

URUGUAY DECREES END OF CONGRESS

Constitutional Government Ended by Leader, Under Pressure by Military

By The Associated Press

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, June 27—Acting under intense military pressure, President Juan María Bordaberry and two Cabinet members abolished the Congress today, ending constitutional Government in this republic for the first time in 40 years.

Military chiefs have held real power behind the scenes here for several months and the decree dissolving Congress pushed Uruguay and her 2.8 million people closer to the kind of military rule that exists in Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador. Military leaders play a dominant role in Bolivia affairs. Neighboring Paraguay is also under the rule of a general.

In place of Congress, Mr. Bordaberry's Government established a Council of State to oversee the President's activities and to do the work of the Congress.

Reaction to the decree was

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The New York Times/June 28, 1973

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swift, but in general the nation seemed calm. The Communist-controlled National Workers Convention called a general strike and ordered occupation of factories. Two Cabinet members resigned in protest.

The Congressional Palace was locked, for the first time since 1933, and tanks and soldiers were stationed around the building, in the center of the city.

By midday, Montevideo, where half of the country's people live, was closing down. The city was calm as buses and taxis disappeared and were replaced by patrolling army and police vehicles. No violence was reported.

'Grave Deterioration'

The Interior Minister, Col. Néstor Bolentini, and Defense Minister, Walter Ravenna, signed the decree with Mr. Bordaberry. The two Cabinet members who resigned were Education Minister José M. Robaina Anso and Health Minister Pablo Purriel.

Mr. Bordaberry's declaration said that there was a "grave deterioration" of constitutional rule and attributed the crisis to "the criminal actions of the conspiracy against the country, aligned with the complacency of political groups without national spirit."

It was announced that Mr. Bordaberry would rule by decree until constitutional changes could be prepared for a national plebiscite.

The "conspiracy" charged by Mr. Bordaberry involves the Marxist Tupamaro guerrillas.

The Tupamaros, in a series of spectacular raids and kidnappings, have sought to undermine the constitutional Government. They murdered one of their kidnapping victims, a United States police adviser, Dan A. Mitrione of Indianapolis, in August, 1971, and held another prisoner for 424 days.

On April 14, 1972, the guerrillas killed four Government officials in daylight ambushes and Congress authorized action the next day, unleashing the military against the Tupamaros.

Censorship Strengthened

In today's action, all schools were ordered closed until July 20 to avoid disturbances. Censorship, which was imposed last year, was strengthened, with news media prohibited from making any report that "directly or indirectly attributes dictatorial goals to the executive power."

Congressmen were waiting in the Congressional Palace when radio stations switched to military marches and folk music before dawn. It was announced at 6:14 A.M. that the decree had been signed. Some Congressmen wept as they left the marble building.

"We are at war with Mr. Juan María Bordaberry, enemy of our country," declared Senator Wilson Ferreira Aldunate, leader of the Opposition National party, who was defeated by Mr. Bordaberry in the 1971 elections.

Military officials said that the decision to abolish the Congress was made because the elected body had blocked the armed forces campaign to end "left-wing subversion" and failed to take steps to provide efficient government.

The showdown between Congress and the military centered on a left-wing Senator, Enrique Erro, accused by the army of links with the Tupamaros. The Senate had refused a military request to lift Mr. Erro's congressional immunity from arrest, and the House had voted against impeachment proceedings.

With dissolution of Congress, the military quickly ordered Mr. Erro arrested, but he was in neighboring Argentina, invited to give lectures by Argentina's new Peronist Government.

Mr. Erro and another leftist Senator, Zelmar Michelini, asked for political asylum in Argentina after receiving news of today's events, reliable sources in Buenos Aires said. However, the Argentine Foreign Ministry issued no statement regarding the two senators.

The closing of Congress came four months after the military had a showdown with Mr. Bordaberry and almost forced him to resign. Last February, a year after taking office, he appointed a defense minister unacceptable to the army and air force.

When Mr. Bordaberry defied a military order to cancel the appointment, the army sent troops and tanks to the Presidential residence. The navy set up barricades to defend the President but surrendered without firing a shot. The entire Cabinet was changed and since then Mr. Bordaberry has exercised executive power in constant consultation with top military leaders.