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By JOSEPH NOVITSKI special to The New York Times

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MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, July 6—The urban guerrillas of Uruguay have apparently decided to avoid upsetting the nationwide elections scheduled for November.

A shift in tactics to favor elections runs against the philosophic grain of the National Liberation Movement, the successful pioneers of urban guerrilla warfare in South America, who call themselves Tupamaros.

The Tupamaros, like other such organizations in Latin America, believe in principle that the socialist revolution they are trying to provoke can only be brought about through armed warfare, never through elections. Still, a change seems to have taken place, with as yet unknown consequences for the Presidential and congressional elections Nov. 28.

The Tupamaros have noticeably withdrawn from terrorist tactics in the last six months. They have offered qualified support to a political alliance that has united the organized Uruguayan left since February. Political analysts recognize their sympathizers in the alliance, called the Broad Front, which has brought Communists, Socialists, Christian Democrats, liberal nationalists and revolutionary splinter groups together behind a single slate.

Almost Clandestine Support

However, the Tupamaros have not given up guerrilla action, and their support for the elections is not only unusual—it is almost clandestine.

In public statements the Tupamaros have maintained that their stand on the Broad Front does not conflict with their conviction that power can never be won through elections.

"Still, you can see that they have toned down, avoiding actions that could upset the elections," a sympathizer who has fairly frequent access to the Tupamaros said.

The guerrilla organization, which has been active in Uruguay since at least 1966, began resorting to bloody tactics after one of its groups kidnapped and killed Dan A. Mitrione, an American adviser to the Uruguayan police, last August. Before that it had used violence for political purposes, rather than making an all-out assault on government and society.

On the one hand, the guerrillas have given up the bombings and terrorist assaults that followed Mr. Mitrione's murder. On the other, they have kidnapped four hostages, including the British Ambassador, in the last six months.

Envoy Still Held

The reason for the kidnapping of the Ambassador, Geoffrey H. S. Jackson, on Jan. 8—the same day that the movement's support for the Broad Front was made public—has not become fully clear.

Some sympathizers suggest that he is a hostage to guarantee that the November elections are carried out. Others assert that holding him for almost six months despite intensive manhunts is in itself a challenge to the Government headed by President Jorge Pacheco Areco.

Three Uruguayan hostages are men identified with President Pacheco or his administration and are apparently being held to embarrass the President politically.

Meanwhile, the Broad Front has been organizing and showing increasing popular support.

Within its mosaic of parties, organizations and splinter groups, one, the 26th of March Movement, was identified by Uruguayan political analysts in recent interviews as being representative of the Tupamaros.

When the Tupamaros offered their support last January, they asserted that they believed in the Broad Front as an instrument for popular organization,

whatever the election outcome. That attitude has cropped up again as the central tenet of the 26th of March Movement, a new organization of independents in the Broad Front that takes its name from the date of the front's first mass rally in Montevideo.

The meaning of the Tupamaro shift is not yet clear.

"They have divided into two

currents, one in favor of forming a political party and one in favor of pure guerrilla warfare," said a leading member of the Uruguayan Socialist party.

A sympathizer said: "The Tupamaros probably see themselves as being able to push a Broad Front government, if there is one, toward more radical policies."