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AIRGRAM

(Departmental and Foreign Service)

POL 2 BRAZ

A-103

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TO : Department of State

1964 MAR 5

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

MAR 6 1964

RM/AN
ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION
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FEB 28 1964

FROM : Amembassy BRASILIA Office

DATE: February 24, 1964

SUBJECT: Views of Vieira de Mello (PSD-Bahia)

REF :

RMR Files
4/3/64

Enclosed is a memorandum of conversation with Federal Deputy Tarcilio Vieira de Mello, former majority leader under President Kubitschek, agrarian reform specialist, and presently leader of the conservative PSD's left-wing ala agressiva. (Brasilia's A-25, September 30, 1963 enclosed another memorandum of conversation with Vieira de Mello.) In the course of the conversation, he made the following points:

1) Goulart is a good-for-nothing but clever politician who has dazzled the opposition into accepting his terms of debate. The opposition could take the wind out of Jango's sails by voting for agrarian reform by constitutional amendment, which Jango clamors for but does not really want.

2) A constitutional amendment is needed for agrarian reform, but the cost to the Brazilian budget will still be great since reform must be accompanied by continuous agricultural assistance. The concept of expropriation of land for social welfare should be applied in Brazil.

3) The real possibilities of a golpe are remote. Success would depend on the military, but it is so divided that any group that inclines toward a golpe is opposed by other groups, interested in their self-preservation.

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals,
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FORM DS-323
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4) The Communist party should be legalized since all currents of opinion should be represented in a democracy. Historically, the Communist party has suffered when in legal competition with other parties.

5) Newspaper speculations about his receiving a cabinet post in the next turnover are just rumors. Neither is he an active candidate (although available) for the governorship of Bahia.

For the Ambassador:

Robert W. Dean

Robert W. Dean
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure: *att*
Memorandum of Conversation

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

February 20, 1964

PARTICIPANTS: Federal Deputy Tarcilio Vieira de Mello (PSD-Bahia)

Mr. Robert W. Dean, Counselor of Embassy
Mrs. Dean

Mr. Robert B. Bentley, Political Officer
Mrs. Bentley

PLACE: Bentley's Apartment

SUBJECT: Current Brazilian Politics

João Goulart and Reforms. Vieira de Mello showed contempt for President Goulart, calling him a "double-crossing, good-for-nothing but clever scoundrel (traidor, malandro, esertíssimo). He has the worst kind of intelligence." Vieira said Goulart doesn't read-- not even official documents necessary for his signature. He said Goulart operates intuitively, largely by listening to his advisors, following the advice of the one who has his ear last. Vieira claims that Goulart does not care about reforms but lives politically by making this popular aspiration an issue. He provokes the opposition by cleverly presenting reforms in strange and unacceptable forms. Vieira said that the opposition stupidly accepts the terms of debate Jango sets for them. He analyzed that the opposition needs more "political maliciousness". They should vote a reasonable reform by constitutional amendment to disarm Jango's demagoguery. It's exactly what Jango doesn't want.

Agrarian Reform. Vieira de Mello still holds to the position that a constitutional amendment is needed for an agrarian reform. He dwelt for some time on Italy's agrarian reform under de Gaspari after the second World War and on the terrific cost to the Italian government of that reform. He said he realized that any serious

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agrarian reform would imply heavy burdens on the Brazilian budget since distribution of land would have to be accompanied by continuous agricultural assistance in order to achieve the primary aim--increasing production.

Vieira de Mello said that land expropriation by exercise of the right of eminent domain, as practiced in the U.S., had been largely superceded by the European concept of land expropriation for social welfare. Under the latter, which he applied to the Brazilian case, land could be expropriated simply because it was not used or was not properly used. Title to the property is thus guaranteed by use rather than purchase.

Golpe. "In intimate political circles they say that Goulart has already chosen his successor--João Vicente(Goulart's son)". However, Vieira calculated that the real possibilities of a golpe are remote. He explained that the political left and the unions--the two forces closest to Goulart-- are against a golpe because they fear it would eventually turn against them. The success of a golpe, he continued, revolves around the disposition of the military, but the multitude of groups within the military make it impossible for it to act as a unified whole. Any group that tries to move the Army for or against the President--or simply becomes too strong within the military--evokes the self-preservation instincts of its other groups.

Legalization of the Communist Party. Vieira is personally favorable to the legalization of the Communist Party. He bases his position on the principle that all currents of opinion--even subversive--should be represented in a democracy. He also stated that the party suffers when it is legal, citing the example of the drop in Communist representation in the elections of 1947 as compared with that of 1945.

Future Public Offices. Vieira said newspaper speculations about his assuming a cabinet post in the near future were just rumors. As for his running for Governor of Bahia, he said "I tried for the job once. If they want me now, they will have to come looking."

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COMMENT: It is difficult to see how Vieira could become a member of Jango's cabinet when he has such utter disrespect for the man as a desirable political leader. However, he still harbors ambition for high political office, and has been active, particularly as regards agrarian reform, as a PSD element of liaison with Goulart's Labor Party (PTB), and could be called into a Goulart cabinet, say as Minister of Transportation, as has been rumored. In such a post he would presumably work to maintain the PSD presence in government and to moderate extremist positions taken by Goulart.

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