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TO : Department of State

INFO: RIO, BRASILIA

FROM : Amconsul São Paulo

SUBJECT : Critical Remarks of Governor SODRE at Inauguration of Ultrafertil Center

REF :

DATE: October 18, 1967

RECEIVED
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OCT 23 10 29 AM 1967

RS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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OCT 25 1967

Governor Abreu Sodré's ability to lose friends and alienate people was illustrated again on October 14 at the inauguration of a new Ultrafertil Agricultural Service Center in the City of Avaré. The Ultrafertil project is an ideal one combining Brazilian and American private capital in a Brazilian-led company, devoted to agricultural development, and with the assistance of an AID loan.

Governor Sodré did not endear himself when he kept Minister of Planning, BELTRAO, U.S. AID Minister Stuart VAN DYKE and several hundred distinguished guests waiting in the blazing heat and dust for over an hour and a half. After complimentary remarks by several high-ranking Brazilian officials such as the Minister of Planning, lauding this example of U.S.-Brazilian cooperation for the benefit of Brazil's development, Governor Sodré made one of his cliché-filled speeches which among the platitudes unfortunately included sentences critical of the U.S. Although he did not mention Viet-Nam by name, he deplored U.S. military expenditures and urged the U.S. to "use its funds for peace, not war." Then referring directly to Minister Van Dyke by name, he launched into an uncalled-for and tactless argument, stating that Brazil did not wish foreign capital which would exploit the workers; Brazil wished foreign capital on proper terms; that foreign capital must be for the benefit of the people, and that it must be willing to work in conjunction with Brazilian capital and in accordance with Brazilian laws.

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Comment: The Governor's statements were especially irrelevant and unnecessary, given the occasion and the fact that Ultrafertil is so highly favorable for Brazil. Most of the audience appeared taken-aback and embarrassed by the Governor's remarks and gave him only perfunctory applause. Several months ago the Governor "dropped a lead balloon" in a similar speech referring to American capital before the American Chamber of Commerce. Let us hope this latest example of infelicitous phraseology and ineptness, or else of an ill-conceived attempt to appeal to nationalist sentiment, is a temporary aberration.

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