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FROM : Amembassy RIO DE JANEIRO

DATE: April 16, 1971

SUBJECT : IBOPE Polls Show Medici Administration Gaining in Popularity

REF : São Paulo memorandum of conversation, "Public Opinion on Various Political Questions", dated 18 February 1971

JOINT USIS-EMBASSY MESSAGE

Summary: Two recent articles appearing in Rio newspapers have reported surveys by the independent Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics (IBOPE) which indicate that the Medici Administration is highly popular in São Paulo. One survey series indicates that the proportion expressing themselves as "very satisfied" with the Medici Government rose from 58 percent in April 1970 to 85 percent in February 1971. The proportion judging the Medici Government to be either excellent or good rose from 75 percent in October 1970 to 84 percent in March 1971.

The conservative, pro-government Rio newspaper O Globo on March 31 reported on a series of IBOPE surveys conducted in the city of São Paulo, from April 1970 down through February 1971, which sought to measure the popularity of the Medici administration. The identical question, asked in seven surveys spread out over this 11-month period, was as follows: "In general, are you very satisfied, only a little satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the Government of President

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Medici?". The replies were as follows:

	<u>April</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>June</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Aug.</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Nov.</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Dec.</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Feb.</u> <u>1971</u>
Very satisfied	58%	72%	70%	84%	74%	81%	85%
Only a little	21	12	15	9	16	11	11
Not at all	2	3	2	1	2	1	1
Don't know	<u>19</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A breakdown of the replies in the February 1971 survey by economic classes show that the only significant differences between classes was a higher percentage of "don't knows" among those with lower incomes, amounting to 10% among the lower middle class and 12% among the poor, contrasted with only 3% "don't knows" among the rich and the upper middle class.

In the February 1971 survey, those saying "very satisfied" amounted to 85% among the rich and the upper middle class, 76% among the middle class, and 76% among the poor. (Note: This does not average out to the over-all figure of 85% shown in the table above and thus casts some doubt on the accuracy of that figure for the total sample. In all probability, IBOPE published only the figures corresponding to the upper and middle class respondents.)

The O Globo article said nothing about the number of persons interviewed in these São Paulo surveys, but an official of IBOPE has informed the Embassy that quota samples of approximately 500 cases were used in each survey.

A second newspaper article, this one in Folha de São Paulo of March 14, reported on an IBOPE survey in São Paulo and compared it with an earlier survey of October 1970. In both surveys, the identical question was asked: "In general, how would you describe the Government of President Medici, up until now?: excellent; good; fair ("regular"); bad; or terrible?". Results of the March 1971 survey were as follows:

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Excellent	48%
Good	36
Fair	8
Bad	2
Terrible	1
Don't know	5
	<u>100%</u>

No similar table is given for replies to the same question in October 1970, but the text of the story says that in the October poll the total of "excellent plus good" was 75%, in comparison with a total of 84% saying excellent or good in the March 1971 survey. IBOPE has indicated that quota samples of 500 cases were also used in these surveys.

COMMENT: It is unfortunate that IBOPE's use of quota sampling makes it impossible to determine sampling error, which can be calculated only when random (probability) samples are used. Thus the degree by which the sample's answers could vary, plus or minus, from the views which the total adult citizenry of São Paulo holds, remains unknown.

However, the consistency with which successive surveys have found very large majorities approving the Medici Government, and only very small minorities expressing disapproval, leads to the common sense conclusion that the surveys are broadly valid in depicting the Medici Government as being highly popular among Paulistas.

This supposition is reinforced further by the findings of a year-end Gallup Poll survey in São Paulo which registered overwhelming public optimism: 75% said 1971 would be a better year than 1970, as against only 8% saying worse; 73% said 1971 would be a year of economic prosperity, against 20% who foresaw economic difficulties; 75% predicted increased employment opportunities, with 16% foreseeing problems; 48% said their standard of living was rising, 9% said it was falling, 43% said it continued the same.

Unfortunately, similar survey data is not available for other areas of Brazil. Public optimism would probably be lower in some areas such as the poverty-stricken Northeast. Nevertheless, general public esteem for President Medici appears to be nationwide, with only regional variations.

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Usually very serious and dignified in his public appearances, projecting a strong father or grandfather image, the President has also shown himself capable at times of the bright smile (most often at soccer games). Indeed, no small part of the high popular regard for the present Brazilian Administration is due to the active public relations effort of the federal government, a campaign directed by Col. Octávio Costa, which continuously places its message on radio and television and into the press. The message is that Brazil is prospering, that all the people should work for development (Pra frente Brasil), that the country is playing an active international role (ninguem segura mais este país), and that in all of this the federal government is leading the way. Medici's two predecessors, Presidents Castello Branco and Costa e Silva, did not have a public relations effort on anything like the present scale.

The popularity of the Medici Government, however, is not based solely on this public relations operation. The popularity of the present regime is also based on concrete government measures intended to improve the lot of the people, which fire their imagination and stimulate their energies. Such mammoth undertakings as the "National Integration Scheme" for the colonization and development of the sparsely-populated Amazon Basin, extensive road-building, expansion of national steel production, etc., give the average Brazilian pride in the achievements of his country. The creation in August 1970 of a "Social Integration Program", through which salaried workers will in theory benefit from a participation fund, and a program announced March 31 which will provide medical services and pensions for agricultural workers for the first time, strengthened the President's image as a person concerned for the common man.

Medici's image, based on an apparent concern for broad social and economic development and a strong defense of national interests, has been labelled "Medicismo" by the popular weekly magazine Manchete. With the benefits of a rapidly expanding economy accruing to the upper and middle classes and slowly filtering down somewhat to an ever-growing number of lower income Brazilians, especially in the south-center industrialized region, people are wont to overlook the more repressive characteristics of the present administration and to indicate strong support and confidence in President Medici and the third post-Revolution government.

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