(Leave Blank)
 314
 205009-1
 206300-1
 206300-1
 11-1
 152050
 117230
 1000
 11-1
 MX

1. (U) The period 16-26 August 1968 was relatively quiet, with much public and press discussion and speculation concerning the possibility of talks between the government and student representatives. Mexico City's Mayor Alfonso Corona del Rosal previously had suggested the formulation of a committee, to be composed of student, faculty, government representatives as well as "impartial" observers, to investigate student charges of police brutality in the July encounters. Students of the National Autonomous University (UNAM) and National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) remained on strike. It appeared several times that a solution to the impasse might be in the offing, but each time some obstacle arose. It was obvious that student leadership was fractionalized, with some wanting to take a moderate course and return to classes. A "National Strike Council" was formed, made up of more militant students, which claimed to speak for the entire student body. The

16. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR: None	17. DOWNGRADING DATA: Group - Secret Downgraded at 12-year intervals; not automatically declassified.	18. ATTACHMENT DATA: 1 Enclosure (U) News Clippings
<p style="text-align: center;">DOWNGRADED AT 12-YEAR INTERVALS NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED DD FORM 1396-10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL (Classification and Control Markings)</p>		REQUEST ENC FROM DIAAP-104 ENCL 1 HAS NOT BEEN REPRODUCED 95 4

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

CONTINUATION SHEET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(Classification and Control Markings)

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]
PAGE 2 OF 5 PAGES
ORIGINATOR [REDACTED]

(Leave Blank)

strike leaders claimed that 32 students were injured or missing as a result of the July disorders, and several lists of missing students were produced, one containing 25 names. Much publicity was given the results of "investigations" which indicated that many of the names on the lists were fictitious, were not bonafide students, or had simply moved or died of natural causes. On 20 August students held a rally in University City (home of UNAM) in southern Mexico City near the Olympic Village. Estimates of attendance averaged around 20,000. Mexican legislators had been invited to attend to engage in "public debate"; none appeared. Following speeches, the students made plans for another demonstration to be held in downtown Mexico City on 27 August 1968.

2. ~~N~~ Based on the possibility of trouble during the 27 August student demonstration, Mexican Army troops in the Mexico City area, who had been taken off partial alert status on 22 August, were placed back on full alert on the 27th. The march, which began at 1600, proceeded from Chapultepec Park near the Museum of Anthropology, down the Paseo de la Reforma, past the American Embassy and on to the central square (Zocalo) in the heart of the city. It was estimated that there were about 100,000 persons in the Zocalo, mostly students of IPN and UNAM. They removed the Mexican flag from the flagpole in the center of the Zocalo and replaced it with a black and red student "strike flag", painted slogans on the walls of the National Palace, and turned on the lights and rang the bells of the Metropolitan Cathedral (acts which caused much subsequent adverse press comment). At the conclusion of the demonstration several thousand students attempted to remain in the Zocalo with the announced intention of camping there until the student conflict was resolved. At 0100, 28 August, Army troops were called in to disperse these students, which was accomplished without serious incident. Involved in the operation were the Paratroop Battalion, two Infantry Battalions of the Infantry Brigade, 12 armored cars of the Presidential Guards, firemen, police and traffic police. For concern of possible violence directed at the American Embassy (the route of march of the demonstrators took them immediately in front of the Embassy on the Paseo de la Reforma), Army troops were deployed around the building, in addition to police. For this, two infantry platoons of 33 men each were used, along with ten armored cars, each with a crew of four and with two caliber 30 machine guns and a 37 millimeter gun. There were no incidents in or around the Embassy, although some epithets were shouted as the students passed by. (Troops were also deployed around the Soviet Embassy.)

3. (U) About mid-day on 28 August, several thousand pro-government workers and farmers gathered in the Zocalo to show their loyalty to the Mexican Government. Later, about 3,000 students also gathered in the square. The pro-government group removed the strike flag put up by the students the previous day and raised the flag of Mexico. The workers attempted to burn the strike flag, but it was recovered by the students. Stones began to fly. About 1355 hours, Army troops and armored cars appeared to disperse the students; at one point, soldiers fired into the air. At about 1415, a man appeared on a balcony (some accounts said four men) over Madero Street and fired a rifle into the air; soldiers responded. The man who had fired the rifle, identified as a jeweler, was detained. Later, other shots were fired at another downtown intersection. During the remainder of the afternoon and into the evening, troops and police had a number of encounters with students who were trying to form groups in the center of the city. Students barricaded the entrances to University City with autobuses which they commandeered. Throughout the night, Army troops, using primarily armored cars, patrolled the city where trouble might develop and some remained stationed in front of the National Palace in the Zocalo. Number of injured in the day's action was not clear, with some sources reporting four injured from rifle fire, and others none.

4. (U) On 29 and 30 August, Army elements and police continued their patrols of potential hot spots in Mexico City. Students attempting to organize in groups were dispersed, and helicopters kept watch from the air. A reduced force of foot troops remained on guard at the American Embassy, but the armored cars had disappeared. Mexico City newspapers of 29 August carried a statement by Secretary of

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

CONTINUATION SHEET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
(Classification and Control Markings)REPORT NO. [REDACTED]
PAGE 3 OF 5 PAGES
ORIGINATOR [REDACTED]

(Leave Blank)

Defense Lt Gen Marcelino Garcia Barragan in which he stressed the Army's support of President Diaz Ordaz and declared that the military did not want a dictatorship of any kind in Mexico--civil or military. Slogans critical of President Diaz Ordaz were observed on walls and buses. Students reported rumors of government plans to use military troops to occupy buildings and grounds of UNAM and IPN in a move to deny the students marshalling areas.

5. (U) Mexico City was calm but a little tense over the weekend of 31 August-3 September. On 31 August, Army troops, accompanied occasionally by armored cars, were stationed in sensitive areas and patrolled school areas. Several small student groups were dispersed. Army troops in the Mexico City area remained on full alert--restricted to offices and barracks, extending to include the Santa Lucia Air Base about 40 kilometers northeast of the city. President Diaz Ordaz delivered his fourth annual Informe (State of the Union Message) on 1 September. He devoted over one hour of his three-hour speech to the student situation, offering some concessions, with the general tone being one of firmness. The military guard lining the streets as the President moved by vehicle from the National Palace to the Chamber of Deputies (where the speech was delivered) was believed by some observers to be heavier than usual, possibly because of rumors circulating that an attempt might be made on the life of the President. The customary mounted honor guard of military cadets preceded and followed the presidential vehicle. Soldiers in vehicles were spotted on instant alert in various locations in the city. Except for the arrest of 11 students who were distributing handbills, the day was without incident. At the annual military breakfast honoring the President, held on 2 September and attended by military leaders from all over the country, the principal speaker, Maj Gen Abel J. Orozco, Commander of the 16th Military Zone, pledged the full support of the military to the President. The student strike council declared itself dissatisfied with the contents of the President's Informe, and promised student action on the streets would continue until a public debate of the issues was held and security forces were withdrawn from school areas. On 3 September, newspapers headlined stories with photographs concerning unknown would-be saboteurs who taped 26 sticks of dynamite to a high-tension electrical line tower north of Mexico City. The dynamite failed to explode because of a faulty connection with the timing mechanism. Had it exploded it would have deprived electricity from much of Mexico City. It was speculated that the dynamite, which was discovered on 1 September, was planted with the idea of blacking out President Diaz Ordaz' State of the Union Message which was carried nationwide by radio and television.

6. (U) Through the first two and one-half weeks of September, the situation remained relatively calm. Mexico City began preparing for the annual Independence Celebrations, to begin 12 September and culminating with the traditional "Grito" ceremony at the National Palace on the night of 15 September, followed by the military parade on 16 September. The UNAM Rector, Javier Barros Sierra, issued a call for a return to normalcy and announced that UNAM classes would resume 17 September. During the late afternoon and evening of 13 September, the students (estimated to number about 24,000) staged a "silent march" (some with their lips taped shut), again from Chapultepec Park, down Paseo de la Reforma, ending at the Zocalo. The demonstration was entirely without incident and ended peacefully in the Zocalo at about 2200 hours with the singing of the national anthem. The guard of foot-soldiers, which had disappeared from the American Embassy on 9 September, reappeared on 13 September before the demonstration which again passed immediately in front of the Embassy. Mexico City moved through the Independence Celebrations without incident. There were rumors that students would boo soldiers during the military parade on 16 September, but nothing materialized.

7. (U) At 2200 hours, 18 September, the picture changed. In a sudden move, Army troops occupied the buildings and grounds of University City, detaining 6-700 persons (highest figure seen was 765). Most of these were students, but some

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

CONTINUATION SHEET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

PAGE 4 OF 5 PAGES

ORIGINATOR [REDACTED]

(Classification and Control Markings)

(Leave Blank)

parents and a few faculty members were included. The operation required only about 30 minutes; students offered no resistance and there were no casualties reported. Timed with the action of the military, the government released a statement declaring that the move was taken because of student threats to sabotage the Olympic Games to be held in Mexico City in October. The announcement said that the UNAM buildings, which are public property, had been seized and used illegally since late July by students and non-students who were planning anti-social and possibly criminal activities. The announcement continued that UNAM's autonomy was violated by student strikers who interfered in its normal work, and troops were sent in to restore order. The federal government has the constitutional right and duty of maintaining the general order, which includes domestic universities, the announcement declared. The soldiers who evacuated the UNAM buildings found "half a room full" of propaganda, some imported from Cuba and some with a Chinese communist slant. Posters on classroom walls criticized the Mexican Government and its leaders; included were pictures of Che Guevara and Mao. A quantity of Molotov cocktails also was found. Students were marched out of the buildings with their hands in the air, escorted by soldiers. Some were forced to lie prone, guarded by armed soldiers.

8. (U) During the period 19-24 September, student groups roamed Mexico City, aroused by the military occupation of UNAM. There were many clashes with police and several with troops who remained on duty at University City and streets leading to it. In at least one clash, a student group momentarily beat back police with stones, but Granaderos (riot police) dispersed them. Tear gas was used by police in several encounters. Many students were arrested. The UNAM rector issued a statement criticizing the action as an unwarranted, "excessive" use of force. Secretary of Defense Garcia Barragan stated that the Army had no interest in remaining in the UNAM buildings and that they would be turned over to university authorities as soon as requested by them and authorized by presidential order. He said the military would take over the buildings and grounds of IPN installations "only if warranted by circumstances". On 19 September the military guard at the American Embassy was withdrawn.

9. (U) In one clash beginning during the evening of 21 September and lasting into the early morning hours of 22 September, police and riot police for a number of hours were unable to subdue and disperse a group of students in the Mexico City area of Tlatelolco, near the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Molotov cocktails hurled by students caused damages to an apartment building and to the Foreign Ministry itself. One Granadero (riot policeman) was killed, and estimates of the number of injured went into the hundreds. Scattered gunfire was heard and students roamed the area, seizing buses and painting signs on walls. At about 0140 hours, 22 September, about 500 soldiers led by a group of tanks arrived on the scene. The situation was largely under control and the troops patrolled the area. Ironically, an off-duty Army lieutenant, identified as Felix Benjamin Uriza Barron, was charged with killing the Granadero. The lieutenant claimed the Granaderos abused his mother and tried to arrest her. According to press accounts, after the encounter, the lieutenant went to his home, changed into his uniform, and gave himself up to police authorities. The District Attorney's office said 500 persons had been arrested in the 21-22 September disorders. On 22 September the UNAM Rector, Javier Barros Sierra, announced his resignation, citing verbal attacks against him by leaders of the government Revolutionary Party (PRI), and the possibility of "all kinds of pressure" against the University.

10. (U) Again during the night of 23-24 September, the violence continued in many areas of Mexico City. Three Granaderos reportedly were killed in flames when students fired what was described as a homemade bazooka from a school. At least one student was reported dead in the night's violence and an unknown number of police, students and other injured. Over 40 buses were seized by students to use as barricades and over a dozen set afire. Fighting spread outside the Federal District and into Tlalneptla in the State of Mexico on the city's northern edge. Police fought snipers firing from rooftops in the area of Vocational School No 7.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(Classification and Control Markings)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

CONTINUATION SHEET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(Classification and Control Markings)

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]
PAGE 5 OF 5 PAGES
ORIGINATOR [REDACTED]

(Leave Blank)

in Tlatelolco and there was considerable gunfire on the northwestern side of the city around the vocational school at Casco de Santo Thomas. Additional injuries and/or deaths were reported in this last affray. Molotov cocktails were thrown at police vehicles from rooftops. During 23 September, there was at least one additional attack by gunfire on a preparatory school by unidentified gunmen. Early in the morning of 24 September, Army units were reported patrolling in the area of Zacatenco in the northeastern part of the city, and in other troubled areas in the city's center.

COMMENTS:

1. (S) Estimates of the number of troops utilized in the 18 September occupation of University City went as high as 10,000. This figure is believed very high, and better estimated probably would be about one-half this figure. Units involved were not publicly identified, but they are presumed to be elements of the Infantry Brigade, augmented by some personnel of the Presidential Guards and Paratroop Battalion. On 23 September 1968, Brig Gen Alonso Aguirre Ramos, Chief of the Second Section, Secretariat of National Defense, said that press accounts of up to 10,000 troops used were "much too high" (but he did not quote a figure). He said that a Task Force organization had been used again, and again was commanded by Maj Gen Crisoforo Mazon Pineda, Commander, The Infantry Brigade.

2. (S) Press accounts said that Colonel Javier Vazquez Felix commanded the battalion of troops used in the Tlatelolco area during the night of 21-22 September. Colonel Vazquez is CO of the 43d Infantry Battalion with headquarters at Toluca, State of Mexico (part of the 22d Military Zone). This marked the first known involvement of troops from outside the immediate Mexico City area and gives an indication of the growing seriousness of the situation.

4. (S) A Defensa representative said on 20 September that all Army units, including Rurales, from outside the area which had come to participate in the 16 September parade had departed for their home stations.

5. (S) The occupation of University City by soldiers signifies a new phase in the Mexican Government's hardening attitude towards the students. Cries of "violation" of the university's "autonomy" are certain to increase; this was a student-unifying factor after the disorders in late July. It also might increase student support from outside Mexico City, not an important factor thus far, and there were rumblings of student support from Guernavaca, Puebla, Oaxaca and increased support from Monterrey where students continued their strike in support of Mexico City area.

7. (U) A selection of newspaper photographs from Mexico City papers showing Army personnel and vehicles involved in actions described in this report is attached.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(Classification and Control Markings)