

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS BETWEEN
PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON
AND PRESIDENT-ELECT ARTURO DA COSTA E SILVA
OF BRAZIL
STATE DINING ROOM

AT 2:25 P.M. EST

PRESIDENT JOHNSON: President-elect Costa e Silva, Madame Costa e Silva, Excellencies, distinguished guests:

It is a good day for us when one of our fellow Americans comes to visit us in this house. It inspires us to feel again how very much we have in common in this Hemisphere -- how interdependent we really are -- and how very closely our destinies are woven together.

We even try to bring the weather into line -- so that a Washington winter day will not be many degrees removed from a Brazilian summer.

Very soon, now, sir, you and I will have even more to share.

I mean, what our President Thomas Jefferson said, "the splendid misery" of national leadership.

After March 15, that mixture of splendor and misery will be your daily fare, as it is mine.

You will know splendor, as you work for a more abundant life for your people.

And you will certainly know misery, as you try to hard to discover, not only how to do what is right, but to discover what is really right. The only certainty, Mr. President-elect, is that you will have to act.

Fortunately for you and me, our countries are blessed with great natural wealth. They are blessed with confident and vigorous people. We are big. We are still growing. We can still experiment. We can still make mistakes and still survive.

The assurance that our people seek is not that we make no mistakes, but that we shall really never tire of seeking education for our children -- better health for all of our families -- better housing for all of our people -- and equal justice for every man. They can tolerate honest error, but they cannot abide indifference.

Mr. President-elect, I know the goals that you seek for the good people of Brazil.

For our part, we here in America shall do all that we can do to try to help you attain those goals. The United

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States, today as in the past, has much at stake in Brazil.

You were our comrades in the Second War. I shall not forget that you were the first to join us in helping the Dominican people resist totalitarian rule -- in making it possible for them to freely choose their own destiny instead of having it imposed upon them. That, sir, was an act of responsible statesmanship for which every free nation of America should be grateful.

Sir, we welcome you to this capital and to this house. Know that as geography has made us neighbors, history and hope have made us friends.

Our good and delightful friends, who have honored us with your presence today, I should like to ask all of you to join with me in a toast to His Excellency, President-elect Costa e Silva and to the great nation of Brazil.

PRESIDENT-ELECT COSTA E SILVA: Mr. President, I would like to confess that as a military man I may not be endowed with your rhetorical skill and the practise that has just been displayed by the illustrious man whom now I might call my friend, the President of the United States.

Starting with the weather, we found out today here that here is a man who really rules over the heavens. In my country when we say that a man rules over the heavens, that means that he is, indeed, a powerful man.

That expression applies very well to what has happened here today as we are greeted with an ideal spring day.

Therefore, I am indeed very grateful. I must say that I am convinced, however, that the magnificent day that we are enjoying today is, indeed, the work of a Supreme Being that reigns above all of us, be it nature, or in my own belief it is the work of the Lord.

I want to say that throughout my trip all over the world we have been blessed with a great deal of luck and good fortune. I consider that this fortune is really a harbinger of better things to come. I envisage them in a most favorable manner and I envisage them in a climate of very good fortune in my forthcoming administration in the government which I am about to assume.

I consider myself very fortunate to have had this interval which was, perhaps, a matter of controversy. I mean this interval between my election and my forthcoming inauguration. This interval, this break, gave me an unequalled opportunity to study, to look into and to endeavor to know the problems not only of my country but also of the world.

Just a few moments ago, I received from a really true statesman a magnificent lesson in what lies ahead for me. Now I feel more able to endure with equanimity and fortitude that "splendid misery" to which you just made a reference, Mr. President, and of which I already have had a foretaste in the three years that have followed our revolution.

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I am, therefore, most grateful to you, Mr. President, because I have just heard a voice of a man who carries on his shoulders a tremendous responsibility, not only before this greatest country of all, but before the entire world. I have received and heard your suggestions and your voice and I consider them a most valuable contribution to my government task that lies ahead.

I am convinced that I am going to endure some suffering and some difficulties, as I have already endured, but I am going to continue to do everything in my power to maintain in the people of my nation a certain state of mind with regard to the United States, so that together our two nations may form and build a true barrier against those who are trying to violate and subvert justice, press, and freedom.

In my closing words, I want to say that this luncheon and this meeting which were of such an intimate and congenial nature were also highlighted by your attitude of a few moments ago, Mr. President, when you greeted, one by one, the journalists of the Brazilian press. I can assure you that through that gesture you have endeared yourself to the very heart of the Brazilian people. I can also assure you that in our press you are going to feel very shortly that genuine warmth that you radiated, the warmth of a kind man, a man who has a genuine human feeling and a feeling which is very close to ours.

Both of us have said, and we mean it, that we want to give to our peoples better conditions of life, more abundant food, more adequate housing. Those are, as a matter of fact, the main programs of the platform which I presented to the party that elected me. The main goal in my party, in my platform was men.

I mean by that a three-pronged attack and a series of achievements in the fields of education, health, better food, housing, and social well-being. What you have said, Mr. President, was a very vital lesson to me. I am very grateful and very pleased to say that our views coincide on such important issues.

Once more I thank you very much for your very inspiring and kind words.

Let us toast the personal health of the President and Mrs. Johnson, and particularly a toast to the greatness of the United States, this country which is the foremost defender of human freedom.

END

AT 2:50 P.M. EST.