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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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AIR POUCH

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

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FROM : Amembassy, BRASILIA Office

DATE: March 31, 1965

SUBJECT : Parliamentary Action Bloc Formalized in Chamber of Deputies

REF : Brastel 132

The Parliamentary Action Bloc came formally into being March 25 when more than 100 deputies who had joined the Bloc presented themselves to President Castello Branco to inform him that the bloc consisted of 206 members, or a majority of the Chamber of Deputies. Attached as an enclosure is a translation of the manifesto published March 26 by the Bloc, and a list of the deputies, who by signing it, have become members. The deputies are listed by party, then by state heading. The breakdown by party among the Bloc's 206 members is as follows: UDN-87, PSD-48, PTB-23, PSP-16, PDC-11, PTN-10, PRP-4, PR-4, PRT-1, PST-1 and one without party. Of the 23 PTB members, one joined the Bloc directly and the other 22 subscribed their adherence in a separate document which was annexed to the Bloc's manifesto.

The Bloc will not become a legally constituted parliamentary entity in the Chamber of Deputies until the Directorate of the house accords it recognition. Various deputies have told Embassy officers that a formal request for such recognition will not be made by the majority leader until after he has pushed through a change in the rules of the Chamber which will protect PSD and PTB members of the Bloc from punishment by their respective parties. As the Bloc commands a majority of the Chamber, it should be able to secure passage of the rules change without great difficulty.

The deputies joining the Bloc pledged to "collaborate [with the executive branch] more uniformly in the social, economic and political structural reforms" initiated by President Castello Branco. At the same time they noted that while doing so they would respect their respective party labels and continue to represent a separate and independent branch of the government. The manifesto provided for the creation of a five-man Provisional Executive Committee to coordinate the Bloc's support for the government. President Castello Branco greeted the formation of the Bloc,

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Drafted by: POL:L.Bowden:sm

Contents and Classification Approved by: Max Krebs

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which he called an "imperative of public opinion" and the "driving force of the social and economic evolution of the country."

A careful reading of the Manifesto shows that deputies are not unconditionally bound to support the President's initiatives on all occasions. Nevertheless, the act of signing the document doubtless creates a strong moral commitment. The President would therefore seem to have acquired a powerful phalanx in the Congress to use in implementing his reform program.

For the Ambassador:

Robert W. Dean
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure: *h*

- (1) Translation of Manifesto
- (2) List of 206 Federal Deputies

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