

# IRC Processing GREEN SHEET

IRC Project: 3489

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Date Withdrawn: 5/15/09  
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Tab: 26

*sanitized copy attached 24 June 2014*

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Authority Section 3.3 of E.O. 12958, as amended

Initials: TB



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Department of State  
**TELEGRAM**

(XR POL 13-6)  
DOM HELDER (26)  
~~POL 29~~  
POL 29

INDICATE:  
 COLLECT  
 CHARGE TO

DISTRIBUTION

ACTION: Amembassy RIO DE JANEIRO

November 18, 1969 7

INFO: Amembassy Office BRASILIA  
Amconsul SAO PAULO  
~~Amconsul PORTO ALEGRE~~

5: PM

RECIFE 1174 Rio Pouch PORTO ALEGRE

To Actn Inf Init Dom Hélder's Views on Recent Arrests Clergymen  
SUBJ: ~~Arrest Rector Recife Institute of Theology~~

PO  REF: Porto Alegre 291; [ ]

EO50x1

POL R   
ECON  1. ConGen political officer spoke with Archbishop Dom Hélder Câmara  
CONS  November 18 regarding arrest in Rio Grande do Sul of Msgr. Marcelo  
ADM  Pinto Cavalheira, Rector Recife Institute Theology for allegedly  
AID  having helped give asylum to persons sought in connection with  
USIS  Marighella group. Cavalheira in Rio Grande do Sul past months  
PC   
RF  taking courses.  
FILE

Action Taken: 2. Dom Hélder described Cavalheira as his "finest, most capable priest" and flatly rejected idea that he guilty subversion of any kind. Stated that with "arch-conservative" like Porto Alegre Archbishop offering support and "protection" to Cavalheira it should be clear he innocent any involvement with terrorists. Dom Hélder expressed gratitude Porto Alegre Archbishop's assistance which he believes has saved Cavalheira from questioning under torture.

DRAFTED BY: POL: DMcLain: jbs DRAFTING DATE: 11/18/69 TEL. EXT. APPROVED BY:

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ACTION:

Noted bitterly Cavalheira not specifically accused any crime and criticized detention as utterly contrary law and democratic practice. Dom Hélder said in spite conviction Cavalheira's innocence he feared truth would not <sup>come</sup> out due controlled press and star chamber procedures and Cavalheira might be ~~fairly~~ unjustly convicted some crime.

~~3. In November 16 issue pastoral bulletin published by Dom Hélder, confidence expressed his innocence and support for him by "innumerable" bishops, priests, and laymen claimed.~~

~~On overall question regarding involvement priests and~~

Brothers with terrorist groups Dom Hélder expressed entire support statement São Paulo Archbishop Rossi as published in O Globo November 11 which rejected violence and terrorism, claimed no special privileges for clergy, but insisted on respect for human and legal rights ~~for~~ of Dom Hélder accused. However ~~he~~ said government deliberately making wild, vague accusations against clergy involved in order implicate all liberal churchmen.

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ACTION:

4. <sup>4</sup> [S.] Dom Hélder denied press reports he had described excommunication two police officials by Riberão Preto Archbishop as "ridiculous." Said had made no statement to anyone on subject and this example of "communist-fascist" tactics against him ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> government controlled press ~~against him~~. Added that Archbishop Riberão Preto had sent him message saying torture of clergy there by police established beyond doubt. <sup>Said</sup> ~~That~~ these officers automatically excommunicated under canon law by own acts and that Archbishop Riberão Preto had not formally excommunicated them since unnecessary.

5. <sup>5</sup> [S.] During discussion worsening relations between regime and church Dom Hélder said foresaw no possibility open rupture. Said although military not "overly intelligent" they realized any concerted move against church would bring all clergy into opposition. Rather belligerently said "just let them arrest one bishop and they will see class solidarity in church of type they so proud <sup>of</sup> within military."

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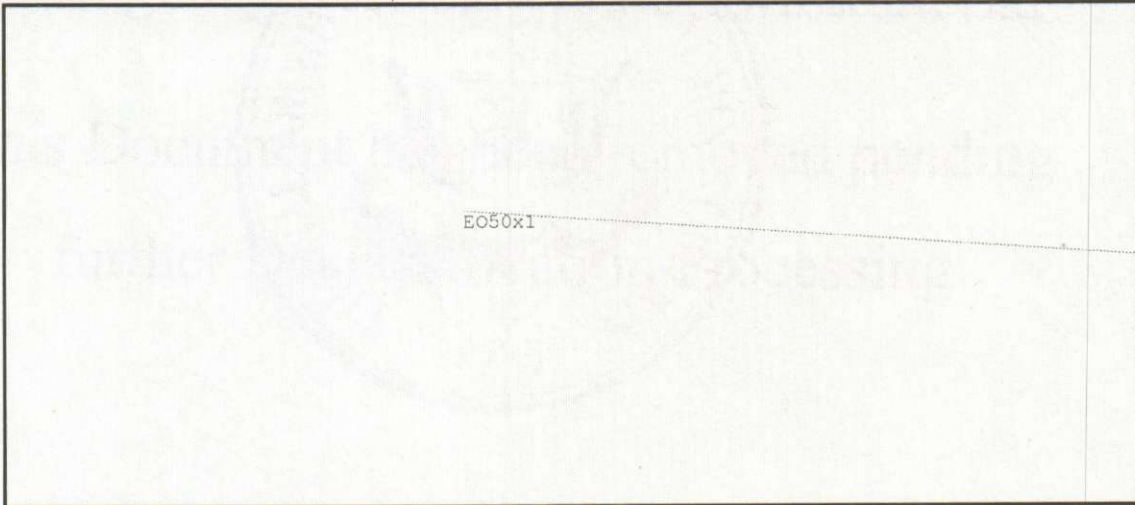
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ACTION:

6.  
7. COMMENT: Cavalheira believed espouse ~~same~~ /liberal  
views Dom Hélder although never attracted widespread notice this  
regard in Recife. In spite harshness words and ~~militant~~ <sup>militant</sup> expressions  
Dom Hélder, he ~~no~~ tranquil in manner during conversation  
and gave ~~no indication he intends~~ <sup>no indication he intends</sup> ~~[impression-he-has-no-intention]~~ inject himself into  
controversy at this moment.

~~XXXX~~



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MCLAIN

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