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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

1966 AUG 18 PM 4 41

INFO : Amembassy RIO, Amembassy Office BRASILIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
AUG 22 1966

RS/AN ANALYSIS BRANCH

FROM : Amcongen RECIFE

DATE: August 15, 1966

SUBJECT : New Cassations Predicted

REF : Recife tel 64 to Department dated July 26, 1966

Summary

1. New losses of mandates and political rights may be expected in the new future, as the Brazilian government acts to prevent "corrupt" politicians from holding public office. In the Northeast, at least four well-known figures will be affected by the government action, including Rio Grande do Norte's former governor, Aluisio Alves. These predictions were made to the reporting officer by General Antonio Muricy, commander of the 7th Military Region. Muricy, who was a leading candidate for the ARENA gubernatorial nomination in May of this year, is rumored to be the next commander of the Third Army in Porto Alegre.

Four Northeastern Politicians Threatened

2. During a discussion of the government's role in the coming elections, Muricy said that he "would bet" on new government cassations in the near future. All of those affected, he said, would be either corrupt or subversive. In the Northeast, four public figures will be affected. The four are: Aluisio Alves, former governor of Rio Grande do Norte and expected ARENA candidate for Senator from that state; Pedro Gondim, ex-governor of Paraiba and rumored Federal Deputy candidate; Severino Cabral, incumbent vice governor of Paraiba and Ademar da Costa Carvalho, Federal Deputy from Pernambuco who recently was forced upon the state MDB organization by the party's national leadership (see Recife's A-157).

Group 4

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In Out

FORM 4-62 DS-323

Drafted by: WPKelly:ss 8/15/66

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3. According to Muricy, all four are "corrupt" and there is no doubt regarding their imminent cassation. He implied that this list is only partial and that others in the region will also lose their political rights. Regarding Aluisio Alves, Muricy said unequivocally that Alves was corrupt, that both the Fourth Army and the SNI had proof of this and that, contrary to recent press reports, the government really intended to act against Alves and not to merely pressure him to withdraw from the Senate race.

Political Blackmail Practiced By Fourth Army and SNI

4. Concerning cassations in general, Muricy gave a rather chilling account of government investigation of politicians suspected of corruption or subversion and described in detail how this information is used for political coercion. The point of this surprisingly frank disclosure was to demonstrate the revolution's determination at preventing corrupt or subversive politicians from ever again holding public office. In most cases, Muricy said, the government simply prepares complete dossiers on each man and awaits an opportunity to use the information. Generally, it uses nothing more than pressure and persuasion aimed at preventing a candidacy or influencing some political action. In cases of a serious nature however, mandates and political rights are cancelled.

Comment

5. Muricy's statements are almost identical to the information furnished by a SNI source and reported in the Congen's 64 to the Department 88 to Rio de Janeiro and 1 to Brasilia. There is no doubt that both Muricy and the SNI source sincerely want their stories to be true and it is probably justifiable to believe that the Fourth Army and the SNI have, in fact, requested the cassation of Alves and others. What remains to be seen is whether or not Castello Branco will concur with the recommendations.

6. The government's removal of Adhemar de Barros in Sao Paulo seems to offer ample proof of its ability to go after even very big fish without too many adverse consequences. If similar action is taken here against Aluisio Alves and Pedro Gondim, it could probably be carried off in almost identical fashion but the government would have to run the risk of defeat in the Rio Grande Do Norte Senatorial race. Alves still maintains a charismatic appeal that charms thousands of voters in that state and his removal would certainly not win any votes for ARENA.

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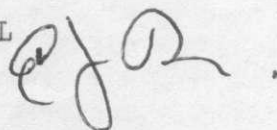
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7. On the opposition side, cassations would probably have an effect of profound frustrations in MDB circles, giving the party a powerful campaign issue by bringing Castello Branco's "dictatorial" methods close to home while simultaneously making it even more risky to raise the issue at all.

8. Perhaps the most interesting thing regarding the cassations is Muricy's willingness to admit the Army and SNI role in what is, in effect, political blackmail. An identical explanation of the methods used was given to the ConGen by the SNI agent mentioned in the referenced telegram.

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