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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# AIRGRAM

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE 1964 APR 17 PM 2 30

INFO : RIO DE JANEIRO

RM/AN  
 ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION  
 BRANCH

FROM : AmConGen RECIFE

DATE: April 8, 1964

SUBJECT : RGN Capital Passes a Quiet Revolution and the Mayor's Chair

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 BUREAU OF  
 INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
 APR 20 1964

In Natal, capital of Rio Grande do Norte, the first sparks of revolution flew on the morning of Friday, March 27, when approximately 300 sailors on the Naval Base went on a sit-down strike in their barracks. The sailors were demonstrating in sympathy with their colleagues hiding in the Metal Workers Union in Rio and, apparently following the instruction of the Association of Sailors and Naval Marines, in complete silence refused to heed the orders of their superior officers to report for work. The new commander of the Natal Naval Base, Rear Admiral Mario Calvacanti de ALBUQUERQUE, appealed personally to the enlisted men to cease the strike. When the Admiral was rebuffed by the sailors, he ordered the men to be placed under arrest and departed from the barracks.

Upon Albuquerque's departure, the sailors attempted to flee the barracks which had been surrounded by the Military Police. In the confusion, a single shot rang out (according to observers, the bullet lodged in the ceiling of the barracks) and brought a sudden collapse to the exodus, restoring immediate order. The sailors then called off their strike and normalcy returned to the Naval Base by evening. The only sailor known to have been jailed was Raimundo Mendes BASTOS who reportedly attacked an officer during the fracas. Admiral Albuquerque promised an investigation of the events surrounding the insubordination.

The city remained quiet until the early hours of April 1, when leftist-nationalist Mayor Djalma MARANHÃO turned the Prefeitura (City Hall) into the Quartel Geral da Luta Pela Legalidade (headquarters) of the national-leftist forces and

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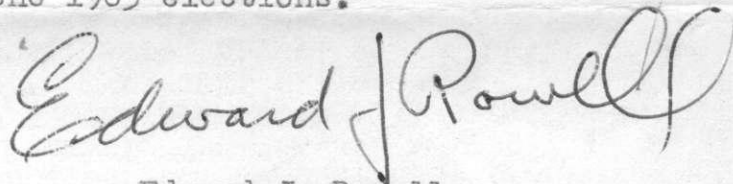
Contents and Classification Approved by:

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 Authority NND 959000

fired off a telegram in which he vowed his support to President GOULART. The Sindicatos Rurais also cabled their support to the President, but the railroad workers were the only labor group to heed the local CGT's call to a general strike. Shortly after General Alves BASTOS issued his statement in Recife that the IV Army was joining the revolution, local Army units occupied the strategic areas of the city. Immediately the local Navy and Air Force declared their adherence to the revolution. It was not until about 9:00 P.M., however, that the Prefeitura was seized by the Army and Maranhao was placed under careful surveillance, although he was not yet arrested. While both the state Legislative Assembly and the Municipal Council went on "24-hour alert", Governor Aluisio ALVES, somewhat tardily, announced his support of the revolution and added that the Goulart administration had contributed substantially to the development of Rio Grande do Norte. Various labor union headquarters were occupied by the authorities and several known agitators were arrested, but there was no unusual violence reported.

On April 2, Maranhao and Vice Mayor Luis GONZAGA dos Santos were detained by the military authorities, and the Municipal Council was informed that both men were unable to discharge their official duties. At 11:00 P.M. the Council voted to impeach both Maranhao and Gonzaga, and at 2:00 P.M., April 4, vereadores Raimundo ELIPIDIO (PDC) and Eugenio NETO (UDN) were temporarily installed as Mayor and Vice Mayor respectively. The city remained calm and the military forces remained in control of the situation.

Monday, April 6, the City Council voted Tercio RABELLO to be the Mayor of Natal, and Elipidio was then selected as the Vice Mayor. Rabello, a retired Naval Admiral employed with the research and planning Companhia de Desenvolvimento do RGN (CODERN) as well as being a former President of the Brazil-United States Cultural Center, began to make his first appointments, and, although the "clean-up" of communists continues, the city hopefully has passed the mayor's chair for the last time until the 1965 elections.



Edward J. Rowell  
Minister Consul General

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