

# TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the  
United States of America

OUTGOING

AmEmbassy Office Brasilia

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Control: 356

Date: Dec. 22, 1966  
1755

ACTION: AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO 277

BRASILIA 356

SUBJ: WEEKA ITEM: Congress Gives Initial Approval to New  
Constitution

FOR: POL + SOLMSEN FROM HINES

1. As expected, the Administration's draft constitution passed its first--and major--hurdle in the Congress with little strain. After ten days filled with opposition speeches, government forces gathered <sup>223</sup>/~~222~~ Federal Deputies and 37 Senators on December 21 to vote ~~approve~~ approval of the text submitted by the Executive. The opposition turned out 110 votes in the Chamber of Deputies and 17 votes in the Senate against the proposal. <sup>There</sup>/~~There~~ was very little crossing of party lines in the vote. Seven Deputies and one Senator registered abstentions.

2. Both leaders and rank and file of the two parties held informal meetings during the week. ARENA leaders were anxious to have continued MDB participation in the sessions, and the MDB wanted ARENA support for its proposed

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(typed: 12-23-66)

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amendments. By the final session, most MDB congressmen had no hopes for achieving major changes but expected support from elements within ARENA to approve at least some amendments during the final voting January 17-21.

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Clearance: HSOkun

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