

TELEGRAM

INCOMING AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

Foreign Service of the United States of America

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ACTION:
POL-2

CONFIDENTIAL

Classification

Control: 080

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Recd: 20 JUN 68
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FM USDAO/RIO DE JANEIRO
TO RUEOJFA/DIA WASHDC
RULPAL/USCINCSO
RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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SUBJECT

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ACTION TAKEN.....

C O N F I D E N T I A L FM ARMA JUN 68

1. (C) UNDER LEADERSHIP OF WELL-KNOWN RABBLE-ROUSERS IN RADICAL STUDENT MOVEMENTS, APPROXIMATELY TWO HUNDRED UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS SOUGHT CONDUCT RALLY IN MINISTRY EDUCATION PATIO AT 1130 TODAY. GUANABARA POLICE ON SCENE AND DISPERSED GROUP WITH MASSIVE EMPLOYMENT TEAR GAS.

2. (C) DEMONSTRATORS RUMBLED THROUGH DOWNTOWN STREETS IN RUNNING CONFRONTATIONS WITH POLICE. AGITATORS BURNED ONE BRAZILIAN ARMY TRUCK CAUGHT IN DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC AND BROKE WINDOWS OF ANOTHER. A BUS NEAR MUNICIPAL THEATER ALSO STONED AS WERE PRIVATE CARS ELSEWHERE IN CENTER OF CITY.

3. (C) POLICE NUMBERING APPROXIMATELY FOUR HUNDRED OBSERVED IN ACTION. ABOUT TWO HUNDRED AROUND MINISTRY EDUCATION AND THESE SUPPORTED BY WATER-SPEWING VEHICLE WHICH THEY FOLLOWED IN FREQUENT CHARGES FROM MINISTRY AREA ALONG NEIGHBORING STREETS. POLICE ALSO USED SHIELDS FOR DEFENSE AGAINST ROCKS AND OTHER DEBRIS. ANOTHER TWO HUNDRED POLICE POSTED ALONG RIO BRANCO AVENUE IN CENELANDIA-MUNICIPAL THEATER AREA. THESE MILITAMEN ARMED WITH MAUSER RIFLES, HALF OF WHICH WITH FIXED BAYONETS.

4. (C) I SPEND NEARLY THREE HOURS IN AREA OF AGITATION AND IMPRESSED BY PUBLIC COMMENTS BLASTING STUDENTS OVER DISRUPTION BUSINESS AND PRIVATE PURSUITS. MOST STOREKEEPERS KEPT LOWERING AND RAISING STREET SHUTTERS AS POLICE-CHASED GROUPS CHARGED BY. SOME STORES ON BUSY URUGUAYANA STREET SUFFERED BROKEN GLASS FROM STUDENT-HURLED ROCKS.

5. (C) INFORMATION FROM OFFICE OF SECURITY CHIEF AND FROM ARMY MINISTRY INDICATES THAT STUDENTS ALSO

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SOUGHT BLOCKADE GOVERNORS' ISLAND NEAR UNIVERSITY CITY, BUT THAT POLICE MOVED SWIFTLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO CLEAR ROAD BLOCKS. A GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS MOVED TO CAPACABANA DISTRICT FROM CENTER OF CITY BUT WAS UNABLE TO CARRY OUT ANY MISCHIEF.

6. (C) GUANABARA POLICE HAVE DETAINED LARGE NUMBER OF ADULTS WHO SPOTTED WHIPPING UP ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL JUVENILES. SOME INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INDICATE AN ATTEMPT MAY BE MADE AT 1800 TONIGHT TO RENEW DEMONSTRATIONS. BUT KEY POLICE AND MILITARY OFFICERS BELIEVE AGITATORS HAVE HAD WIND KNOCKED OUT OF SAILS. ONE SENIOR OFFICIAL EXPRESSED HOPE THAT REMAINING RADICAL LEADERSHIP WOULD SHOW ITSELF IN ORDER TO FACILITATE ROUNDUP.

7. (C) THREE-HOUR BATTLE TODAY HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY BY GUANARABA SECURITY. ARMY HAS GUARDS BN, ARMORED INFANTRY BN., ARMY POLICE BN., AND BEACH AREA COAST ARTILLERY UNITS ON ALERT BUT DOES NOT EXPECT REQUIREMENT TO COMMIT MILITARY FORCE. GUANABARA POLICE APPEARED TO OVERREACT IN USE OF TEAR GAS AND AT TIMES SEEMED LUDICROUS CHASING THE WATER-SQUIRTING TANK. LIBERAL USE TEAR GAS CAST CLOUD OVER ENTIRE DOWNTOWN AREA WITH RESULT THAT THOUSANDS OF "CARIOCAS" IN AND OUT OF BUILDINGS SHED TEARS. SAME SITUATION PREVAILED AT THIS EMBARRY. WHEN CONFRONTED WITH SUGGESTION OF OVERREACTION, SECURITY OFFICIALS UNANIMOUS IN AVOWING THAT "WE ARE NOT GOING TO ALLOW THIS TO DEVELOP INTO A PARIS." BASED ON MY SOUNDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS, POLICE ACTIONS EFFECTIVE AND STUDENTS/PSEUDO-STUDENTS APPEAR BEARING BRUNT POPULAR WRATH. SITUATION CALM AS TO 1700 AND NO REPORTS OF ACTIVITY ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY.

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