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TELEGRAM

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ACTION: Amembassy MEXICO

STATE

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SUBJECT: Special Observation and Training Program in Police Activities

REF: Mexico's 00040

1. Department shares Embassy's reservations re proposed training program and politically unpopular uses to which trainees may be put after return. We particularly puzzled by professed interest in reorganizing and "cleaning up" Mexico City police, in that the trainees' role in such an operation remains unclear.
2. Nonetheless, we agree that we should be as forthcoming as possible in meeting this first substantive request for assistance by Echeverria Government. There would seem to be two alternatives,

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Page 2

7

depending upon Mexican intentions: (A) If GOM is serious about doing a thoroughgoing job of reorganization and reform, then the trainee candidates should be prepared to spend considerable time in training and should consist of experienced police officers; (B) if, however, GOM desires training of young, non-police group for other reasons and assuming we have made determination to assist on political grounds, then a program along lines suggested by Embassy (i.e., with no USG training content, and consisting entirely of observation tours to various metropolitan police departments) would probably be most desirable. Potential anti-US fallout resulting from future activities of trainees might be diluted by arranging for them to visit other foreign police departments as well, e.g. the Royal Canadian

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Page 3

7

Mounted Police.

3. Effort should be made to apprise Mexicans that advantages will accrue only in proportion to prior experience of trainees and time and effort put into training. Short-term observation tours by inexperienced, non-police personnel will not produce very gratifying results in terms of substantive training.

4. Drawing on foregoing observations, Embassy should attempt to ascertain Mexican intentions more specifically. GP-3

END

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