

Retired 1961

L. Personalities

1. Biographical Sketches

DENYS, Odylie, Marshal, Minister of War -- Marshal Denys was born 17 February 1892 at Padua, State of Rio de Janeiro, of French-Swiss paternal and Brazilian maternal parentage. Marshal Denys assumed his position as Minister of War in February of 1960 under President Kubitschek, and was the only cabinet minister retained when President Quadros took office. Prior to his cabinet post, ~~Denys~~ he served as Commanding General of the First Army. He was named to that post, the most important and powerful command in the Brazilian Army, in 1954. His influence in the Army was considered second only to the then-minister of war, Henrique Teixeira LOTT. ^{MARSHAL} Denys was scheduled for statutory retirement in August 1956, but Marshal Lott prevailed on the government to pass the so-called "Denys Law", a special bill allowing him to retain his command till the compulsory retirement age of 66. The approval of this bill raised considerable opposition in the younger military element and in Congress. On February 17, 1958, his 66th birthday, he was placed on retirement status, but Marshal Lott arranged to have him recalled to immediate active duty. Again, this "reactivation" was widely condemned by opposition congressmen, the press, and some Army officers. While serving as a

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troop commander in the early fifties, he was very close to the troops under him, making numerous visits to troop areas. He played a planning role in the Coup of 1955. In spite of some dissatisfaction among fellow Army officers, he is thought to have firm control over the Army establishment.

Marshal Denys entered the Brazilian Military Academy in 1912, graduated in 1915 as an Aspirante, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1917, and returned to the ~~Army~~^{ACADEMY} as an instructor in 1918. He was promoted to Captain in 1927, Major in 1933, and in 1934 served on the staff of the Minister of War, General ~~Blum~~ Pedro de GOES Monteiro. In 1940 Marshal Denys was named Commander of the Military Police of the Federal District, and in 1942 was promoted to Brigadier General. In 1946 he was elevated to the rank of Major General while commanding the Third Infantry Division at Santa Maria, State of Rio Grande do Sul. He commanded the First Infantry Division in the Federal District in 1948, and then the Second Military Region and the Second Infantry Division at São Paulo till December, 1949. He was later Commanding General of the Central Military Zone, (new

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the Second Army), and in 1950 was appointed Chief of the Administrative Department of the War Ministry. In 1952 he was named Commander of the Southern Military Zone (now the Third Army), and in 1954 he assumed command of the First Army, the most important and powerful troop command in the Army. He retained this command till his appointment as Minister of War in 1960.

It was thought that President Quadros retained Marshal Denys as Minister of War because ~~of~~ his strong personal influence could be relied upon to keep the Army non-political. It appeared, however, that President Quadros was grooming General Oswaldo Cordeira de FARIAS for the new Minister of War, with intention of replacing Denys in the fall of 1961. When President Quadros resigned from the Presidency in August of 1961, Marshal Denys remained as Minister of War during the period of deciding whether to allow Vice-President Joao Goulart to assume the presidency.

Denys is a tall, slow-moving, sober individual. He is a soft-spoken, a strict disciplinarian, drinks very little, and seldom attends social

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functions. He is quite reserved and thus is very difficult to approach. He is an avid student of history, particularly admiring Napoleon, Rommel, Patton, and Leclerc. Denys is described as opportunistic and ambitious. His native language is Portuguese, but he speaks French, and has an understanding of Spanish. He can read English; understands English to a small degree, but cannot speak it. He has been outside of Brazil only twice; short trips to Europe and Argentina.

Denys was reported to be pro-Allied during WW II. He is anti-Communist and friendly toward the United States, but more closely oriented toward Europe than the United States. Denys is married and the father of three sons and two daughters. Two of the sons are Army officers, one a diplomat, and both of his daughters are married to Army officers.

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