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OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM

TO: Amembassy RIO DE JANEIRO
FROM: Amconsul PÔRTO ALEGRE
SUBJECT: POLITICAL: Adhemar Gets Chilly Reception On RGS Visit
REF:

DATE: February 15, 1966

OMP-1

The Consulate plans to revive its series of OMPs - operations memoranda on political matters - initiated in 1963 but discontinued in 1965. As pointed out in the first of the series, dated July 25, 1963, the need was felt for a vehicle less formal than the airgram but lending itself to wider distribution than the OFFICIAL-INFORMAL letter, to convey items of minor or limited interest between the two posts. The Consulate is well aware of the restriction contained in 5 FAH-241.2, but interprets H-241.3 as authorizing the use of an OM between posts on matters of this nature.

The Consulate recommends that this document not be disseminated outside U.S. government offices.

It was announced on February 11 that São Paulo Governor Adhemar de Barros would be traveling to Pôrto Alegre the following day for the purpose of conferring with Governor Meneghetti and III Army commander Gen. Justino Alves Bastos. Either because of the report or in spite of it, Meneghetti promptly set forth for Passo Fundo, a city at some distance from the state capital, and Adhemar, when he actually did show up at the airport on the 12th, was practically ignored.

Interviewed by a political reporter, Adhemar stated that the real purpose of his visit to RGS was to attend a convention of the Third Order of St. Francis, being held over the weekend in Caxias do Sul. He added that he would have liked to have a few words with Meneghetti, although he had planned no talk with General Justino. With regard to reports of bad relations between himself and the federal government, he said that he considered President Castelo Branco as a "true patriot", and that the relations, far from being bad, were good and even cordial. However, he continued, he did not consider that Brazil had a democratic regime, and said that he personally had fought hard to preserve freedom, but that it had been done away with by the Third Institutional Act.

While in Caxias, to which city he proceeded immediately by air taxi, the Bandeirante Governor stated that, although it might

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have won plaudits from the United States and the IMF, the financial-economic policy of Minister Roberto Campos had been a disaster for the country. The middle class was disappearing, businessmen and agriculturists were becoming poorer, and in fact the national and state treasuries were the only ones to benefit from the government's measures.

Queried regarding the statement made by General Carlos Luis Guedes, commander of the 2nd Military Region, according to which Adhemar had taken no part in the overthrow of Joao Goulart, Adhemar said that General Guedes had been in Belo Horizonte at the time of the Revolution, and that he was unaware of what was going on in São Paulo. President Castelo Branco himself could tell Guedes that he was mistaken.

Turning to the topic of elections, Adhemar said that his own position in the matter was well known: he was in favor of direct elections, and believed that the holding of indirect ones was a serious mistake which would have to be rectified sooner or later. While he hoped to be able to join ARENA, which had already received his former comrades of the PSP, he fully intended to launch his own candidacy to the presidency, and excused himself at this time from making any comment regarding that of Minister Costa e Silva.

Summing up, the Paulista Governor had the following to say:

"At heart, I am an optimist. I believe in the destiny of the Brazilian people. What we need is a bit more patience. Patience, and above all, caution. We must know how to wait until the day comes when we may really feel happy and proud with the general state of things in our land."

Eyebrows were raised over the fact that none of the prominent members of the ex-PSP were on hand to welcome their former leader. One of them, Tertuliano Bofill, is state secretary of Transportation, and another, Heitor Pires, long served as vice president of the Legislative Assembly. Queried regarding their absence, Pires stated that Adhemar had given them no official word of his coming, which was not surprising, since he had long neglected his comrades in the South. "Maybe", he concluded, "he will seek us out when the situation gets worse".

cc: CG São Paulo
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