

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

OUTGOING

Amembassy Office BRASILIA

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Control: 11-004

ACTION: Secstate WASHINGTON 62

Date: November 5, 1965
4:12 p.m.

INFO: Amembassy RIO DE JANEIRO 81
Amconsul SAO PAULO 13

1. Deputy Martins Rodrigues, former PSD floor leader in Chamber, gave Emboffs following extremely pessimistic picture of current political situation on Nov 4.

(A) Second Institutional Act a "piece of illegality" which not only did not resolve crisis but made it worse, and this allegedly recognized even by govt.

(B) Rodrigues claimed it clear to everybody, including US govt and public, that Brazil today governed by military dictatorship. Congress left open only to try fool world opinion, but not successful maneuver. From standpoint institutional self-respect, Rodrigues believes would have been better if govt had closed Congress.

(C) According Rodrigues, next major crisis would come over investiture Negrão de Lima in Guanabara on Dec 5 because hardline military determined not allow him take office. Although President Castello Branco clearly and strongly on record (as is Juracy Magalhães) that Negrão will take office, Rodrigues believes President no longer has power prevent hardline officers from having their way. Rodrigues further foresees clash developing between President and hardline over

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Israel Pinheiro's investiture in Minas Gerais on Jan 31. Generalizing from present situation, Rodrigues predicted that direct elections for governors would not be held next year, but that indirect elections via legislative assemblies would install governors acceptable to hardline. Deputy would not be drawn out on subject of congressional elections scheduled for Nov 13, 1966.

(D) Rodrigues believes President is man of honor but under circumstances only best choice of evils. "It will be worse if he goes." President, however, has lost his authority and situation cannot continue as is for long.

✓ Palliative, but not solution, is to install another military man as President in hope that he can bring hardline under control. Does not think Costa e Silva is right man because of his nature and his complete lack of preparation for land's highest office. Rodrigues believes General Mamede has many fine qualities, but at same time is concerned over his reputed "nasserist tendencies." PSD already has in mind a certain general (unnamed) who it thinks would be good candidate.

(E) Deputy Rodrigues thinks it ridiculous to say, as Costa e Silva has said, it unimportant that President may be politically weak but militarily strong. In his view, no

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President can govern Brazil for long who does not have political support, and only a limited mind could think so. Military officers apparently do not realize how much of public has been alienated by revolutionary govt. Rodrigues pointed to hostile attitudes of working class, intellectuals, students and much of middle class. He also noted refusal Governor Magalhães Pinto to support govt subsequent to second Act unless farreaching policy changes made. He said refusal this week of Col Passarinho and Governor Ney Braga to take high posts in govt showed regime cannot get support even from within its own ranks. Rodrigues observed further that for first time in Brazilian history attitudes of general public and those of military are on widely divergent courses. He asserted it extremely dangerous phenomenon that public beginning to express openly disdain for military officers. End result this process, he thought, would be push mass of people more to left, with all consequences this might bring.

(F) Rodrigues said US must realize that in public mind US intimately connected with March 31 movement. It only natural therefore that people should feel US somehow responsible for present situation, said Rodrigues, although he knows both US govt and public are opposed to second Act

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and associated measures. Nevertheless, Rodrigues hopeful that US, emotionally unassociated with current developments and with cool head, can find some means to improve situation. Rodrigues said he would like have opportunity present his views personally to Ambassador in near future.

2. Comment. Rodrigues is normally given to balanced and well-considered judgments, as befits a politician of his tact, experience, and stature. In above conversation, his reserve and balance seem have been subordinated his deep concern and depression. We also cannot discount possibility of some hyperbole on Rodrigues's part designed elicit sympathetic reaction to presentation his dark views. He termed situation "extremely grave" and possibly leading to ruination of his country. He clearly gave Emboffs to understand that he speaking with uncommon frankness because he wanted us understand full seriousness of present crisis in hope we could help find some way surmount it.

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