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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# AIRGRAM

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JAN 19 1964 PM 3 17 *Jm*

TO :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO: RIO DE JANEIRO

RM/AN  
ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION  
BRANCH

FROM : AmConGen RECIFE

DATE: January 8, 1964

SUBJECT: Interview with Djalma Maranhao, Mayor of Natal, RGN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BUREAU OF  
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
JAN 20 1964  
Action  
ARA:LA/BR  
R. Burton  
FEB 12 1964

REF

During a recent visit to Natal, RGN, an officer of the Consulate General went to the Prefeitura to pay a courtesy call on Mayor Djalma MARANHAO. Since the Mayor was not present, the officer was met by Otavo Joao GALVAO, Chefe da Gabinete da Prefeitura, and an hour-long discussion ensued. As the officer was about to depart from the Prefeitura, the Mayor arrived and, after being introduced, with a warm abraço invited the officer into the private office. As reported in the attached memorandum of conversation, Maranhao expressed the following ideas:

- A. His willingness to meet with any foreign dignitary and his "politica nacionalista";
- B. The progress which Natal has achieved under Maranhao's administration;
- C. His deep admiration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

*Edward J. Rowell*

Edward J. Rowell  
Minister Consul General

Enclosure: *att*

Memorandum of Conversation.

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FORM 8-62 DS-323

Drafted by: *[Signature]*  
PJdeVos:je

Contents and Classification Approved by:

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PLACE: Prefeitura of Natal, Rio Grande do Norte

DATE: December 10, 1963

SUBJECT: Djalma Maranhao's Nationalistic Approach

PARTICIPANTS: Djalma Maranhao - Mayor of Natal  
Otavo Joao Galvao - Chefe da Gabinete  
da Prefeitura  
Peter Jon de Vos - American Vice Consul

A. After being seated, the reporting officer explained that he was visiting Natal to familiarize himself with the city and its people. Mayor Maranhao replied that he was glad to have the opportunity to welcome "an American Vice Consul" at the Prefeitura. When informed that the Minister Consul General in Recife would visit RGN in the near future, the Mayor expressed his interest in receiving any foreign official from "Russia, China or the United States", and promised a warm reception during the forthcoming visit. Maranhao then went on to declare himself a "nacionalista" and grew rather agitated venting his feelings against imperialism and foreign intervention in Brazil's domestic affairs. He further alleged that in the past the United States had intervened in Brazilian affairs. When the reporting officer protested that the United States had absolutely no interest in interfering in Brazil's affairs, Maranhao lost his composure and grew visibly angry. The Mayor quickly regained his temper, however, and reiterated his willingness to meet with the Minister Consul General.

B. The topic of conversation was then changed to the progress which Natal has made during Maranhao's administration. The index of progress used by the Mayor was the showy public works program undertaken by the city's administration. By far the most lavish and expensive project is the indoor Sports Palace nearing completion. The Sports Palace is the pride of the Natalese who does not mince words in informing the visitor about the edifice. The Mayor also pointed out the new bus terminal, the public market, the Concha Acoustica (a public speaking platform), and the art museum, as evidence of his accomplishments while in office. The reporting officer suggested that, while the aforementioned projects were nice additions to Natal, there were many important social needs

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pressing in the city. Maranhao agreed that there was still much to be done, and then talked of his educational program. The city has a campaign, "Com Pe No Chão Tambem Se Aprende Ler", which encompasses adult and child education courses and classroom construction. "We open a new school every Thursday", the Mayor boasted, "and the thatched roofs are being rapidly replaced by brick buildings with tile roofs." He also denied rumors that he was exporting his education program together with its political connotations to certain interior towns, but boasted that the OAS had expressed a definite interest in Natal's system of mass education. Although not completely satisfactory, Maranhao commented that there were now sufficient schools to permit an emphasis next year on a health program which is envisaged as the construction about the city of various health centers staffed with doctors and nurses. All of the Mayor's comments were punctuated with the remark that "The project is being built with our own money (com nosso dinheiro)", and he clearly showed his disdain for the Alliance for Progress.

C. Before concluding the interview Maranhao pointed to three large photographs hanging on the wall of the office. One photograph was of Getulio Vargas, one of a local hero named Camarao, and one was of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The Mayor expressed his deep admiration for Roosevelt as a true statesman who had done much to further U.S.-Latin American relations. The Mayor stated he had seen Roosevelt from a distance when the President visited Natal during World War II, and was inspired by FDR's figure. As a concluding remark, Djalma Maranhao mentioned that if Roosevelt were President today, the world would be in better condition. During the entire conversation, Maranhao failed to mention John F. Kennedy or offer his personal condolences at the death of the late President.