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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1964 MAR 23 AM 7 56

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FROM : Amconsul PORTO ALEGRE

SUBJECT : WEEKLY SUMMARY No. 100

REF :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 BUREAU OF
 INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
 MAR 24 1964

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2. State Government and "Productive Classes" Take Dim View of Jango's and Brizola's Rio Antics
3. Porto Alegre Leftist Comício Evokes Little Interest; Brizola Bides His Time
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1. RGS Landowners React to Signing of SUPRA Decree

Angry and frightened by President Goulart's recent issuance of the controversial SUPRA decree, Rio Grande do Sul landowners are whipping themselves into a near-frenzy that threatens to set the stage for bloodshed. Adding to the tension was a highly exaggerated study issued last week by the state Secretary of Agriculture indicating that 42% of the entire state was now subject to expropriation..

Although the landowners have not reached the stage where they contemplate resistance to legal expropriation proceedings

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carried out under existing law and regulations, their attitude toward unauthorized "invasions" by landless peasants has hardened. FARSUL (the State landowners association), after expressing its support for Governor Meneghetti's promise to move quickly against such invasions, also has advised its members to be prepared to defend themselves "by any and all methods." The fazendeiros in the troubled Bagé area, they charged that SUPRA is working for the communists and warned that would defend their property at all costs. Cachoeira do Sul farmers wired a "respectful" protest to President Goulart in which they asked him to remember, as he of all people should, that gauchos have not forgotten their fighting traditions and that they are ready and organized to fight in defense of their land. The extent of the fazendeiros' fright was amply demonstrated at a FARSUL meeting of some 2000 landowners at Caçapava, when, after swearing to defend themselves, the delegates actually passed a motion favoring enforcement of the widely evaded minimum wage laws for agricultural workers.

Reflecting the widespread unrest was a ban on the sale of arms and ammunition in Bagé, increasing (unconfirmed) reports of contraband arms shipments, and a run on cartridges and shells in the agricultural interior. The growing impatience of many to take some or any kind of direct action against their harassers was expressed by one rancher who complained to a Consulate officer that "it used to be the gauchos who were the he-men (os machos), now it is the boys from Minas Gerais."

Comment: Many landowners realize that the SUPRA decree will have limited effect as long as constitutional guarantees regarding payment for land remain in effect. Others feel that ranchers who keep their mouths shut will not be molested. All, however, regard the signing of the decree as a threatening first step against their land. The instinctive reactions of the less temperate have created an ugly atmosphere which can easily erupt into violence. Should SUPRA or MASTER (landless peasants' group) order further illegal land invasions, only prompt action by Meneghetti's Brigada Militar can prevent serious disturbances.

2. State Government and "Productive Classes" Take Dim View of Jango(s) and Brizola's Rio Antics

Although state civil and military authorities breathed a sigh of relief when the sun of Saturday, March 14, rose on scenes of peace and quiet rather than on fields strewn with the cadavers of expropriated landowners and eviscerated landless agriculturists, the significance of the documents signed in Rio the previous evening by President Goulart was not lost upon Governor Meneghetti or such groups as the Federation of Industries, Federation of Commercial Associations, Federation of Rural Associations and Syndicate of Bankers. Meneghetti quickly called meetings of his key advisers and drafted a telegram addressed to the presiding officers of both Senate and Chamber of Deputies, expressing

indignation over the remarks of Brizola et al. directed against the Congress, and announcing his determination to defend the Constitution and the lawfully elected representatives of the people under any circumstances and by all available means. While the Governor is known as a "manifesto man", some observers believe that his recent words may contain a note of grimness generally absent from his previous utterances. Singly or in concert, the groups representing the so-called productive classes have issued statements supporting the Congress, condemning the President's recent actions, and calling for an end to agitation and other forms of disorder. The SUPRA decree, while greatly resented, is generally viewed as potentially much less dangerous as the one affecting the oil refineries, and the latter as of limited effect pending a measure providing for nationalization of the channels of distribution. The taking of such a measure is not viewed as inevitable or as likely to occur within the near future, although it is the logical step in the progress of Petrobrás. Some satisfaction and amusement are aroused by reports that pieces of land belonging to the President, including one located at São Borja, will become subject to expropriation under SUPRA's new powers.

Keeping a long-standing speaking engagement in Porto Alegre, Federal Deputy Cunha Bueno (PSD-São Paulo) described Goulart's Friday night speech as "disastrous", and predicted far-reaching public reaction. If the Constitution is in danger, São Paulo was ready to move, he added, and the Paulista women in particular were busily preparing themselves for any emergency. By a fortunate coincidence, a movement of "Feminine Democratic Action" has recently been organized in Porto Alegre, and Cunha Bueno was able to invite representatives of this group to be present at a rally to be held in the Praça da Sé in São Paulo on March 19.

3. Porto Alegre Leftist Comício Evokes Little Interest; Brizola Bides His Time

As cooler heads had predicted (Weekly Summary No. 99, A-54, March 10, 1964), the leftist rally held in Porto Alegre "to protest against the high cost of living" flopped dismally in its attempt to arouse popular interest and/or enthusiasm. Although more than a thousand persons were present, the audience consisted largely of a paid claque augmented by variously attired forces of law and order. Banners and inscriptions in the vicinity of City Hall called for immediate agrarian reform and immediate nationalization of the private oil refineries, and similar thoughts were expressed on banners carried by assembled Petrobrás and railroad workers. Nothing much else happened, and the speeches are said to have been unusually dull and repetitious. The "900 sergeants" were prevented from appearing by military alertness orders.

The star performer in rallies of this nature was strangely absent, and even Última Hora commented: "And just where was Deputy Brizola? It is known that he was in town." According to reliable reports reaching the Consulate, Deputy Brizola was awaiting the right moment

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to make a dramatic appearance on the platform and acknowledge the thundering applause of the frenzied crowd. When he was repeatedly informed by his advisers that the reaction he sought was unlikely to be forthcoming, he decided to save his strength for a more propitious occasion.

4. Administration Retains Shaky Control of Legislative Assembly

After weeks of behind-the-scenes horse trading, Governor Meneghetti's coalition ADP patched up a deal that enabled it to elect its slate of officers for the session of the state Legislative Assembly that opened March 15. Last year's agreement with the MTR that resulted in the surprise election of Deputy Cândido Norberto as assembly president apparently had guaranteed ADP control of the assembly presidency for the balance of Meneghetti's term. However, the MTR's decision to renege on its promise made it necessary for Meneghetti to woo and win the votes of the historically uncooperative PL.

The PL's six deputies just gave the administration the minimum 28 of 55 votes needed to elect a slate of assembly officers - with PL Deputy Solano Borges as president. However, the PL has not yet promised support for Meneghetti's vital and controversial revenue bills which will be presented soon.

5. Maragato Deputy Gives "Workers' Bishop" Hell

Federal Deputy Carlos de Brito Velho (PL-RGS) was one of those who were not amused by the remarks attributed to Dom Jorge Marcos de Oliveira, Bishop of Santo André, S. Paulo (See Weekly Summary No. 99). Brito Velho is apparently very sensitive regarding his dignity and that of his fellow-members of Congress, and did not appreciate the Bishop's definition of a deputy as that of a man "who can rob with impunity". "Either His Most Excellent Reverence is seriously disturbed mentally", said the fiery Maragato (a nickname inherited by the Partido Libertador from the Federalists of '93), "or he is intellectually and morally bankrupt." Brito Velho added that the Bishop reminded him of a Nazi-Fascist, rather than a Communist, because "even the Communists feel some shame in speaking in such a manner of the Legislative Power."

6. Meneghetti and Petrobrás Chief Trade Accusations

Shocked at discovering that state gasoline and diesel fuel storage had dropped to a scant ten days' supply, Governor Meneghetti last week bypassed Petrobrás and wired a frantic appeal for action to his compatriot Egydio Michaelson, Minister of Industry and Commerce. This end run was too much for Petrobrás' Marshal Osvaldo Ferreira Alves who, in an obliquely directed message to the Commander of the III Army, huffed that Meneghetti was a tool of the enemies of Petrobrás who would have been told, had he asked, that plenty of gas and oil was on its way.

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As tankers arrived to alleviate the temporary shortage, Meneghetti, in the last shot of the gas war, lamented that Marshal Osvaldo should have imputed political motives to his entirely justified appeal to Michaelsen.

7. Transmogrified Humorist Treads on Sensitive Toes

A Gaúcho columnist and radio figure, with the unlikely name of Sérgio Jockyman, has worked for about a year for the dean of Brazilian journalism, the "Velho Capitão" himself, Assis Chateaubriand, in the capacity of director of the station Radio Farroupilha and that of regular contributor to the Diário de Notícias. Though he is now extremely well paid, success has not spoiled Jockyman, whose wit, always evident, has become increasingly rapier-keen. Only a short time ago, in the memory of a number of persons still serving at the Consulate and USIS Porto Alegre, funnyman Jockyman was as leftist as they come, loudly chanting the praises of Jango and Brizola from the pages of Ultima Hora, where he appeared as a columnist under the pseudonym Gato Preto (Black Cat). He was notable in those days for his anti-American attitude, which, indeed, may still form a part of his outlook on life, but in other ways he is certainly a different man. Only recently he wrote about a certain "Joe Cunhado", who was nothing at all until he married the boss' sister, and still more recently, about the "president of an unfortunate country", who decided to go to a medium in order to conjure up the ghost of a bygone statesman and ask the Old One for advice as to how one might prolong one's term in office, this in a country where consecutive terms as president are barred. The Old One gave much wise counsel, but the president was not yet satisfied. "What will be the outcome of all this?" he asked. "My son", said the Old One, "You will end as I did, with a bullet in your chest."

While Jockyman is presumably checking his insurance policies and getting measured for a bullet-proof vest of his own, a group which calls itself the "ex-prisoners of the Estado Novo" thought his piece clever enough to warrant its ~~reappearance~~ reappearance in a paper in the form of an a pedido (paid announcement). The times and actions of the late Getúlio Vargas seem to be more and more frequently evoked, as 1965 draws near.

8. Political Notes

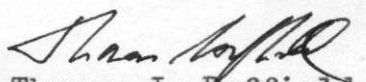
a. State PSD officials who support Carlos Lacerda have announced they will form a PSD "Dissident" group to support the Guanabara Governor immediately after the PSD National Convention nominates Juscelino Kubitschek. Prominent among the dissidents are former PSD state secretary general João Dêntice and State Deputy Alexandre Machado.

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b. In the newly organized município of Cruzeiro do Sul, a coalition PSD-PL slate easily defeated the PTB candidate for mayor by 1433 to 653 votes.

c. Federal Deputy Tarso Dutra, who has been leading the (vain) struggle here to keep his PSD united in support of Juscelino Kubitschek, announced that Lacerda, Kubitschek and Adhemar de Barros would meet before the PSD national convention this week in an effort to find an ideological common denominator against President Goulart's recent turn to the left.


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