



SECRET

POL 33 (LOS) EXDIS

Classification

Department of State
TELEGRAM

EXDIS

INDICATE:

- ☐
- COLLECT
-
- ☐
- CHARGE TO

539
June 17, 1971

DISTRIBUTION

AMB-3

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO: AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO

BRASILIA: 539

EXDIS

REF: STATE 107556

SUBJECT: "New York Times" Publication of Viet-Nam

Documents.

1. Brazilian press largely ignored NYT articles until court restraining order sought and obtained by Federal Government. Treatment after that has been relatively detached observation of internal controversy. Event has been used by some papers for subtle criticism of GOB by means of calling attention to USG resort to legal action rather than authoritarian measures, even in face alleged improper disclosures security information.

2. Although Embassy officers have held informal

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conversations with GOB officials on Viet-Nam in last 24 hours, no mention made by Brazilians of NYT articles. Up to this point matter appears to be viewed by officials, like press, largely in context US domestic debate on Viet-Nam, and we have heard no generalizations on guarding security information or conclusions drawn for US-Brazilian relations.

3. However, GOB and Brazilians take security very seriously, and their confidence in ability of USG to protect classified information clearly could be shaken by events as reported here. I have no doubt that if they believed practice of publication of classified information might extend beyond Viet-Nam conflict, in which they have relatively minor interest, and danger existed of compromise in security information affecting US-Brazilian relations, damage would be done to those relations and willingness of GOB to share confidences with us. Moreover, I believe Brazil, as well as other nations which look to US as main source of strength in defense of free world, would be profoundly shaken in their confidence in our continued ability to meet our obligations and responsibility should it appear that US system rendered it impossible

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to maintain security so obviously required if effective
defense is to be maintained. GP-1

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