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A-403

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TO : Department of State

INFO: BRASILIA, RIO DE JANEIRO

FROM : Amconsul São Paulo

SUBJECT : Public Protest Over Expulsion of French Priest

REF :

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SEP 30 3 30 PM 1968
ANALYSIS BRANCH
DATE: September 20, 1968

A group of 300 persons, composed of priests, workers and women staged a demonstration in Osasco September 14 to register their protest over the government's expulsion from Brazil of the French worker-priest Pierre VAUTIER who had been arrested for participating in the Osasco strike. After gathering in the Church of Santo Antonio they marched through the streets of Osasco carrying banners with inscriptions, "We protest against unjust expulsion of Father Vautier," "Church demands justice" and "Christ died for justice."

The demonstration was organized jointly by local priests and Teresinha BERBINA, who is an officer of the Osasco Association of Mothers. Sra. Berbina was also collecting signatures on a petition requesting President Costa e Silva to reverse the expulsion order. She announced that a meeting would be held on September 19 in the Convent of the Dominicans in São Paulo to discuss further ways of protesting the "arbitrary" government action.

Comment: From conversations with several people in Osasco the reporting officer has concluded that people feel the government expelled Father Vautier without good reason. He was well liked by his colleagues at work and by people in the community. He was not as active politically as several of the Brazilian priests. The general impression in Osasco was that he was singled out because he was a foreigner. The difficult living conditions in Osasco, plus the fact that employers have expressed reported non-compliance of employers with

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SEP 20 1968
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FORM 4-62 DS-323

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agreements reached during the strike negotiations (see Memcon September 12 with Father Rafael Busato) and the activities of local priests and radical leftists aimed at stimulating workers to action, all indicate that the situation in Osasco will continue to be tense. Unless conditions improve or the government acts to require management to live up to the agreements reached with workers, additional trouble can be expected in the area.

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