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BY BRASILIA

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM : Amembassy Office BRASILIA

DATE: December 31, 1965

SUBJECT: Embassy Move to Brasilia: 1965 Yearend Report

REF : Rio de Janeiro's A-774, January 15, 1965

SUMMARY

1966 promises to be the decisive year for the transference of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília. If construction of the Foreign Ministry building in Brasília continues at its present pace, it is likely that the Ministry could be installed here about the middle of 1967.

This report summarizes the activities and plans of the Foreign Ministry and of diplomatic missions in Brasília at the end of 1965. It also requests certain actions in connection with our own moving plans.

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1. Foreign Ministry. The major building development of the year 1965 has been the steadily accelerating pace of work on the office building of the Foreign Ministry. The outside shell of the building -- which has been tentatively christened "The Palace of the Arches" -- has risen particularly rapidly over the past several months, and it is now one of the notable structures of Brasilia's still bare skyline. The roof-laying ceremony is scheduled for January 1966, and to meet this self-imposed deadline about a thousand workmen have been laboring day and night (under floodlights) to finish the top floor of the building.

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Drafted by: ~~HS~~ HSOkun: TRHodet: jpc 12/29/65

Contents and Classification Approved by:
DCM: Minister Raine

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Responsible Foreign Ministry officials here maintain that every effort is being exerted to meet a February 1967 target date for occupancy.

It is housing for Foreign Ministry employees, however, that continues to be the chief bottleneck and the biggest question mark regarding the timing of the Foreign Ministry's move to Brasília. Construction of staff housing has not yet begun, having been impeded throughout most of 1965 by arguments as to the type of construction to be employed in building the apartment blocks. The Foreign Ministry, however, has budgeted the money for the staff housing and NOVACAP (the government-owned building organization in Brasília) has announced that it will be receiving bids for the housing complex beginning next month. We think it realistic to believe that construction will get under way during the first quarter of 1966, with some apartments ready for occupancy by the end of 1966, and the remainder ready by the middle of 1967.

An unknown factor at this point is the attitude of the future Foreign Minister towards the transferral of the Ministry to Brasília. Vasco LEITAO DA CUNHA, who resigned last month as Foreign Minister prior to being named Ambassador to the United States, was a strong supporter of Brasília. His successor's views on the subject will be important.

2. Foreign Diplomatic Missions. There follows a roundup of significant developments relative to foreign missions' building and planning for their eventual moves to Brasília.

--Czechoslovakia officially inaugurated its Embassy chancery and staff quarters at a reception held on December 8, 1965 (Brasília's A-63, December 15, 1965). The buildings were constructed by the Christiani-Nielsen company from plans drawn up in Prague. The two-story apartment bloc for staff housing is a handsome, modern structure complete with swimming pool. The quality of the construction appears to be excellent. The Embassy compound occupies about 6,000 square meters.

--Great Britain has just signed a contract with a Brazilian construction firm to build six houses for senior Embassy officers, and a bloc of eighteen apartments for staff housing. Groundbreaking ceremonies are scheduled for January 1966, and the British expect to have the residences ready for occupancy by June 1967. The architect's design of the Chancery has been made, and construction will probably begin next year (See Brasília's OM of December 8, 1965).

--Ghana is negotiating at present for the construction of a Chancery and staff housing. We have been informed by local contractors that the proposed construction and grounds will comprise an area of about 4,000 square meters.

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--The USSR took title in November 1965 to the land on which its mission will be built.

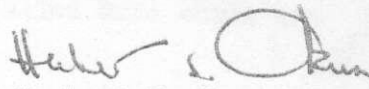
3. US Activities. Much of this information was discussed with Mr. Joseph SAGONA, Post Management Officer ARA/EX, during his recent visit to Brasília. Emphasis was placed on the need for the Department: (a) to initiate action looking towards the construction of our future Chancery in Brasília, and (b) to begin planning for the early construction of the DCM residence, to be occupied by the Ambassador if he were to move to Brasília before his own residence were completed (see referenced airgram, 7. d).

--Action Requested:

(1) that an architect be chosen and assigned to Brasília in order to draw up plans for our future Chancery (the Embassy Office understands that it takes about one year from the time an architect is selected until his design is ready);

(2) that the Department inform the Embassy of its plans for the construction of the DCM residence in Brasília.

For the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.:


Herbert S. Okun

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