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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: November 28, 1967

SUBJECT: Army Commander Comments on Miscellaneous Political Topics

PARTICIPANTS: General Dilermando Gomes Monteiro,
Commander, 10th Military Region

Francis R. Campbell, Economic Officer

William P. Kelly, Political Officer

COPIES TO: RIO DE JANEIRO (2) Monteiro bio file
BRASILIA Reading file
INR/ARA/BR (2) USAID/NE
ARA/LA/BR Peace Corps, Recife

The conversation took place during a routine courtesy call on General Monteiro during a visit to Fortaleza. The general was pleasant and frank in his comments.

CEARÁ STATE GOVERNMENT. Monteiro said that the state government had recently gotten over a political crisis but stated that the problem was not so bad as the press treatment made it sound. He described Governor Placido Castelo as a "big hearted" and simple man who allowed himself to get overly involved with the state's political factions. His cabinet, however, has now been reorganized along non-political lines and the Castelo government has received the support of the Army and every other "class" in Ceará except that of the professional politicians.

The General spoke with obvious (and in my opinion excessive) enthusiasm about the economic situation in Ceará and in Northeastern development in general. He said that the Northeast is on the move and the forecast for the future is optimistic. Great progress has been made in the region and although economic difficulties still exist, they are now being solved.

Comment. In a separate conversation the previous day, Governor Castelo told us that his cabinet was "non-political" in the sense that the various secretaries were chosen primarily for their

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