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Lpd 4 Dec 68

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SECRET 071415Z APR 68 CITE MEXICO CITY 5143

DIRECTOR

MHALPHA

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION SUBMITTED ON ASSUMPTION THAT HEADQUARTERS INTERESTED IN REACTIONS TO ASSASSINATION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING; PLEASE ADVISE.

2. PER LIENVOY 5 APRIL 1968, IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN LUIS QUINTANILLA AND HIS SISTER TERESA, THE LATTER QUESTIONS WHETHER ASSASSINATION MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF SOME MOVEMENT "POR ABAJO", NOT EXACTLY THE GOVERNMENT. LUIS SAID IT WAS THE FASCISTS, THE CRAZY ONES .. THE FORCE THAT KILLED LINCOLN... ALL THE ANTI-NEGRO ORGANIZATIONS OF THE SOUTH. TERESA COMMENTED ON FACT THAT KING WAS NOBEL PRIZE WINNER, AND THAT JOHNSON NOW IN PREDICAMENT. LUIS PREDICTS ACTS OF VENGEANCE, TERESA BELIEVES COULD EVEN SPARK A REVOLUTION. LUIS SAID HE HAD MET KING IN GENEVA, REFERRED TO HIM AS "ELEGANT" AND LIKENED HIS DEATH TO THAT OF GANDHI, "A CHAMPION OF PEACE, LIKE ALL THE DECENT AMERICANS...HE WAS AGAINST THE WAR IN VIETNAM". BOTH LUIS AND SISTER COMMENTED ON FACT THAT PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO HONOLULU WAS DELAYED, WITH LUIS ADDING, IN REFERENCE TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, "HE HAS TO MAINTAIN THE FARCE

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THAT THEIR CONSENT IS NEEDED".

3. LIENVOY, SAME DATE, REPORTED EXCHANGE BETWEEN FORMER WIFE (TISBE) OF COMMUNIST DOCTOR CARLOS NOBEL AND HER SISTER THAL A. IMMEDIATE REACTION OF BOTH WAS THAT KING'S DEATH CAUSED DELAY IN PRESIDENT'S TRIP, AND THAT RACIAL REPERCUSSIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE. TISBE SAID "MY FRIENDS LOVED HIM VERY MUCH (MY FRIENDS ARE RICH); THE ADVOCATES OF NON-VIOLENCE ARE WELL TO DO...THE VIOLENT ONES ARE THOSE WHO DON'T EVEN HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT...THEY BOUGHT KING OFF BY GIVING HIM THE NOBEL PRIZE".

4. DEATH OF KING CAUSED BANNER HEADLINES IN ALL LEADING MEXICO CITY DAILIES, BUT BECAUSE ALL OF THE PRESS COVERAGE CONSISTED OF AP, UPI AND OTHER AMERICAN WIRE SERVICE REPORTS, REPORTING IN THE MEXICAN PRESS WAS OBJECTIVE ON 5 APRIL. LARGEST HEADLINE WAS 86 POINT "LUTHER KING ASSASSINATED" IN LEFTIST DAILY "EL DIA", WHILE POINTAGE OF HEADS IN ALL OTHER PAPERS WAS AVERAGE, INDICATING MEXICAN EDITORIAL STAFFS WORKING EVENING 4 APRIL NOT CERTAIN AS TO NEWS INTEREST STRENGTH OF STORY IN MEXICO. CENTER LEFT "EXCELSIOR", WHICH DEVOTED ALL THREE OF ITS LEAD EDITORIALS TO JOHNSON WITHDRAWAL A FEW DAYS AGO, DEVOTED ONLY ONE SHORT LEAD EDITORIAL WHICH ANTI-U.S. GOVERNMENT IN TONE AND WRITTEN BY TOP EXCELSIOR FIGURE AND PROFESSIONAL

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ANTI-AMERICAN

JULIO SHERER GARCIA. SECOND LEAD EDITORIAL WAS BY LIQUIFIER RE HOPE FOR VIET NAM. AFTERNOON DAILIES REPORTED THAT STOKELY CARMICHAEL CALLING FOR REBELLION, BUT ARTICLES WERE AP AND UPI WRITE SERVICE STORIES AND CONTAINED NO MEXICAN EXPRESSION OF SENTIMENTS FOR OR AGAINST BLACK REBELLION IN AMERICA.

5. ON 6 APRIL "EL DIA" FRONT PAGE TOP FEATURED MURALIST TYPE SCRATCHBOARD ARTWORK DEPICTING MARTIN LUTHER KING IN ROBES IN THE SKY WITH PERSONS WITH NEGRO, ASIAN AND INDIAN FEATURES IN BACKGROUND. HOWEVER, "EL DIA" FRONTPAGE WAS FAIRLY OBJECTIVE DESPITE BEING A CONGLOMERATE OF AFP, REUTER, UPI, INFORMEX, CTK, EFE AND PRENSA LATINA WIRE STORIES. FRONT PAGE ALSO FEATURED A LENGTHY ANTI-WHITE-AMERICANS POEM ABOUT KING WRITTEN ORIGINALLY BY LEFTIST RAYMUNDO RAMOS IN 1963. HEADLINES IN ALL OTHER NEWSPAPERS EXCEPT "EL UNIVERSAL" WERE BANNER HEADS BUT IN COMPARITIVELY SMALL TYPE. POLITICALLY VARIABLE "EL HERALDO" RAN 1967 RIOT PICTURES OVER CAPTIONS CLAIMING THEY WERE TAKEN IN STATES ON 5 APRIL 1968. BIGGEST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE STORY WAS PUBLISHED IN "EXCELSIOR", FILED FROM MEMPHIS BY REPORTER FAUSTO FERNANDEZ PONTE WHO RECENTLY FILED A FALSE "EXCLUSIVE" INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON. EXCELSIOR SERIES SHOWS KING DEATH SITE. FERNANDEZ PONTE DESCRIBES IN MINUTE DETAIL

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EVERYTHING TRANSPIRING IN MEMPHIS BUT TALKS OF MACHINE GUN FIRE AND THE PRESENCE IN TENNESSEE OF 16,000 MEMBERS OF WHITE CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA. "EXCELSIOR" AND MANY OTHER PAPERS CARRY PICTURE

OF KING IN COFFIN MOURNED BY WIFE AND PICTURES OF STIKELY CARMICHAEL CALLING FOR REBELLION ON TV. MOST NEWSPAPERS SIMPLY CONFINE THEMSELVES TO REPORTING CIVIL UNREST, ANGUISH AND VIOLENCE IN U.S. BUT "EL HERALDO" CARRIES A CHEST-BEATING ARTICLE ENTITLED "UNANIMOUS CONDEMNATION IN MEXICO OF EXTREMISM AND INTOLERANCE" AND IN ANOTHER ARTICLE QUOTES VISITOR AND PLAYWRIGHT ARTHUR MILLER AS STATING THAT DEATH OF KING MAY BRING ABOUT REVELOUTION IN U.S.

6. LEAD "EXCELSIOR" EDITORIAL OF 6 APRIL FORTUNATELY WRITTEN BY LIQUIFER. IT IS OBJECTIVE AND REASONABLE ESSAY EXPLAINING THAT WHILE MUCH HAS BEEN DONE LEGISLATIVELY IN THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT YEARS TO BREAK DOWN THE INEQUALITIES OF RACE IN THE U.S., THERE IS A MARKED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TECHNICAL RIGHTS OBTAINED THROUGH LEGISLATION AND THE DEGREE OF IMPROVEMENT OF THE NEGRO'S LOT. HE EXPLAINS FURTHER THAT NEW NEGRO PRESSURE GROUPS HAVE DEVELOPED SEPARATE FROM AND OPPOSED TO THE KING FOLLOWING, SOME OF THEM MOTIVATED TO TAKE DRASTIC AND VIOLENT ACTION BECAUSE THE PROGRESS IS TOO SLOW. THE ARTICLE ENDS DEPLORING THE NEGRO VIOLENCE AND POINTING OUT THAT IN

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THE LONG RUN THE NEGROES HAVE LESS TO GAIN BY VIOLENT ACTION THAN BY PEACEFUL POLITICAL ACTION.

7. IN SUMMARY THE MEXICAN PRESS AS OF 6 APRIL IS FAIRLY OBJECTIVE IN REPORTING THE TROUBLES IN THE U.S. AND HAS NOT BEGUN TO SERMONIZE ABOUT THE EVILS OF AMERICA. THE LEADING DAILIES APPEAR ALARMED AND INTRIGUED, BUT NOT HOSTILE TOWARDS THE U.S., WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE POEM NOTED IN "EL DIA". IN CONTRAST LOCAL AMERICAN RADIO STATION "VIP" IN MEXICO CITY HAS BEEN RE-BROADCASTING NEWS AND COMMENTARY PROGRAMS FROM STATES WHICH BORDER ON THE HYSTERICAL.

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