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A I R G R A M

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AIR POUCH

TO: Secstate WASHINGTON

FROM: Amembassy BRASILIA Office

DATE: October 9, 1962

SUBJECT: A New Look in Brazilian Foreign Policy?

The public statements of the recently-installed Brazilian Foreign Minister, Hermes Lima, have led to speculation in various quarters that Brazil may be in the process of modifying the stridently "independent" foreign policy which it has pursued ever since the accession of Janio Quadros to the Brazilian presidency. Some of Lima's recent private statements also lend support to the thesis that Brazil--though probably not modifying its present policy in its essentials--is nonetheless seeking ways to make it more palatable to (and publicly more in consonance with the objectives of) the United States.

What first drew notice from Brazilian observers were Lima's brief remarks upon taking office¹--wherein he not only failed to pay homage to the "independence" of Brazil's stance in foreign affairs but cited the necessity for "hemispheric solidarity" and of the Foreign Office "honoring its traditions." Of course, Lima's words were sufficiently vague that some saw in them merely a continuance of the Arinos-Dantas foreign policy line. Though vague, however, Lima's words were sufficiently different from the nationalistic chest thumping in which his two immediate predecessors were wont to engage (to say nothing of the contrast they offered to the remarks of Under-Secretary Bernardes who--in turning over to Lima the office that he had been filling ad interim--did not fail to laud Dantas and

1 See enclosure for free translation.

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Arinos and get in a plug for Brazil's manifest destiny as a world power) that they beguiled not a few with the possibility of a return to the pre-Quadros policy of placing primary emphasis on Hemispheric affairs and primary reliance on good relations with the United States.

And events for the following week did nothing to dispel this hope. On the one hand, the Foreign Minister privately informed Ambassador Gordon (Embtel 735) that he was in general agreement with the U.S. position on Cuba (as outlined by the Secretary to Ambassador Arinos in New York). Subsequently, Arinos himself came out publicly in defense of the thesis that the Communist penetration of Cuba was a threat to the security of the Hemisphere, (though, typically, he noted that this fact must be judged by each country in the light of its own special circumstances). The fact that Arinos was operating at the specific behest of the Foreign Minister (and, through him, the President) was underlined when the statement, though made in New York, was released by the Foreign Office in Brazil and given wide press play.

As might be expected, this refreshing display of anti-Communist vigour reportedly met with considerable resistance from the Leftist political forces whose support the Goulart administration (and Lima, whatever else he is, is a Goulart man, first, last and--probably--always) considers so essential to the maintenance of its political health. The result has been two subsequent public statements by Lima in which he has attempted to re-affirm the present regime's continuing loyalty to the thesis of "non-intervention" (a word which, as the Department is aware, has become an euphemism for a pro-Castro posture), while at the same time maintaining the essentials of the Arinos position as set forth in Washington (i.e., the thesis that Communism in Cuba is a threat to the Hemisphere). Indeed, it is significant that--in the first of these public declarations--Lima put the Communist threat first, and only subsequently attempted to counter-balance it with (1) the statement that it is up to each country to meet this threat as it sees fit (2) the (somewhat unrelated) claim that the forthcoming elections are clear proof of the validity of Brazilian democratic institutions (3) the declaration that Brazil is not defending the principle of self-determination solely for the benefit of Cuba but as a necessary adjunct to its support of the idea of peaceful co-existence and (4) that though Brazil recognizes Cuba's right of self defense, it also recognizes that other nations of the Hemisphere possess the same right (by reason of either their "geographic location" or of the exigencies of internal security), though it does not approve of the formation of military blocs by groups of American nations.

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Though it obviously did not please everyone, this rather dexteriously ambidexterous approach did come as close to satisfying everyone as was probably possible--as indicated by the fact that virulently leftist Ultima Hora saw it all as an affirmation of Brazil's "pro-Cuba" policy, while some of the rightist press played it in exactly the opposite manner.

Unfortunately, the most recent public declaration of the Foreign Minister cannot be accorded as high marks--being essentially (there is no text--the statement being apparently "off the cuff") a denial that the October 3 communiqué on Cuba issued by the Foreign Ministers in Washington was binding on any of the countries represented at the meeting. However, it is again significant that the Foreign Minister did not deny the present administration's general agreement with the line taken in the communiqué (he is in fact reported to have ducked several pointed questions in this regard).

Conclusions: Considering these declarations and attitudes in their totality, it seems fairly certain that the present government is attempting (for the moment at least) to shift the emphasis in its foreign policy away from the attitude of "independence" for independence sake. Thus, the agreement, both public and private, with the U.S. position on the Communist threat represented by Cuba--as indicated both by the statements noted above and by the Brazilian agreement with the joint communiqué (the Foreign Minister's subsequent attempts at domestic obfuscation notwithstanding). On the other hand, there is no real evidence that the Brazilian position has changed in its essentials--as repeatedly stated by Lima himself. (In this regard it is well to remember that, even at Punta del Este, Brazil was the signatory of a document repudiating Communist intervention in the Hemisphere.) Therefore, Brazil's present foreign-policy posture would appear to be a tactical maneuver, probably undertaken for the purpose of favorably impressing the United States. As such, it fits neatly into the general mein of enlightened (and, privately at least, pro-U.S.) reasonableness which the Goulart regime has assumed since it succeeded in winning its battle with Congress over the question of presidential powers. And, as is the case with this entire pose, it remains to be seen whether the somewhat timid new look in foreign policy is a sometime thing (designed possibly with the forthcoming visit of President Kennedy in mind)

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or whether it is indeed an indication of a more sensible long-range approach to Brazilian problems.

For the Ambassador:

Harry A. Quinn
Second Secretary of Embassy

APPROVED:

Philip Raine
Counselor of Embassy
for Political Affairs

Enclosure:

- 1 Free translation of Foreign Minister Hermes Lima's remarks upon taking office.

DISTRIBUTION: All consulates in Brazil, Service Attachés, USIS, Econ (2), Labor, Pol II, Pol Rio (5), CP (3), Pol Brasilia (5).

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Enclosure 1

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REMARKS OF FOREIGN MINISTER
HERMES LIMA UPON TAKING OFFICE

It is a pleasure for me to receive from the hands of Ambassador Bernardes the duties of the Foreign Relations portfolio. I have known Ambassador Bernardes a long time and have observed his career, one of the most successful. I wish to confirm before him my entire admiration and confidence in his discharge of his position's duties. I particularly wish also to express my thanks for the present manifestation on the part of the employees of the Ministry. In this cordial manifestation I see expressed once again the determination of all those who work here to serve our country as they have done up to now. I am certain that I will not lack the cooperation of the Ministry's employees, and I know perfectly well that this cooperation will be in the name of Brazil, at whose service we all are.

The world of today is an intranquil one, full of problems, internal ones as well as those of an international nature. Brazil's position has always been one of favoring understanding among peoples, and it is precisely this traditional policy, maintained in the development of the very circumstances and evolution of the world, that Itamaraty /Foreign Office/, honoring its traditions, offers to the world. That contribution is, as always, a valuable one to the problems of peace and understanding among peoples. It is not important that that peace and that understanding are difficult /to achieve/. What is important is not to neglect a policy of clearheadedness, human and hemispheric solidarity in the sense of offering the people of the whole world and to the people of America the peace and tranquility they so much need. I am certain that this point of view is one which the Ministry has never failed to uphold.

Translation by Frank Micelotta:jw

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