

TELCON  
The President  
Ball & Mann  
3/31/64, 3:35 P.M.

DECLASSIFIED  
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By LS, NARA, Date 11-19-92

A quick run-down of the situation in Brazil was given. "We had a meeting this morning with Bob McNamara and Max Taylor and Gen. O'Meara who is here overnight. We decided on the basis of the information that had come in this morning to go ahead and start a naval task force out but with no commitment so that it will be steaming down in that direction. It could not get into the area before April 10 and in the meantime we can watch the developments and see whether it should go on or not. It can be done in a way that doesn't create anykind of public stir. We have located some navy tankers in Aroba and the big thing that they are going to need if they have a successful revolt, at some point, is gasoline, both for motor vehicles and aviation. The tankers are going to be loaded but again they can't be down there until around April 8-13. This is a precautionary move that we are taking. They are getting together a shipment of ammunition but this will have to wait before we start moving it because it will probably have to be moved by plane and that can only be done after the situation is clarified and we have clearly decided to make a commitment in the situation. What is actually happening in the field is very confused. We have just had a teletype conversation with Link Gordon in Rio. It seems clear that the state just north of Rio which is Minas Gerais is in revolt. Both the army and civilian authorities of the state seem to be acting together and the army has apparently moved in and blocked the road from Rio so that the first Army in Rio could not move up and stop the revolt. We are waiting some clarification of the situation in Sao Paulo which is the key to the matter. There has apparently been no movement in Sao Paulo but there is some expected at almost any moment and we should know within the next few hours what is happening. The hope there would be that the Second Army would move and block the road from Rio down and isolate Rio. In the meantime they have drafted and impeachment in Congressional circles of Goulart but there has no action taken on it. They have listed all the offenses against the constitution which they will use. There is a lot of bickering around to see what could be done in the way of forming some kind of a civilian government which would have a claim to legitimacy. The anti-Goulart Governors are apparently going to meet Wednesday and on the basis of information that Gordon has there are a significant number of the governors are prepared to move against Goulart--about 9 all together which is a very impressive number."

The President asked how many they had. Ball said the total number of states is about 21. The 9 are the big and important states. Ball said, "We have instructed Gordon not to take anymore ~~context~~ ~~on~~ with the Brazilians until we see how the situation develops. I think there has to be some more movement in Sao Paulo to make sure that this thing is going to move. We don't want to get ourselves committed before we know how the thing is going to come out. He feels on the basis of the momentum that has been started so far that it can wait for 12 hours before anything has to be done, or overnight before we have to take any decision on whether we should or shouldn't move. I think we can see the developments and then make a judgment on it."

Ball asked the President if he were coming back to Wash. tonight and he said he would be in about 8:30.

The President said that we should take every step we can and be prepared to do whatever we need to do as we were in Panama. Ball said we were canvassing all the possibilities to make sure we were not leaving anything undone. The President said we just could not take this one and we should use the ingenuity or imagination of anyone in Gordon's, McCone's, McNamara's or the Department's outfit. He said we should get right on top of it and stick our necks a little.

Ball said this was our own feeling and that we were pretty well organized.

The President asked Mann if there was anything new on Panama. Mann said he had been working on Brazil all day but that Bunker was going to talk with Moreno. The President said that Mann should tell Bundy that the paper sent to the President was all right to present. Mann said he had that word last night from the Secretary.

The President said he would see Ball and Mann tonight.