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A-233

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AIR POUCH

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO: Belem, Porto Alegre, Recife, Rio, São Paulo

FROM : AmEmbassy Office BRASILIA

DATE: April 19, 1968

SUBJECT : Student Demonstration Wrap Up

REF :

1. The death of Edson de Lima SOUTO in a student demonstration in Rio de Janeiro sparked a series of manifestations throughout Brazil which lasted about a week, running roughly from the day of his death, March 28, to the Seventh Day Masses, April 4, held throughout the country. Enclosed are memoranda from the Consulate General in Recife, and the Consulates in Belem, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, concerning the student demonstrations in these consular districts.

2. Demonstrations Vary in Intensity. The largest and most violent demonstrations took place in Rio de Janeiro, followed by Brasilia and Goiania. The total number of deaths was four--three in Rio and one in Goiania--but many were hospitalized, both students and authorities, as a result of the demonstrations. In general the demonstrations elsewhere were peaceful although some violence was registered in Belo Horizonte. Porto Alegre represented a special case because President COSTA E SILVA governed from that city throughout most of the demonstration period. The additional security measures provided, however, were sufficient to put down attempted demonstrations which would have been of national interest if they had succeeded in embarrassing the President.

Enclosures: 1-Recife Consulate General Memorandum of April 5
2-Belem Consulate Memorandum of April 2
3-Belem Consulate Memorandum of April 9
4-Belo Horizonte Consulate Memorandum of April 3
5-Porto Alegre Consulate Memorandum of April 5
6-São Paulo Consulate Memorandum of April 11
7-São Paulo Consulate Memorandum of April 11

Group 3 - Downgraded at 12 yr. intervals
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FORM 4-62 DS-323

Drafted by: POL/E: JWD:ld:4/19/68

Contents and Classification Approved by: POL: HSOkun

Clearances:

Action: ARA/BR - NAN - File

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
MAY 2 - 1968

ANALYSIS DIVISION

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3. Reaction of Authorities. In general the police and armed forces charged with controlling the demonstrations acted with patience, restraint, and professionalism. Considerable credit must be given to these authorities for controlling with a minimum of force--in spite of physical and verbal provocation--the actions of the demonstrators. Although the press took full advantage of lurid pictures of the police in action it would be hard to substantiate charges of widespread "police brutality" considering the size and violence of some of the demonstrations. Probably the most damaging pictures showed mounted police swinging sabers while breaking up the demonstration during the Seventh Day Mass in Rio. Thus armed, they looked like Cossacks riding roughshod over the populace and it would seem that nightsticks would have been more potent physically and less damaging psychologically. The direct intervention of local authorities--such as the Governor of Pernambuco and the Mayor of Brasilia--also had a salutary effect in minimizing the disturbances.

4. Involvement of Non-Student Sectors. Although several attempts were made by non-students to turn the demonstrations to their own end--including attacks on the United States--these attempts had minimal success. Federal Deputies in Brasilia got considerable publicity for their presence at the first demonstration but offers to give further aid were turned down by the students who maintained "this is our business." Other congressmen--e.g. Paulo CAMPOS (MDB-Goias) and Marcio MOREIRA ALVES (MDB-Guanabara)--reportedly were agitating behind the scenes in Goiania and Rio. Professional agitators within student ranks attempted to seize control of the demonstrations but their efforts were not successful.

5. The Archbishop of Goiania apparently was active in the first demonstrations but bowed to pressure from church and state authorities and left Goiania for northern Goias to wait for the dust to settle. The refusal of Dom Helder CAMARA to officiate at the Seventh Day Mass in Recife is significant since his presence could easily have aggravated the situation. The students gained some potentially powerful support from the clergy in Belo Horizonte and it has been reported that the federal authorities are concerned with the evidence pointing to active church participation (Rio ARMA-2-809-0183-68).

6. Causes. The death of the Rio student provided the catalyst for wide ranging student dissatisfactions with their situation and the administration. Unhappiness with university facilities and faculties is widespread and justified. The death of the Rio student was caused in a demonstration over a long-standing grievance against the university restaurant. At the time of the death, students in Recife and Porto Alegre were on strike because of purely local university problems. The manifestation can also be seen as the sudden release of long pent-up student dissatisfaction with circumscription of their political capabilities imposed

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A-233 - Brasilia
Page 3 of 3

since April 1964 as well as with the semi-authoritarian aspects of the present Constitution and political regime. Violence on the part of some demonstrators and their willingness to attack police with whatever weapons at hand was greater than in past similar situations. This more aggressive behavior probably stems from (a) increasing frustration with students currently impotent political role, (b) deliberate desire by some to provoke forceful countermeasures, (c) generally heightened level of violence throughout the world when young people have taken to the streets, e.g. Grosvenor Square, Memphis, Tokyo, Berlin, Prague, Warsaw.

7. The Future. Quick and effective action by the authorities combined with statements by administration leaders--including the President--that order would be maintained at all costs may have convinced the majority of students that the violent demonstrations are not worth the candle. May Day activities on May 1 will provide the first indication of whether the students again care to test the administration's determination to maintain order. Over the long run, student dissatisfaction with the present administration and the curtailment of their political activity will certainly not diminish. The government can take some steps to remedy some of the valid student complaints concerning the universities which would decrease student frustrations. It remains to be seen if it will. Whether it does or not, the outlook is for further sporadic demonstrations.

OK BMB
TUTHILL *JS*

Note: The memoranda from the Consulate General in São Paulo (Enclosures 6 and 7) were received after this airgram had been prepared. The observations concerning lack of student success to attract support of workers, Governor Sodre's role in minimizing the demonstration problem, lack of evidence of communist influence among demonstration leaders (enclosure 6) and the anti-Americanism among workers (enclosure 7) are particularly noteworthy.

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REPORT Nº 17

APR 12 1 09 AM '68

TO: Amembassy BRASILIA

April 5, 1968

INFO: Amembassy RIO DE JANEIRO

SUBJ: Factors Contributing to Relative Student Calm in Recife

REF: Recife's 794 and previous

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SUMMARY

Student disorders and violence in Rio on March 28 found the university situation in Recife already unsettled due to purely local, university-related grievances. The relative calm which was maintained here is therefore particularly noteworthy. The strong show of force and generally responsible conduct of the local military police played the decisive role in controlling the situation. However, without the timely assistance of Governor Coelho's personal mediation efforts and Dom Hélder's highly publicized refusal to officiate at a Seventh Day Mass on April 4, calm might not have been so easily or widely maintained.

Arrival in Recife of news of last week's student disorders and violence in Rio found the student situation already unsettled, due principally to purely local, university-related grievances. One of the city's three universities had been on strike for almost a month and students at the other two had joined their colleagues in temporary sympathy strikes. The fact that this volatile situation nevertheless produced no significant disorders or violence therefore seems particularly noteworthy. The relative calm of the past week here, as might be expected, results from a combination of factors, the most significant of which were:

1. Police Behavior: The authorities were initially undecided as to how to react to the developing situation following the Rio violence of March 28. Local authorities initially favored permitting student demonstrations but later prohibited them after instructions were received from the federal Ministry of Justice. The restraint of the police throughout the tense week which followed was on the whole exemplary. The only excesses which occurred apparently resulted from continued jeering and heckling^{by} students of individual policemen who responded with force. This happened only on the evening of April 3 (see RECIFE'S 789).

Contingents of military police posted throughout the city during critical hours were armed only with "family sized" riot control sticks, thereby substantially reducing the possibility of injuries by firearms should force have been required to disperse crowds. Only those police held in reserve actually carried firearms. The show of force in the downtown area and at

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ey points throughout the city on April 2 and 4 was impressive, and considerable thought appears to have gone into police dispositions. One report was that the Secretary of Public Security simply gave the Military Police Commander carte blanche after demonstrations were forbidden. Army forces were not in evidence.

2. Governor Coelho's Mediation Efforts: Beginning almost as soon as the first word of violence was received from Rio, Governor Coelho took personal charge of efforts to settle all purely local grievances contributing to the unsettled university situation. He visited the campus of the Rural University on the outskirts of the city and made a strong plea for calm in the face of provocation. He called upon the students to present to him a list of their grievances and promised to use the power of his office to achieve honorable solutions. These steps were consistent with his earlier championship of student causes. The Governor subsequently met on almost a daily basis with student leaders from all of the city's universities.

Coelho's well-publicized activities on behalf of the striking students brought almost immediate results. All major demands of the Rural University students were granted. Increased prices at the Rural University cafeteria were reduced to previous "symbolic" levels, with the state government agreeing to assume the operating deficit of the cafeteria. The expelled leader of the Central Student Directory was reinstated, and the state government agreed to forward a petition to the federal Secretary of Education requesting forgiveness of student absences during the period of the one-month strike at the Rural University. At the Federal University, the Rector announced the suspension of a planned study of cafeteria operations which students had viewed as a prelude to an increase in cafeteria prices. The Rector also publicly announced more liberal cafeteria hours, as requested by student leaders.

At the Federal University, the Dean of the Law School announced that, with the collaboration of student leaders, a plan had been worked out for the creation of 200 additional vacancies for first-year law school applicants. These concessions, which were propitiously announced on the eve of planned student demonstrations, apparently dampened much of the enthusiasm for protest. The Governor and university authorities, by working directly with elected student leaders, for the most part successfully isolated these leaders from involvement in possible street demonstrations, and in the end lack of effective leadership was perhaps the principal deterrent to any demonstration.

3. Dom Helder Demurs: The Archbishop's well publicized refusal to officiate at the Seventh Day Mass for the dead Rio student was a particularly significant factor in calming the situation on April 4. Dom Helder stated that, although expressing his solidarity with the student struggle, he could not celebrate

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
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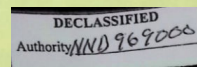
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
one mass as requested by some students because at the present time the climate for a religious act did not exist. "The consequences would go beyond the mass itself since a desire exists to exploit the act, which beyond digressing from the principles of the Church could cause new victims among innocent students." Dom Hélder added that he had already earlier in the day celebrated a mass for the dead student "without publicity" at another location where the political character of the mass had been successfully eliminated. Although ~~the~~^{the} mass was ^{subsequently} held at another location in the city, it was of necessity a hastily-arranged affair which was relatively sparsely attended. While the role of the police and the Governor are easily explained, the Archbishop's conduct bears closer analysis.

Dom Hélder is a political being, and his dramatic announcement undoubtedly reflected his assessment of the political situation. It may be, of course, that his decision, effectively disassociating himself and the Church from the planned mass, was made upon instructions from the Church hierarchy from the South. However, the careful wording of his statement, in which he associated himself with the student cause while refusing their request, carries the familiar Dom Hélder imprint. In any event, his declaration was nevertheless welcomed, if somewhat out of character, and the tone of moderation and responsibility which it reflected are elements which may not have been given adequate weight in previous assessments of Dom Hélder.

While some tension still remains in the situation here, the real danger point appears to have passed. The strong show of force and generally responsible conduct of the military police played the decisive role in controlling the situation, but without the timely assistance of the Governor and Dom Hélder, calm might not have been so easily or widely maintained.


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PM-11

A-233 - Brasilia
Enclosure 2

TO: Amembassy, BRASÍLIA (POL)

FROM: Amconsul, BELEM

SUBJECT: Belém's Reaction to the Death of Edson Luis Souto

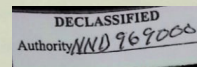
Belém's newspapers have devoted a large amount of space to the story of the death of Edson Luis Souto, reflecting local interest in the fact that the boy was from Belém. Most of the stories and comments have originated in the South, and, for the most part, coverage has been balanced and non-polemical, including giving space to the policeman's version of what happened.

Stories originating locally have focused on the "human interest" aspects of the case. Both the press and radio have run interviews with people who knew Edson and with his mother, a woman of very modest circumstances with whom Edson had not lived for some time, but although the stories have been designed to be sentimentally heart tugging, they seem to be without political prejudice.

The students at the University of Pará staged a protest march and rally in downtown Belém on Saturday morning, March 30, 1968; both events were orderly. Only about three hundred students participated in the march, and one student told a Consular officer that the organizers were quite disappointed with the turn-out. The marchers carried signs denouncing "A Ditadura", but there was no evidence of any anti-American sentiment. At the rally afterwards, some students called for a march on the Consulate, but the idea got no support from the crowd, and nothing came of it.

A possible source of trouble may be this coming Saturday when the students at the University of Pará conduct their traditional first-of-the-year trote. This event normally consists of mere pranks, but it also has political overtones, and if emotions are aroused, it could turn violent.

GOELZ



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A-233 - Brasilia
Enclosure 3AM-PM-12

TO: Amembassy, BRASÍLIA (POL)

FROM: Amconsul, BELÉM

SUB: DEMONSTRATIONS WRAP-UP

REF: Rio's 927 of April 5, 1968 and Posts BLM-PM-11 of April 2, 1968

Three main demonstrations were held by students in Belém as a result of the death of Edson de Lima Souto in Rio de Janeiro: a march made up principally of students from the University of Pará, but including some high school students as well, on Saturday, March 30; a march of medical students on Tuesday, April 2; and the Seventh Day Mass on Thursday, April 4; the demonstration expected for Saturday, April 6 did not materialize. All of these demonstrations were orderly and, with the exception of the gathering after the mass, remarkably small considering that the dead boy was from Belém; although it must be noted that he was not well known locally.

There were no major clashes between students and the police or military. All of the demonstrations were directed entirely against the GOB. Some marchers merely protested the extreme measures used by the Guanabara police, but others called for the downfall of the government. There was little anti-American sentiment exhibited. On two occasions when someone called for demonstrations against the United States, the idea was immediately quashed by the student leaders and other student demonstrators.

The only demonstration having any significant non-student participation was that which took place in the praça in front of the church after the Seventh Day Mass when the crowd was addressed by three opposition members of the state assembly and two members of the city council. By Friday, April 5, the situation had returned to normal in Belém, and the students had returned to their classrooms.

The relative calm which prevailed in Belém can probably be accounted for by the efficient and disciplined operations of the police and military in keeping the students under control without provoking them to violence and the firm control the Rector of University of Pará has over his school which minimized the opportunities for faculty or outside agitation; moreover the rainy weather at this time of year is quite discouraging to outside demonstrations.

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American Consul, BELO HORIZONTE 1 01 AM '68

Subject:

Student Demonstrations in Belo Horizonte, BRAZIL

SUMMARY

Belo Horizonte students, following the example of those in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia, reacted to the death of Edson Luiz de Lima Souto by staging demonstrations beginning Friday, March 29, and continuing to the present. The demonstrations were marked by violence in a degree not characteristic of student actions in this city. Another notable departure from the norm were the efforts of the students to enlist non-student participation. Also for the first time, students discovered oppositionist political movements and endorsed the Frente Ampla. Other political distinctions were generally ignored in a general condemnation of the "dictatorship".

1. After many months of calm, the students of Belo Horizonte seized on the death of Edson Luiz de Lima Souto in Rio de Janeiro and made of it a symbol of all their grievances and a departure point for demonstrations aimed at no less than (so they said) the downfall of the "dictatorship."

2. Within hours after the death of Edson Luiz became known in Belo Horizonte student leaders began violent verbal attacks on the government calling for the participation of workers in opposition to the government. "Chegou a hora da união de todos que aman o Brasil para depor os opressores," declared Raimundo Mendes of the UEE. Jorge Batista President of the DCE of the UFMG, asked "a união de todas para a derrubada da ditadura numa luta contínua."

DEMONSTRATION OF MARCH 29

3. At about 5 p.m. on Friday, March 29, the favored hour of student demonstrations in Belo Horizonte, the students staged their first passeata. The demonstration was unusual for Belo Horizonte student actions however, in that the students sought and perhaps to their surprise received permission to march from the Secretary of Public Security.

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Drafted by: CASemones:t

4/3/68

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Amembassy Rio de Janeiro

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The passeata, which according to the press drew up to 10,000 students (the reporting officer's estimate is much lower -- no more than 1,000 at least in the central core of marchers) was carried on in an orderly manner. The students marched silently through the center of the city (usually in contra-mão), carrying national flags, black banners, and placards, ending in front of the Legislative Assembly, where speeches were made by student leaders. The passeata was well-watched by DVS agents who made no attempt to interfere.

THE WEEKEND

5. Perhaps dismayed by their success without success in mounting a demonstration of which the worst victim was a tearful "noiva" whose wedding was delayed for one-half hour because of the ensuing traffic jam, the students called at once for a new passeata. This time they resolved that they would go out in the streets, as ordered by Jorge Batista "without asking licença." As expected police authorities here resolved that they would not be permitted to march.

6. The week-end was spent preparing for the passeata by holding meetings and distributing hand-bills convoking a general "concentração" in front of the São José Church, another favorite student protest spot, on Monday April 1.

DEMONSTRATION OF APRIL 1

7. As expected the demonstration of April 1 led to a massive protest scene. Some 3,500 military and civil police and perhaps 10,000 students were involved in the affair which ended in the arrest that night of at least 20 persons (more later).

Two students and more than 30 police were injured. A car belonging to the Mayor of the city of Arassuaí, a hapless visitor in the city was burned. Windows were broken in many downtown stores and offices, including several in the First National City Bank.

8. Students painted slogans on buses and cars, threw ice and water from the windows of buildings, threw stones at the police, and reportedly even shot at the police. The police attempted to control the situation with "moral" bombs and tear-gas, the latter being used so extensively that the fumes drifted throughout the downtown area, reaching many persons not involved in the demonstrations, particularly those in downtown movie theaters, (including the reporting officer and his wife).

9. One student was shot in the thigh but not seriously injured.

10. According to an incident described to the reporting officer by the DVS agent in charge of the plan to curtail the demonstrations, at one point demonstrators attracted police to a dark area obscured by trees, where they were fired on by several persons. At least one agent was wounded and several vehicles were damaged. The incident was not reported in the press.

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Secretary of Public Security Joaquim Ferreira Gonçalves in announcing that no further disturbances would be permitted declared that "não houve passeata estudantil." Nevertheless, it was clear that the students had made their point.

THE AFTERMATH

12. The demonstrations spilled over into Tuesday and Wednesday, but the police, now in firm control of the situation, confined them to the various faculdades.

13. By Wednesday 62 persons had been arrested, 19 as "subversives," and the students began to mount a campaign for their release.

PARTICIPATION IN THE DEMONSTRATIONS

14. As mentioned above the students attempted to secure the participation of workers and other elements in the demonstrations. In doing so their hand-bills invoked all popular grievances which could be thought of, among them, suppression of free elections, intervention in unions, the "arrocho salarial," government educational policies (MEC-USAID), the handing of the country over to foreigners, and the persecution of the clergy.

15. Although 21 of the 62 arrested were non-students, little success was obtained. The unions, at least publicly, ignored the whole thing. Only the local spokesman of the National Union of Public Servants, a consistent opponent of the government, joined the students in denouncing the government.

16. The students did, however, gain some potentially powerful support from the clergy, including Dom Serafim Fernandes de Araujo, the Bishop of Belo Horizonte and the Rector of Catholic University, who issued a statement condemning "the attitude of the one who killed" and of those who ignore the grave problems the students are struggling to overcome. The Dominican Fathers of Belo Horizonte, led by Padre Frederico Ozanam, distributed a statement signed by 40 other Dominicans stating they were in solidarity with the "embattled Youth protesting against the violence of the establishment." Both statements, however, were issued in conjunction with the March 29 passeata.

ANTI-AMERICANISM

17. Little anti-Americanism was apparent in the demonstrations, but was implicit everywhere. The City Bank window was mentioned above. Jorge Batista, ceaselessly anti-American, attacked "American Imperialism" often. Several American flags were burned at the School of Law. The slogan "Nosso Exemplo é o Vietnã" (not further explained) became popular. A threatening note was left on the private automobile of the post's Branch Public Affairs Officer on the night of March 31. In general, however, Americans and the United States were not main themes of protest.

COMMENTS

18. Although the student's efforts to widen participation in the demonstration was not noticeably successful, support from non-students was more evident than in the past.

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Later student handout declared "The students went into the streets. This time not so isolated but at the side of a portion of the population.... The people will continue the struggle until victory...." At this point however, student claims in this regard are perhaps a little extravagant.

19. The students generally ignored political parties and distinctions. Coming on Magalhães Pinto in his car during the March 29 passeata, (a member of the ditadura perhaps but an oppositionist here) the student greeted him by applause which he answered with a friendly wave. Later several MDB deputies, although nominal opponents of the government, were threatened with stones at the Legislative Assembly.

20. Becoming more selective later, perhaps, the students were more inclined to choose sides. A Monday hand-out declared that "We must then, denounce all attempts which do not satisfy the demands and interests of the people as the Frente Ampla has been doing. Frente Ampla is our new "golpe." The student support of the Frente Ampla is the first time anyone in Belo Horizonte, except for professional politicians, have had much to say publicly about the movement.

20. Among the reasons advanced to explain the uncharacteristic violence of the Belo Horizonte student's protest are: a. the demonstration effect of student actions in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia and the Belo Horizonte's students' desire to show support. b. Imitation of recent student actions in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Both examples seem reasonable.

21. Another factor no doubt influencing the students was the influence of Jorge Batista. Elected about a year ago as something of a firebrand, he had little opportunity to show his stuff. His actions during the demonstrations firmly established him as the leading student protester, and DVS considers him responsible for most of the trouble.

22. On the surface the demonstrations were different from past ones only in intensity and scale. The significance of their actions thus, lies not in the demonstrations themselves, but in the new directions in which the students have set their course, these being, a. the aligning, however temporary, of the student protest movement with a particular political movement against the government, and b. their attempts however unsuccessful to broaden participation in the demonstrations.

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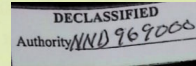
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April 5, 1968

TO : AmEmbassy, Brasilia
FROM : AmConsulate, Porto Alegre
INFO : Department of State ARA/BR, INR: Amembassy Rio de Janeiro
SUBJECT: Summary of Student Agitation in RGS



1. When a student was killed in the course of a demonstration in Rio de Janeiro on March 28, 1968, the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul was already partially on strike. The strike had begun about a week before in the Faculty of Medicine of the FURGS and gradually spread to other faculties. It was designed to protest budget cuts and insufficient vacancies. Until the incident in Rio de Janeiro it had virtually no political content; was strictly within the family; and was based largely on legitimate gripes. It was well on the way to solution under the calm and fatherly hand of the Rector.

2. The death of a student in Rio de Janeiro changed all that and what had begun as a legitimate protest over administrative matters became a political protest over everything in general. There were, however, several special factors operating that diverted the protest out of the channel it would probably have taken otherwise. Chief among these was the visit of President Costa e Silva scheduled to begin April 1. The Presidential visit distorted the situation two ways. A successful demonstration conducted in the vicinity of the President could be considered a great victory for the students, especially if they succeeded in embarrassing him in some way. On the other hand the tight security precautions in effect made it risky and difficult to do this.

3. Action in Porto Alegre has thus far been confined to two evenings - April 2 and April 4. On April 2 several hundred students armed with eggs, rocks, and slings gathered across from the University where President Costa e Silva was due to receive a honorary degree. They were quickly dispersed by the police. Later in the evening small groups of students carried out lightning demonstrations in various parts of the downtown area. Two police vehicles were burned and two policemen and one bystander were injured. One group of students attempted to reach the American Consulate according to some press reports, but if this is so personnel in the Consulate at the time were unaware of it. Several dozen arrests were made during the evening.

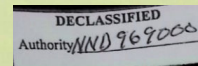
4. On the evening of April 4 two seventh day masses were said for the memory of the student killed in Rio de Janeiro. During the one at the Cathedral a large petard (not a bomb as reported in some accounts) went off startling everyone but causing no damage or injuries. After another mass heavily attended by students they attempted to gather for a march but were quickly and quietly dispersed by police. They drifted to the University where they were once again dispersed.

5. On the evening of April 3 police arrested a number of labor and student leaders on leaving a meeting allegedly held to plan further disturbances. Throughout April 4 police conducted a sweep to pick up all the major leaders of the DCE Livre and the AP. Their success is partially responsible for the mild nature of the events that evening.

6. For over a year the DCE Livre and the AP have been divided and competing, and neither have had strong bonds with the labor movement. This disunity also accounts for the relative failure of the student agitation movement in RGS. The one attempt of these groups to get together on April 3 was nipped in the bud by the security authorities, as described above.

7. Throughout the events of the past week the performance of the security authorities has been impressive. The police under the leadership of the State Secretary of Security showed calm, firmness, and technical skill in controlling and dispersing the students. No shots were fired and, indeed, all weapons were carried unloaded. It did not prove necessary to use water, gas, or even rifle butts to clear the streets. Almost without exception the quick-marching, tightly packed riot control wedges sent the students scudding in front of them with no physical contact being required. The Armed forces were on the alert throughout the week but not even their moral support was required, and not a tank nor an armored car left the barracks. The effectiveness of the security system was demonstrated by the low number of police casualties and the total absence of student casualties. The zeal of the police can be explained in part by the presence of President Costa e Silva, but this does not explain their skill. It is tempting to attribute this at least in part to the USAID Public Safety Program that has been operating in RGS for the past four years.

HEWITT



Drafted By: ACHewitt Jr., April 5, 1968

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SP-25
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TO: Amembassy BRASILIA:POL
FROM: Amconsul São Paulo
SUBJECT: Some Observations Concerning Recent Student Demonstrations
REFS: São Paulo Telegrams 1418, 1449, 1457 and 1458 (latter to Rio and Brasilia only)

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The student-Government crisis in São Paulo appears to be waning. In the absence of another incident to arouse student indignation, immediate prospects for demonstrations of the magnitude and kind staged here on April 1 and 5 and in Santo André on April 4 have subsided. The most important aspect of all three demonstrations in São Paulo is that good judgment prevailed on both sides. The State Government, reportedly despite contrary orders from General Jayme PORTELLA in Brasilia, permitted the demonstrations to occur and kept all uniformed police away from the scene. The student leaders, on the other hand, went to great lengths to keep agitators from provoking violence, and to avoid vandalism and clashes with the police. The mood of the demonstrators was serious but not malicious. Private cars (and even a Guarda Civil jeep) which were at various times caught in the crowd were not molested, but allowed to escape from the demonstration.

Organization and Control. During each of the "passeatas" students had security leaders who supervised the handling of the marchers. During the march on April 5, students told a Congen employee there were about 160 of these security men. They were observed by a Congen officer organizing a line by having participants join hands around the entire rear, and half way around the sides of the marching group. The lines kept stragglers from wandering into stores (which remained open) along the route. The security men followed behind this line to ensure that it remained intact. Whenever motorists behind or at the side got too near (a truck belonging to the newspaper Folha de São Paulo frequently drew up close to and pushed into the crowd almost as if its driver wished to provoke an incident), the security men would go over and talk quietly with the driver.

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An incident illustrating the role of these security men occurred during the march on April 5. After a 45-minute rally during which student leaders had addressed the crowd of 3,000, the demonstration's leaders started moving the marchers toward the Praça das Bandeiras. However, three agitators, whom the reporting officer observed to be older men and obviously not students, began shouting "Up Avenue São João" and otherwise trying to persuade the crowd to clash with the military police who were waiting (with riot squads, armored cars and machine guns) on two side streets opening into Avenue São João two blocks away. Approximately 100 students remained behind to listen to the agitators and were beginning to move up Avenue São João when several of the student security men returned. They shouted, "No, we do not want heads broken! No fights with the police! We want no deaths! To the Praça das Bandeiras!", and denounced the agitators as not being students. The three agitators in turn called the student leaders "cowards" and "sellouts". Finally after approximately 15 minutes during which the group moved indecisively back and forth, the students succeeded in moving the crowd toward Praça das Bandeiras and away from the military police. There were about 10 student leaders involved in this effort. Each time after making a plea to the marchers they would set off through the crowd physically turning students toward the Praça as they went. Each time it appeared that the crowd was not going with them, they returned to the place where the agitators were and repeated their pleas; finally they succeeded in moving the crowd. Despite the fact that they physically turned people around there were no scuffles or fights. It was an impressive performance.

Later when a rock was thrown through a window at the offices of the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, and some people were urging a general attack on the building, student security leaders formed a cordon between the building and the crowd and led the marchers away from the building.

Nature of Slogans and Speeches. During the two marches in São Paulo and the one in Santo André basically the same themes were used, although during the Santo André demonstration much more anti-Americanism was present. The principal themes were the need for more and better schools, the desirability of common action by workers and students, protest against the military dictatorship "which is killing students and workers", and the necessity for the people to organize to defeat the dictatorship. Speakers made the usual charges that the present Government is exploitative and dictatorial and is serving the interests of large foreign and domestic businessmen. During the demonstration on April 4 in the working class suburb

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of Santo André, speakers frequently referred to Viet-Nam and American imperialism; however, during the two demonstrations in São Paulo on April 1 and 5 anti-American statements were not frequent, and only one or two placards (among many) referred to the United States.

The Brazilian opposition also was not spared. The Broad Front, Carlos LACERDA and the MDB all were denounced as "wanting to exploit the people just as does the present Government".

Worker-Student Cooperation. Despite efforts by the student leaders to attract support of workers for joint action in protest against Government policies, particularly the wage policy, this effort has not been noticeably successful. There was no significant worker participation in the two marches in São Paulo, and in Santo André only about 20 percent of the marchers appeared to be workers.

Absence of Marxist Overtones. At no time during the demonstrations were there shouts of slogans such as "Viva Peking", "Viva Moscow", "Viva Che" or reference to Cuba. The Communist sign of the closed hand was not used by either speakers or marchers. A Congen local employee had long conversations with several of the leaders of the student security group during the evening of April 5, and met with them again on April 7. They said that one of their functions was to weed out and suppress trouble-makers. According to them the Communists and Ação Popular groups wanted trouble but the great majority of students were there to protest against the death of Edson Luis SOUTO in Rio de Janeiro and to show their opposition to the military dictatorship, lack of adequate emphasis on education, and the wage-salary squeeze. They said students reject Communism whether it be of the Soviet, Chinese, Cuban or Brazilian brand. They also reject opposition politicians as well as the present Government.

An example of the students' antipathy toward leftist politicians was provided during the April 1 march when State Deputy Fernando PERRONE (who reportedly is a Marxist and has links with the Communists, although there is no indication that he has ever joined the party) was booed and hooted when he attempted to speak to the marchers.

Students Lack Positive Program. The impression one gets from the students' speeches, slogans and the conversations with them is that they are against a number of things. They are against the Government, the military, politicians of right, left and middle, and foreign "interference in Brazilian affairs". They want such things as better educational facilities,

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more scholarships, higher wages for workers, and a more just society. These are vague goals and the students appear to have no program and no real cohesive organization. The reporting officer's impression is that while the students could organize and carry out an orderly demonstration they are not sufficiently unified under leadership which has a firm political orientation and a set program. They do, however, remain dissatisfied and frustrated with the present state of things in Brazil. A new incident or issue will bring them back into the streets.

Comment: The São Paulo State Government and the student leadership both deserve credit for avoiding violence during the recent marches. Governor SODRE's local image has improved as a result of his handling of this difficult situation. Even opposition politicians have publicly lauded the Governor's action. Paulistas are somewhat smugly congratulating themselves that São Paulo remained an island of peace in comparison to the violence of Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and other major university centers.

The charges by student leaders that the "Communists and other radicals" wanted to make trouble does not tie in with reports from other sources that the Communists were determined to avoid trouble during the demonstrations. The Congen local employee who talked with the student leaders is convinced that those who controlled the demonstration were not Communists. The reporting officer also noticed no evidence of Communist influence among the leaders or the overwhelming majority of the marching students.

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