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MEMORANDUM TO THE UNDER SECRETARY

THROUGH: S/S

FROM: ARA - Mr. Martin

Attached is "A Contingency Plan for Brazil" which has been worked out in cooperation with Ambassador Gordon. I would appreciate your suggestions and approval before seeking appropriate inter-agency views and clearances.

ACTION MEMORANDUM

Attachment:  
"A Contingency Plan  
for Brazil".

*orig handled as  
Read to Bundy 1/6/64  
S/S#245*

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BRAZ

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B. A. Funder NARA Date 5/5/96

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A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR BRAZIL

As used herein, contingency refers to any ~~major~~ attempt to ~~regime~~ significantly change, by violence or otherwise, the character of the regime governing Brazil. This paper should not be construed as predicting that the Goulart Regime as presently constituted will be overthrown. Nor is it the policy of the U.S. Government to attempt to bring about the overthrow of the Goulart Regime.

Some Underlying Assumptions

1. Contingency is not intended to describe rightist coup plottings such as have been occurring recently in Brazil. Given the existing constitutional democratic regime, it is difficult to conceive of any significant change in U.S. posture ~~with~~ these various coup plottings. U.S. association with such plottings should be avoided as ~~basic~~ basic policy because (a) it could be construed as U.S. intervention by Goulart - a situation which would be damaging to U.S. interests (b) such plottings can be used as a pretext by Goulart to strengthen his own powers. It will of course be necessary that the U.S. maintain covert contact with the various anti-Goulart groups for the purpose of intelligence collection and for the exercise of a moderating influence, where appropriate.

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2. Any change in the existing constitutional democratic regime is highly unlikely if such change is opposed by the bulk of the armed forces. If the military forces are substantially united they can be a decisive force for or against a basic change in the character of the existing regime. A contingency can take on serious proportions therefore only as it is supported by the military or involves a significant division within the armed forces. Without significant division in the armed forces any revolt from the right or left can be put down by them.

3. A democratically inclined group seeking to attain or maintain national leadership in Brazil would not be reluctant to request overt U.S. intervention or support, unless (a) There were clear indications of Soviet or Cuban intervention or (b) They became convinced that U.S. support would be insufficient to prevent Communist control of the country. It is more than likely, however, that the U.S. would be asked for some form of covert support. (Caution would need to be exercised on our part against the loose use of the Communist label.)

#### Alternative Contingencies

Against the foregoing background, the following alternative contingencies deserve consideration:

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- (a) An extreme leftist revolt against the Goulart regime, having the support of a segment of the armed forces. Any sizeable amount of Brazilian military support to such an extreme left revolt is highly unlikely, given the combination of commitments entailed, i.e., support to the extreme left and opposition against the constitutional regime. In view of this, such a revolt could be serious but most likely not threatening to the regime, except as it might lead to alternative (c) below.
- (b) Overt, organized resistance by sizeable democratic forces, with considerable military support, against Goulart effort to seize authoritarian power. This would most likely occur in response to national intervention into one or more states, the closing of Congress, or some other action widely regarded as a mortal threat to democracy or as unconstitutional. The move by Goulart would probably be toward a Peronist, rather than a communist, type dictatorship although entailing dangerous and potentially explosive will accommodations and alliances with the extreme left over Government which Goulart may not be able to maintain effective control. to encourage both the continuation of extremist divisions and a serious approach to constructive reform by the Brazilian government. It seems unlikely, however, that the help of U.S. forces could be requested. Any advance preparation for such U.S. assistance would be governed by the same limitations that are set forth in "B" below.

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If one were to attempt an assessment of likelihood, this  
(c) The removal of Goulart by the military or by other forces  
contingency would seem to be the least likely of those presented  
in order to obtain a "more effective" national leadership.  
In this paper because of the extreme reluctance of a large portion  
Goulart could be "persuaded" to resign, could be made to  
of the left to go it alone and the improbability that any signi-  
"see the handwriting on the wall" - in short, willingly  
ficient element of the military would support such an attempt,  
or unwillingly, be forced to make way for a successor.

B. Democratic Revolt Against Evils of Goulart:

This would most likely derive from a state of accumulated

This implies the possibility of civil war or at least a clash  
collective exasperation over a progressively more disturbing  
between democratic forces and the incumbent Goulart regime. In  
political and economic chaos.

Such a circumstance we should carefully obtain from giving support  
(d) A gradual takeover by extreme leftists ultranationalists

to Goulart by public demonstration, by arms supply, or in any other  
with or without Goulart collaboration accompanied by the  
way. We should maintain an initial non-interventionist posture  
neutralization or fractionalization of the armed forces

but at the same time seek ways and means of assisting the democratic  
and therefore meeting only token or ineffective resistance.

forces. Such actions would be limited by the degree to which they  
In this situation elements of the extreme left would con-

were solicited and could be put in an internationally acceptable form.  
time moving into positions of authority without creating

If a significant part of the national territory were held by the  
a sufficiently firm, substantial and clear cut issue against  
democratic forces, formation of an alternative provisional government  
which an effective opposition could be mounted.

Such support help would be highly desirable. In such a case, the  
A. Extreme Leftist Revolt:

United States might well be willing to provide covert or even overt  
In this situation, it can be expected that the United States

will condemn the revolt, will give arms and other help to the

Government of Brazil if requested, and will exploit the experience

to encourage both the containment of extremist excesses and a

serious approach to constructive reform by the Brazilian government.

It seems unlikely, however, that the help of U.S. forces would be

requested. Any advance preparation for such U.S. assistance would

be governed by the same limitations that are set forth in "B" below.

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If one were to attempt an assessment of likelihood, this contingency would seem to be the least likely of those presented in this paper because of the extreme reluctance of a large portion of the left to go it alone and the improbability that any significant element of the military would support ~~such~~ an attempt.

B. Democratic Revolt Against Excesses of Regime:

This implies the possibility of civil war or at least a clash between democratic forces and the incumbent Goulart regime. In such circumstance we should carefully abstain from giving support to Goulart by public pronouncement, by arms supply, or in any other way. We should maintain an initial non-interventionist posture but at the same time seek ways and means of assisting the democratic forces. Such actions would be limited by the degree to which they were solicited and could be put in an internationally acceptable form. If a significant part of the national territory were held by the democratic forces, formation of an alternative provisional government to request help would be highly desirable. In such a case, the United States might well be willing to provide covert or even overt support, particularly logistical support (POL, food, arms and ammunition) but to intervene with forces only if there were clear evidence of Soviet Bloc or Cuban intervention on the other side.

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Planning and preparation against this contingency should be undertaken. However caution must be exercised against taking preparatory steps which would be susceptible to being prematurely discovered and identified as U.S. preparations to intervene covertly or overtly in Brazil. This could provoke the kinds of developments in Brazil that we are trying to prevent and would be seriously damaging to the United States in its relationships in Brazil, the hemisphere and beyond. Furthermore any action to provide armed support should be specifically and politically determined by a careful assessment of the circumstances of the moment and should not be triggered by a predetermined or predefined set of circumstances.

C. Removal of Goulart by Constructive Forces:

This could take place in a variety of ways. No problem would be raised for U.S. policy in the event of a constitutionally contrived change, with Goulart "persuaded" to withdraw and President of the Chamber of Deputies Ranieri Mazilli constitutionally succeeding him until the Congress within thirty days elects a new president under the Constitution. But the change might take other forms, including an interim military takeover. In the latter circumstance, we should take a constructive friendly attitude and at the same time press for a quick return to constitutional democratic processes; being prepared to give quick support and assistance

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to the new regime as soon as it is sufficiently committed to a return to democratic processes.

D. Gradual Extreme Leftist Takeover:

It will be extremely difficult in such a situation to contrive an effective policy toward Brazil. It should be our objective to bring the preponderant more moderate and democratic elements in Brazil back into control. Brazil is a very large country and cannot too easily be "pushed around." Therefore the forces for change will have to come from within. The difficulty of contriving an effective policy for this contingency adds to the importance of doing everything possible to prevent it from arising. This is the central objective of the September 30 IAPC paper.

Outside Communist Support:

If under this or any other contingency there was clear evidence of outside support from Soviet bloc, Chinese Communist or Cuban sources, alone or with OAS agreement, we should overtly condemn this intervention and seek ways to stop it.

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