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Approved WH(Mr Nachmanoff) DEPARTMENT OF STATE
without change 2/26/69

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 21,
TIME: 10:15 A. M.
PLACE: The White House

SUBJECT: Presentation of Credentials --
Brazilian Ambassador

PARTICIPANTS: Foreign

Ambassador Gibson of Brazil

United States

President Nixon
Mr. Mosbacher, Chief of Protocol
Mr. Vaky, Acting Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs

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At the time of presentation of credentials, the Brazilian Ambassador presented to the President a personal letter from President Costa e Silva of Brazil. In the private conversation following presentation of credentials, Ambassador Gibson observed that his government had been very pleased to note the observations made by President Nixon with regard to Latin America, particularly in his campaign speeches. These, the Ambassador noted, coincided very much with Brazilian views, especially the observation of increased trade rather than aid.

The Ambassador then stated that Latin America was a special area -- it was Christian, western and underpopulated -- characteristics which set it apart from the other underdeveloped areas of the world. With respect to Brazil he noted that a major effort had been made to control inflation and he believed this was now under control. GNP growth was about 6% last year, which was another major accomplishment.

ARA/LA:VPVaky
(Drafting Officer and Officer)

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The Ambassador referred to recent internal political developments, and said these were of course matters of domestic concern only. He did wish to emphasize however that his country was dedicated to democracy, and if certain conditions including the need to make economic and social progress resulted in temporary extraordinary powers nevertheless Brazil was dedicated to Western ideals and to constitutional rule.

The President thanked the Ambassador for his exposition. He expressed great interest in U. S. relations with Latin America and observed that he believed it important to rethink our policies and the Alliance. He had not been satisfied with progress under the Alliance and thought that it was now necessary to review the problems and see what new had to be done, what had to be recast and what had to be intensified. He noted that the Rockefeller mission was intended to begin this review, and that he thought it important to listen to Latin America, not tell it what it needed. He believed it vital to engage with Latin America in mutually worked out policies and plans. He referred to the Ambassador's comments regarding internal political matters and said that the U. S. would not pass judgment on such internal matters. He noted the Ambassador's remarks regarding belief in democracy and said that the U. S. only wished them well in their return to constitutional rule.

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