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Amconsul SAO PAULO

November 19, 1965

LIDER Planning Deposition of President

Professor Robert J. ALEXANDER of Rutgers University, noted Latin American scholar on sabbatical in Brazil to collect material for a new book, has visited the Congen several times. On his last visit, November 19, he recounted a recent conversation he had in Rio de Janeiro with Colonel Osneli MARTINELLI, President of the extreme "hardline", rightist organization LIDER, and formerly officer in charge of a military police investigation (IPM) into communist subversion, whose disciplinary imprisonment last June caused a nationwide sensation. Professor Alexander said that Martinelli informed him that LIDER aimed to depose President CASTELLO BRANCO soon and planned to install a thorough going "hardline" Federal Government, eventually under Carlos LACERDA. A memorandum of the conversation is enclosed.

Niles W. Bond
 Minister Consul General

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POL:FJHaendler:11 11/19/65

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: LIDER Planning Deposition of President

PARTICIPANTS: Professor Robert J. Alexander
Jack Liebof, Labor Officer
Frank J. Haendler, Political Officer

PLACE: American Consulate General São Paulo

DATE: November 19, 1965

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Professor Alexander said that he visited Colonel Martinelli to discuss the present national political situation. He recounted that Martinelli told him that LIDER's objective is to remove President CASTELLO BRANCO from office. He said Martinelli added that if Castello Branco was still President on December 6, the day after Guanabara Governor-elect NEGRÃO DE LIMA is to assume office, he can stay on as President as long as he wishes. However, Martinelli assured him, he will no longer be in office by December 6 because LIDER and its "hardline" allies will remove him, by force if necessary. According to Colonel Martinelli the "hardline" is stronger now than ever before and its main force is coming, not from colonels and generals, but from lieutenants and captains who favor a thorough political cleanup.

In Martinelli's view only one man is capable of being President of Brazil--Carlos LACERDA. As far as General COSTA e SILVA is concerned, LIDER believes that he is largely an unknown quantity. He claimed that no one really knows what Costa e Silva believes, what he really thinks and what he wants. Costa e Silva would be acceptable to LIDER only as an interim President of Brazil; eventually Lacerda must succeed him.

In discussing the Second Institutional Act Martinelli made it clear that LIDER was not satisfied with either its content or its implementation. According to Professor Alexander, Martinelli said that several clauses LIDER favored and which LIDER was assured would be included, were removed by the President. Martinelli implied that when Castello Branco was replaced the clauses would be inserted and the Act in its entirety would be put into effect. In commenting on his conversation with Martinelli, the Professor mentioned that he has noticed a revival of integralismo, a fascist-type movement which reached its highpoint in Brazil in the late 1930s.

COMMENT : In São Paulo, extreme "hardliners" have warned the Congen that the days immediately proceeding December 5 may well bring a political crisis. They claim that the "hardline" is determined to prevent the empowering of Governor-elect Negrão de Lima. If the IPM before which Negrão is scheduled to testify does not elicit sufficient evidence to prevent his inauguration, they say that the Federal Government will be forced to do so, just as it was forced to promulgate

the Second Institutional Act. If this would mean the resignation of President Castello Branco, so much the better, according to São Paulo extremists. They would like to see the President replaced in any case, since in their opinion he is too soft and moderate to eradicate once and for all corruption and subversion from the nation.

From this vantage point the Congen cannot offer any opinion as to whether the extreme "hardline" and LIDER has sufficient strength to realize the objectives enumerated by Colonel Martinelli. Embassy Rio may wish to evaluate the Colonel's remarks and assess the seriousness of the threat LIDER and its followers may pose to the continuation of the President in office. In any maneuvers such as those evidently projected by Martinelli, São Paulo extreme "hardliners" would be relegated to the role of fascinated bystanders with the action really taking place in Rio and/or Brasilia.

In the opinion of the attached São Paulo observer, the Second Institutional Act is not likely to cut short the terms of office of any of the major São Paulo political figures. The observer is a former member of the Second Army Command and the observer is Theodore Quintin, a 45-year-old lawyer and civic leader who is not affiliated with any of Brazil's political parties or lines and whose long-term opinion is one of long-term optimism. His views are outlined in the attached memorandum of conversation.

Walter E. Hall
Military Attaché General

Attachment:

Memorandum of Conversation

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