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Joe 12-1 Bray  
XR Pal 13-2 Bray  
XR Pal 15-7 Bray  
**TELEGRAM**

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*Rec 4 196  
5/28/69*

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ACTION ARA 16

INFO OCT 01, CIAE 00, DODE 00, JPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,

P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, USIA 12, AID 28, CU 04, PC 04, NIC 01, RSR 01,

/120 W

108773

P R 282035Z MAY 69  
FM AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8720  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMCONSUL RECIFE  
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO  
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIO DE JANEIRO 4146

SUBJECT: MURDER OF RECIFE PRIEST

REF: RECIFE 542

1. JORNAL DO BRASIL MAY 28 PUBLISHED STORY FROM ITS RECIFE CORRESPONDENT ON MURDER RECIFE PRIEST (REFTEL) WHICH REPORTS STRONG REACTION DOM HELDER CAMARA TO CRIME.

2. STORY SAYS DOM HELDER SAW KILLING AS "WORK OF THOSE WHO THINK THEY SAVING CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION THROUGH ELIMINATION OF PRIESTS AND STUDENT LEADERS," AND THAT HE RELATED CRIME TO RECENT ATTEMPT AGAINST STUDENT CANDIDO PINTO AND LAMENTED "WORST OF THIS IS THAT IT IS NOT GOING TO STOP. FATHER HENRIQUE WAS ON LIST OF 32 NAMES OF PERSONS MARKED FOR DEATH." (FOR ANOTHER REFERENCE THIS LIST SEE RECIFE A-48.)

3. DOM HELDER REPORTED ALSO TO HAVE INDICATED EXPECTATION "FICTITIOUS VERSIONS" WOULD DEVELOP CONCERNING CRIME, "FOR HE WHO HAS COURAGE TO COMMIT IT WILL ALSO HAVE COURAGE TO INVENT ANY VERSION WHATSOEVER."

4. COMMENT: IF DOM HELDER QUOTED CORRECTLY, HE IS ALREADY ON RECORD AS ATTRIBUTING CRIME TO RIGHT-WING TERRORISTS,

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GENERALLY BELIEVED BE OPERATING UNDER COVER MILITARY OR OTHER  
AUTHORITIES. SERIOUS FURTHER STRAIN ON CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS  
ANTICIPATED IN REGION, QUITE POSSIBLY WITH NATIONAL  
REPERCUSSIONS, UNLESS RECIFE AUTHORITIES CAN PROVE QUICKLY  
AND CONVINCINGLY THAT CRIME NOT POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.  
EVEN WITH SUCH PROOF, DOM HELDER'S FORTHRIGHT PREJUDGMENT OF CASE  
WILL BE FACTOR FOR HEIGHTENED CHURCH-STATE TENSION. BELTON

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