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AIR POUCH

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TO : Department of State

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO: RIO DE JANEIRO, BRASILIA

JUN 16 8 29 AM 1967

FROM : Amconsul SAO PAULO

RS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH
DATE: June 9, 1967DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

SUBJECT : A Carvalhista Views the São Paulo Scene and ARENA

JUN 20 1967

REF :

Though relations between Sao Paulo Governor Abreu SODRE and most ARENA factions have been deteriorating over the past few months, the state's popular Senator, CARVALHO PINTO, and his very significant local following have not yet publicly critized or opposed the Governor or his administration. Having backed Sodre for the ARENA gubernatorial nomination and pledged his support after Sodre's inauguration, Carvalho Pinto has continued to provide at least his tacit endorsement, concerning himself with his new legislative duties and with national ARENA matters without involving himself much in Sao Paulo politics. However, there evidently are limits to Carvalhista patience and forbearance toward Abreu Sodre and a rupture between the Senator and the Governor may be nearer than is generally imagined.

Recently one of Carvalho Pinto's key political legates, State Deputy Solon Borges dos REIS (ARENA, ex-PDC) CP's representative on the Sao Paulo ARENA Executive Commission and his former State Secretary of Education, told Consulate General officers that Carvalho Pinto and his followers might soon be forced to review their relationship with the Governor and his administration. He made it clear that Carvalhistas believe that Sodre has shown himself unprepared for the task of administering Sao Paulo and that the state's governmental machinery is functioning badly. Unless the administration's performance improves significantly in the near future, he warned, Carvalho Pinto and his local representatives will be forced to speak out.

While Solon Borges dos Reis was unhappy with Sodre's conduct of the

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government's administration, he was even more concerned with the political path the Governor has followed. In his opinion the Revolution must build up a firm political base in Sao Paulo by means of ARENA with the assistance of the state government which ARENA put into power. He charged that rather than advance the party's influence and increase party prestige, Sodre and his aides have virtually ignored ARENA, governing as if they had no connection whatsoever with it. In this connection, the deputy denounced a recent declaration by Sodre's Secretary of Interior, Helio Lopes Meirelles, that he was purely an administrator with no interest in or connection with ARENA politics. Solon Borges dos Reis maintained that such an attitude was completely unacceptable and that such secretaries must be supplanted by loyal ARENA men who possess political sensitivity as well as technical ability. According to him, the political ineptitude of Sodre's State Secretaries and some of his personal aides has greatly contributed to the erosion of the Governor's support in the State Assembly. He believed that Sodre himself has come to appreciate this and that he is now awaiting only a good opportunity to shake-up his secretariat and his personal staff. As Solon Borges put it, it is no longer a question of whether the long-rumored secretariat changes would be made, but of when.

In blunt terms the ARENA leader also maintained that it is very much in Sodre's interest to cultivate the closest possible relationship with ARENA. He declared that Sodre essentially is ARENA's creation, a politician who never could have managed election to the Governorship in a direct vote. In his opinion neither Sodre himself, nor his former party, the ex-UDN, ever had a broad popular following in the state of Sao Paulo. Thus, keeping in mind how he entered office, Sodre would be well advised to build up the statewide political following he needs to govern successfully, by acting through the party organization and identifying himself with it. Because important party factions, like the Carvalhistas, possessed functioning local units throughout the state, this would not be difficult to accomplish, he claimed. Until now, in Solon Borges' view, the Governor has not maintained serious coordination or liaison with ARENA.

While still discussing ARENA, the deputy mentioned that Carvalho Pinto's chief current interest and concern is to breathe life into ARENA by devising a genuine ideology and platform for the party. He maintained that as chairman of the national ARENA committee to review party

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statutes and programs, Carvalho Pinto was sincerely trying to accomplish this staggering task. Though he did not directly say so, he strongly implied that the Senator would not feel obligated to stick with ARENA, should his present efforts not be successful.

Comment: If the views expressed by Solon Borges dos Reis accurately reflect the attitudes of Senator Carvalho Pinto, his statements may have important bearing both on the local Sao Paulo as well as on the national political scene. As far as Sodre is concerned, active Carvalhista anti-pathy and opposition, added to the existing hostility of such other important local ARENA groups as the ex-PSP and ex-PR, would without doubt place the Governor in a serious, if not untenable, position here. A rupture between Carvalho Pinto and Sodre would convulse Sao Paulo's ARENA and could well lead to a split in the party nationally. Even if nothing occurs in Sao Paulo, should Carvalho Pinto be stymied in his efforts to find an attractive and liberal ideological basis for the party and withdraw from it, powerful impetus would be forthcoming here and perhaps nationally for a third party movement. While it is true that Carvalho Pinto is not a clever political tactician and in the past has often been a loner, some of his advisers appreciate the key position the Senator could play. In the months ahead, it will be interesting to observe whether CP will continue in his present, unaggressive course, or whether he and his followers will embark on the kind of maneuvers which could have far-reaching political implications.

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