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DATE: June 25, 1966
AMERICAN EMBASSY
BRASILIA, BRAZIL

SUBJECT: 1966 State and Federal Elections

PLACE: Rio de Janeiro State Legislative Assembly, Niteroi

PARTICIPANTS: Deputy Cordolino Ambrósio, President of the Assembly
Lewis W. Bowden, Political Officer, American Embassy
Rio de Janeiro
Peter Solmssen, Political Officer, American Embassy
Rio de Janeiro
Paulo Rolo, Political Assistant, American Embassy
Rio de Janeiro

1. During a courtesy call by the aforementioned Embassy officials, Deputy Ambrósio had the following things of interest to relate:
2. He noted that he had once been the Mayor of Petrópolis, Director of the "Caixa Econômica do Estado do Rio de Janeiro" and Secretary of Public Works during one of the previous State administrations. He is an ex-PTB man who has now joined ARENA.
3. Speaking of the functioning of the State Assembly, Deputy Ambrósio said that it has 62 deputies, 38 of which have joined ARENA and 22 the MDB. Two are still undecided, but he foresees that they will join the opposition. He does not anticipate any increase in the number of deputies in the State of Rio in the next elections. (The number of deputies in the various States is fixed by State Constitutions, and it is up to the State Assemblies to alter the number).
4. He greatly praised Castello Branco's administration. He said that one of the most crucial problems of Brazil before the Revolution was lack of authority and responsibility, but that the present Government headed by Castello Branco has restored these principles in the country.
5. Concerning the cassation of mandates, he said that four deputies of the State Assembly had been unseated at the Assembly's own initiative and only one deputy, Valdir Mansur, had been deprived of his mandate by the Federal Government.
6. Speaking of the coming direct elections, Ambrósio said that the deputies of the State of Rio have been working continuously for their reelection and that they seem to be enthusiastic about their chances. He thinks that their

Fol 14

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electoral campaigns will be lively ones in which the candidates will have to do a lot of canvassing if they want to be reelected. His opinion about the majority system ("distritão") is that this system would permit an election of candidates based more upon the personal qualities of the individual than the present proportional system allows. He seemed to favor the majority system although he thinks that there will not be time to introduce it before the next elections.

7. He praised the present two-party system but noted that the present two parties, ARENA and MDB are likely to be further subdivided into three or - at the most - four, since this would be more in accordance with Brazilian political traditions. He criticized the old multi-party system, saying that it had greatly harmed Brazilian political life, since the parties had been founded simply on the personal interests of their members and lacked any philosophy of their own.

8. With respect to the indirect elections for Governorship of the State, the deputy said that several names have been brought up and that a group of deputies from ARENA were going to present his name for Castello Branco's consideration.

9. He ended by saying that the State Assembly had awarded post-mortem honorary citizenship of the State of Rio to ex-President John Kennedy and that he would name a Commission of Deputies to present the award to the Embassy.

Distribution

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POL: [initials] / L: Bowden / ; lsa
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