

TELEGRAM

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

Pol-29

35

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Charge:

Classification

Control: 161

Date: May 22, 1970

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO: AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
AMCONSUL RECIFE

Declassified
Authority: 43265 By:
Amanda Weimer Date:
05-15-2015

Brasilia 161

SUBJ: MDB Denounces Torture and Death São Paulo Worker

REF: E050x1 São Paulo 485, São Paulo A-38, A-41

1. In Chamber of Deputies May 21, Franco Montoro (MDB-São Paulo) accused public authorities in São Paulo of the arbitrary arrest of 17 workers participating in a peaceful commemoration of May Day and torture and subsequent death of one of these workers, Olavo Hansen. Montoro gave detailed account of how Hansen died as a result of injuries he claimed sustained during police interrogations. Noting that this case violated specific articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Brazilian Constitution, Montoro requested that the urgent convocation of the Brazilian Council for the Defense of Human Rights in order to investigate case and assure punishment of guilty. Montoro speech widely reported in press May 22.

Drafted by: *WYoung* WYoung/md/5/22/70

Approving Officer:

Concurrence:

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FORM FS-413
8-65

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DocId: 31241937

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OUTGOING AMERICAN EMBASSY BRASILIA

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2. Hansen case had earlier come to attention of Chamber on May 19 when both MDB and ARENA deputies informed the Plenary that they had telegrams from São Paulo unions protesting death of Hansen. At that time, ARENA Vice Leader Cantídio Sampaio promised that rigorous investigation would be opened because government does not support practice of such acts and is interested in assuring life of its citizens as necessity for constitutional order in country.

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3. ARENA leader Raimundo Padilha informed the Embassy that Franco Montoro's speech violated agreement between him and MDB leader Humberto Lucena ~~to~~ ^{not to} raise the Hansen case in Chamber, ~~since~~ ^{since} ~~the President had ordered an investigation of the case and Ministry of Justice was proceeding.~~

4. COMMENT: ~~Although the Brazilian press has been reporting that the Government is investigating the case, it is not clear whether the investigation is being conducted by the Ministry of Justice or by the Public Prosecutor's Office. The existence of such an investigation is not confirmed by the Brazilian press. Pressure on GOB to investigate case comes primarily from~~

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^{unions.}
São Paulo It is probably also in response to this constituency that Franco Montoro, a former Minister of Labor, felt ~~was~~ compelled to make a detailed denouncement of Hansen case despite agreement between the MDB and ARENA leaders.

5. As reported São Paulo's A-38, President Médici personally informed on May 4 by labor leaders of union concern over May Day arrests and he promised at that time to look into matter. Médici's involvement in matter at a time when Hansen still alive may also be a factor in government's decision to undertake investigation.

6. Although ~~there~~ discrepancies exist

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EO50X1

there appears to be serious evidence of police involvement in Hansen's death. If this is factually true, resistance can be expected from military and police authorities to any investigation in depth. Hansen case could shape up as ~~important~~ test of GOB desire and/or ability to control police excesses. This is first ~~time~~ occasion wide publicity has been

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permitted of a torture case and first time government has
 agreed to investigate specific case. ~~Government~~ ^{By} long
~~Government by long drawn out and~~ drawn out and indeter-
^GGOVERNMENT
 minate investigation may still slip off hook in Hansen case,
 nevertheless pressure will continue for frank government
 treatment of issue.

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