

TELEGRAM

OUTGOING

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

Charge:

CONFIDENTIAL
Classification

Control: 515

Date: December 3, 1969

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO : AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO, AMCONSUL
SAO PAULO, AMCONSUL RECIFE, USCINCSO

Brasília 515

1. I spent about 45 minutes with President Médici yesterday afternoon. He was accompanied by Fon Min Gibson and Counselor Low was also present. Principal subjects of conversation were Brazil-U.S. relations, areas of cooperation between our two countries, domestic political progress in Brazil, and subversion.

2. I noted that before leaving for Chiefs of Mission conference next week I wished to express appreciation of President Nixon for message from President Médici which Ambassador Gibson had delivered. President Nixon's speech will serve as point of departure for new relationship with Latin America. He has a special interest in this continent and particularly in Brazil, its largest and most important country. President Médici added, "and best friend, too". He said he hoped the President's speech would turn out to mark the beginning of a

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new era. He recalled with pleasure his year and a half as military attaché in Washington in '64 and '65, said he had a very warm feeling towards the United States. For this reason he had chosen the Ambassador there to be his Foreign Minister.

3. I said I had read the President's speeches carefully and was interested to note the emphasis which he put on the three fields of health, education, and agriculture. These were three areas where we had similar interests and where we felt we could be helpful to the Brazilians. I recalled signing the 64 million dollar education loan agreement just last week. The President noted that Brazil had already made considerable progress in communications and transport and said that the three areas I had mentioned were those in which there was greatest need of advance. He acknowledged the usefulness of our assistance in these areas. The Foreign Minister noted that science and technology was a fourth area where we could very usefully cooperate. He expressed his great interest in

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what he called a "mother agreement" now being negotiated between us. It had recently been finally approved within the Brazilian Government. He was very encouraged by this agreement which he believed could serve as the basis for a whole series of technical agreements on specific subjects. I agreed with the Minister ^{on the importance of the subject} and recalled President Nixon's expressed desire to cooperate in this field. Gibson added that science and technology was the one area at the recent IA-ICOSOC meeting where some progress had been made. He agreed with my comment however that this meeting was just the beginning of a long period of negotiation in which progress would undoubtedly be made in other areas as well. In response to my invitation for ideas from Latin Americans he noted that Brazil had already made its proposals which would be negotiated along with ours.

4. The President did not acknowledge my question concerning new directions of Brazilian foreign policy. However later that evening Gibson said he could state categorically

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that the GOB was not planning any changes.

5. I noted the President's stated desire to return Brazil to democratic government by the end of his term in office and asked him about relations with Congress. He acknowledged that a return to democratic government was one of his aims and characterized his relations with the Congress as being very good. It had "learned its lesson" last year and was profiting from the experience. He called attention to the municipal elections which had been held last Sunday, noting that the opposition had won in a number of towns in Goiás. I asked whether he considered this to be the beginning of a liberalization of the political process. He said he thought it could be so considered and added that the opposition had nothing to fear from his government. He was encouraging it to speak out and criticize him whenever it felt called upon to do so.

6. This led the ~~Pres~~ President to note that Brazil still had a considerable problem of subversion, adding that no one

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knew that better than I. I took this occasion to thank the Government for its understanding of the situation and the help which it offered me during the kidnapping, adding that the terrorist act to which I was subjected clearly had a Marxist background. President agreed heartily with this and noted that communist influence within the Goulart regime had become alarming. The revolution of 1964 had gotten rid of it, but subversion remained a problem both within Brazil and abroad. The Foreign Minister added that some people in the United States did not understand this, and that a few "so-called liberals" in the Congress and elsewhere believed that the terrorist movement in Brazil was directed towards re-establishment of democratic government here. The President considered this absurd. He added that subversion by Brazilian exiles abroad had reached the point where it was seriously embarrassing the government. Evidence of this was recent criticism of Brazil in Europe for "genocide" practiced against Indians here. He and the Foreign Minister

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then launched into a heated defense of Brazil's policy toward the Indians and condemnation of the injustice of the attacks in the European press.

7. On departure, the President assured me of his interest in maintaining close and friendly relations with us and discussing mutual problems whenever the occasion arose.

8. COMMENT: The President was polite and friendly, and on a number of occasions showed a genuine warmth towards the United States. He does not have what I would describe as an easy-going or an expansive personality, nor did he strike me as a robust figure. Though reserved, at time even distant, he is a man who obviously is used to command and can express himself vigorously when the occasion warrants.

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