



**TERMINATION  
PHASE-OUT  
STUDY  
PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECT  
URUGUAY**

**APRIL-MAY 1974**

**AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523**

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SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
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YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON DEC. 31, 1980.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Terms of Reference

A. I. D. funded police assistance overseas prohibited by the recently passed Foreign Assistance Act is consequently being terminated. In the phase-out of these projects, future development of the civil police forces and their role in Uruguay's economic, political and security posture become matters for concern. Of equal concern is what, if any, effect this premature termination of U.S. assistance will have on current and future U.S. interests in Uruguay.

This report presents the findings of the study conducted with these objectives in mind. An evaluation is made of the past and present security and developmental situation in the country, the civil security forces' operations and the role they have played in the context of their own society, A. I. D. Public Safety efforts in accomplishing project goals and contributing to U.S. objectives and interests. An appraisal is provided relative to the expected effect the termination of police assistance will have on future progress and development of the civil security forces.

Subsequent actions by both the USG and the GOU towards continued development of responsible, professional and responsive law enforcement in Uruguay are recommended and offered for consideration.

### B. Conduct of the Study

The evaluation was conducted by: Albert L. Bryant, OPS/W.

The evaluator arrived in Montevideo on May 5, 1974 and completed the study on May 24, 1974. The study consisted of talks with numerous persons from both USG and GOU agencies concerned with or involved in the internal security situation in the Republic of Uruguay, more specifically as it concerns the civil police agencies and the Public Safety Project. A list of persons contacted is shown in Attachment A of the unclassified portion of this report.

On-site visits were made to all of the major elements of the Montevideo Police Department and to the Department of Colonia.

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The unclassified report covers in some detail the Public Safety Project, its counterpart agencies and progress made to date. This information will not be repeated here. This report is merely a supplement which will confine itself to matters not covered there due to their sensitivity.

## II. SUMMARY

### A. Impact of Program Termination

Progress has been good in achieving mutually developed goals and objectives. The host country has achieved a degree of self-sufficiency in many areas. Most notable areas requiring further development are organization, management, planning, and training. The initial steps have been taken in these areas and one can only hope that progress will continue, although somewhat slower in the future with the departure of Public Safety assistance.

### B. Recommendations

Recommended U.S.G. actions deal with proposed training and continuation of the USAID contacts with the Ministry of Interior and the Montevideo Police Department for selection of participants.

## III. HOST COUNTRY SITUATION

### A. Social, Economic and Political Background

Twenty years of economic stagnation and a fragmented and contentious political arena which inhibited governmental policy decisions and raised doubts as to the assured continuity of governmental action underlay the nation's malaise and resulting law and order problem. Many of these problems remain and some may prove intractable. But the trend in recent years, in part at the expense of traditional civilian government and liberal institutions, has been toward increased executive power to redress these problems.

### B. Internal Security Situation

At the beginning of the Public Safety Program, law and order efforts were severely strained. The MLN/Tupamaro terrorists, three years old in 1965, were beginning their own period of major success. Worker unrest, led by the Communist-dominated CNT

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labor confederation, resulted in frequent work stoppages, demonstrations and a number of serious street disturbances. By 1972 the terrorist threat, if not eliminated, had been contained. The CNT was proscribed in mid-1973 and to date labor agitation has been successfully deterred.

Until the underlying causes of Uruguay's malaise are resolved, threats to public order will continue. The possibility of terrorist acts remains, and could increase due to the high level of terrorist activity in neighboring Argentina. But it is the Mission's assessment that the GOU military, police and intelligence organizations will be able to handle foreseeable terrorist, student and labor threats to order.

GOU officials, particularly those most involved with the security agencies, have been highly appreciative of A.I.D's Public Safety Program and regret its termination. At the same time, however, the termination has not caught them by surprise. The need for self-sufficiency in commodity acquisitions has been a reality for some three years and local authorities have been forewarned since 1972 of the probable termination in FY 74 of our advisory functions. The Montevideo Police Chief, Col. Alberto Ballestrino, in a conversation with the Chargé in mid-1973, stated that it was the "responsibility of each country to provide full support to their police."

Thus, in general, the police are prepared both psychologically and materially for the termination of the PSP. Additionally, their greater self-sufficiency will not mean complete isolation from external assistance. PSP training in the U.S. will continue to be offered. And there are signs of increased and productive exchanges between the Uruguayan police and neighboring security forces, especially with the Argentine and Brazilian police.

#### IV. US INTERESTS/OBJECTIVES

##### A. Current Mission Appraisal

The objective of our Public Safety project, which began in 1965, was to increase the effectiveness of the police in carrying out their responsibilities to maintain law and order. Its priorities have been to increase the ability of the police to handle riots and demonstrations which threaten public order and to control and eliminate terrorist and subversive groups which seek to create economic and social chaos.

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During earlier periods, emphasis was given to improving riot control capabilities, including communication and transportation commodity purchases. In the early 1970's the project's major emphasis was shifted to improving anti-terrorist capabilities. By 1972 the project's commodity program had significantly decreased. Looking toward the phasing out of the project by FY 74, program emphasis was aimed at establishing police self-sufficiency in management, planning and training areas.

B. Assistance Achievements

The project has been notably successful in achieving its objectives. The project's effectiveness has been greatly enhanced by the GOU's own high priority in developing a more effective police force. The police's riot training and equipment were severely tested in 1968 and 1969 and found adequate. Police/military joint efforts successfully contained by mid-1972 the threat of the MLN/Tupamaros, one of the best organized and most successful urban terrorist groups in the world.

Shortages of equipment and funds remain a problem to optimal police operations. Weaknesses in planning, training and management remain. But within these limitations, progress has been substantial. Equipment, pay and general local resources allocated to the police, previously substandard relative to other GOU agencies, have been significantly improved. In all, the police are a better trained, better equipped and more active force than 10 years ago. And they have a greater confidence in their ability to effectively operate without external assistance.

The Public Safety Program has not been without controversy. As Uruguayan insurgency and counterinsurgency efforts escalated, our association in this sensitive area was at times distorted or misinterpreted. Encroachments on traditional Uruguayan civil liberties have added fuel to the controversy in recent years.

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V. THE CIVIL SECURITY FORCES

The civil security forces were covered in the unclassified report and will not be repeated here.

Most of the problems encountered in the police organization are not peculiar to the police but are a reflection of the entire government structure. It was noted by USG officials in Uruguay, and the evaluator must agree, that the major barriers to future police development and managerial improvement are the bureaucratic procedures of the GOU at the top level. Until some changes take place at this level, the police can only progress to a certain point in their own managerial practices.

VI. THE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM

The unclassified report contains a detailed description of the Public Safety Program, so no attempt is made here to repeat that document. It is sufficient to state that a unique and closer relationship exists between the Public Safety Program and the Uruguyan Police as a result of the joint efforts during the urban terrorist activities in Uruguay and the murder of the Public Safety Officer. All officials contacted expressed regret at the termination of the program and stated that the close contact and personal friendships will be deeply missed. They expressed determination to continue the development of the civil police function and expressed great satisfaction that the International Police Academy would continue to be available to them.

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