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The Governor Designate of Bahia: Antônio Carlos
Magalhães. The Man and his Prospects as Governor.

SUMMARY: Antônio Carlos Magalhães, is a forty two year old, middle class man who has spent his entire adult life as an energetic participant in Brazilian politics, first with the UDN and then with ARENA. He was a state and federal deputy, but truly distinguished himself only when he became Mayor of Salvador in 1967 and earned a reputation as a dynamic, honest, effective administrator. Antônio Carlos is intelligent, shrewd, ambitious and aggressive. The weakest facet of his personality is an explosive and violent temper. He claims to be a democrat, but believes that Brazil's primary need is for honest, effective government and fears that a premature reopening of the political process would hand power back to incompetent and discredited traditional politicians. Although a member of the traditional political class, Antônio Carlos as Governor is likely to behave more as an administrator-technician than as a traditional politician. With the help of a group of young technocrats he will seek to impress the Federal Government by creating a dynamic, effective administration which will concentrate its efforts on education, livestock production, sanitation and development of mineral resources. He is likely to use the power derived from his being the President's personal choice and his consequent lack of dependence on traditional political groups to solidify his political hold on the state and establish a power base for the future. If he controls his temper, Antônio Carlos could be an excellent governor and an important political figure in Brazil for years.

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I. Introduction. President Medici selected Federal Deputy Antônio Carlos Magalhães, the former Mayor of Salvador, to be the ARENA party candidate for the governorship of Bahia. Inasmuch as the state Legislative Assembly which will indirectly elect the governor is firmly controlled by ARENA, the President's nominee will certainly become governor. This report provides biographic information concerning Antônio Carlos and offers a preview of his administration's intentions. The information herein derives from the reporting officer's general familiarity with Bahian politics and on several lengthy conversations with Antônio Carlos during the last of which the future administration's programs were discussed and the reporting officer outlined what resources might be available to it from USAID and other US sources. A subsequent report will describe to the extent possible the process by which Antônio Carlos was selected to become governor.

II. Background. Antônio Carlos Magalhães was born in Salvador on September 4, 1927, the son of a middle class professor. He was educated in Rio and Salvador and graduated from the Medical School of the Federal University of Bahia in 1952. He is married to the former Arlette Maron; they have four children.

Even while a student Antônio Carlos was more interested in politics than medicine. He became president of the Diretório Central dos Estudantes at the university and was a political reporter for the Diários Associados affiliate in Salvador for several years. His energy and strong, combative personality caught the eye of Juracy Magalhães (no relation), a founder of the União Democrática Nacional and former interventor and governor of Bahia, who took him under his wing. In 1954 he sought and won a seat in the state legislature on the UDN ticket. Four years later he became a federal deputy; he was re-elected in 1958 and 1966. As a deputy Antônio Carlos opposed the faction of the UDN lead by Carlos Lacerda and, although of the opposition party, he supported President Juscelino Kubitschek. In 1959 he supported Juracy Magalhães' candidacy for the UDN presidential nomination but fell in line behind the party's eventual nominee, Jânio Quadros. Subsequently, he became president of the Bahia UDN.

Antônio Carlos was a fervent and vociferous supporter of the 1964 Revolution and, when the traditional political parties were replaced by two artificial new parties, became president of the Bahia branch of the pro-government

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ARENA. While he was a federal deputy he had easy access to President Castelo Branco through the good offices of the president's Chief of Civil Household, Luis Viana Filho, his former colleague on the Bahia delegation to the Chamber of Deputies. Antônio Carlos is very proud of the relationship he had with President Castelo Branco, whom he venerates.

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With the support of Luis Viana, Minister of Justice in the Castelo Branco administration, Antônio Carlos was named Mayor of Salvador by Bahia Governor Antônio Lomanto Junior. (In Brazil mayors of state capitals are appointed, not elected.) He took office on February 13, 1967, and served until April 2, 1970, when he resigned in order to maintain his eligibility for the governorship which he actively sought. (At the last minute the Law of Ineligibilities was changed so that he would not have had to resign to remain eligible to become governor, but he resigned anyway).

His lack of any administrative experience occasioned some criticism of his appointment as mayor, but he surprised his critics by proving himself to be an excellent administrator. His term was certainly one of the most dynamic in the city's history. He built many new public works, chiefly highways and parks, but showed respect for Salvador's colonial artistic tradition. His small but highly competent staff introduced organizational and financial reforms which resulted in greater municipal revenues and lower payroll and overhead expenses. His administration earned a reputation for soundness, honesty, and unbridled energy. His visible achievements, honesty, aggressive refusal to kowtow under to the powerful, whirlwind style and clever use of television gained Antônio Carlos considerable popularity with the middle and lower middle classes of Salvador. His behavior also provoked charges of ruthlessness and demagoguery, however. Nevertheless his excellent overall performance as mayor was the single most important factor contributing to his selection by President Médici to be the next Governor of Bahia.

III. Personal Characteristics. Antônio Carlos Magalhães is only forty two years old, but his silver hair and slight obesity make him appear ten years older. He is definitely a middle class man. He is very achievement oriented and sets great store by middle class values such

as hard work and personal honesty. He feels a strong need to prove himself and readily admits a desire for popular approval and acclaim. Antônio Carlos is distinctly less comfortable among smooth, elegant members of the Brazilian upper class than he is among middle class individuals, especially professional politicians, technocrats and young people.

Although not without polish, Antônio Carlos prefers to be informal and enjoys poking fun and making an occasional cheeking remark or provocative question. He is very direct and will not hesitate to criticize a person vehemently to his face. He demands that his subordinates be energetic, competent, honest and completely loyal, but he is frank and forthright and welcomes other people's views.

The Governor Designate is smart, shrewd, tough, courageous, energetic, ambitious and aggressive to the point of belligerence. He seems to thrive on strife and often over-reacts to what he considers to be malicious or unjust criticism. His most serious handicap as Governor probably will be his flaming temper which has erupted into actual physical violence on several occasions in recent years.

Antônio Carlos' wife, Arlette, is pretty but quite shy and retiring and does not seem to relish the idea of becoming the first lady of Bahia.

IV. Political Attitudes. The political outlook of Antônio Carlos Magalhães is representative of many professional politicians who support the 1954 Revolution. He considers himself to be a democrat and believes that government must be willing and able to respond to the articulated demands of the people. He deplors the diminution of the powers and responsibilities of Brazilian legislative bodies and believes that one indicator of the extent to which Brazil is undemocratic is its failure to create strong, independent, representative legislatures.

On the other hand, he thinks that the traditional pre-1954 political structure failed to produce the effective, dynamic, honest government on which he places a premium and fears that, if the power of the legislatures were restored or the principal executive offices were to be filled by direct elections before social and political reforms were undertaken at the local level, political power would fall back into the irresponsible hands of politicians of the pre-1954 ilk. Given the choice which he believes Brazil

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faces between effective administrators chosen by non-democratic means or democratically elected but incompetent, dishonest or narrowly focused executives, he does not hesitate to opt for the former. However, when asked what should be done to change the system so that more desirable officials could be produced by more democratic processes, Antônio Carlos responds vaguely that the people should be better educated and conditioned to expect more responsible, effective government.

V. Prospects as Governor. When President Médici chose Antônio Carlos Magalhães to be the ARENA candidate for Governor and hence the next Governor of Bahia, traditional professional politicians and their journalistic allies throughout Brazil breathed a sigh of relief. He was the first governor designate whom they considered to be a "natural candidate", that is, a representative of the traditional political class who had sufficient organizational strength to have obtained the ARENA gubernatorial nomination without presidential intervention and sufficient popular support to be elected governor or at least to run a good race in direct elections. With his selection the politicians could take heart that President Médici and the Revolution would not abandon them.

Antônio Carlos may surprise some of his old cohorts, however, by behaving more like an administrator-technocrat than a traditional politician after he assumes the governorship. This will not indicate that he has ceased to be a politician, but rather that he is aware that his most important constituency consists of President Médici, not the traditionally powerful Bahian political groups, and that the President's criteria for judging the success of state administrations are likely to be their strength, dynamism, honesty and contribution to economic and social development.

There are likely to be very few political cronies in Antônio Carlos' cabinet. Although he has spent all his adult life immersed in Brazilian politics, he is essentially a loner who recognizes very few political debts. Furthermore, the present concentration of political power at the state level in the hands of the governor will free him from having to represent traditionally powerful groups in the cabinet. The key figures of his administration will be technocrats many of whom will be under forty years of age.

At present Antônio Carlos is energetically preparing his

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governmental plan with the assistance of a group of young technocrats some of whom will join his cabinet and many of whom have studied in the United States. They believe that the industrialization of Bahia is progressing well and that, even without any innovations by the next administration, will be irreversibly established by the time Antonio Carlos leaves office. Therefore, his administration will concentrate its efforts on education, agricultural (especially livestock) production, sanitation and development of the state's mineral resources. He wants to build a network of rural feeder roads from the main highways which have been constructed during the last two administrations. Antonio Carlos also plans to use his budgetary powers to force the judicial system to be more responsive to the needs of the people. He feels that this is an area in which the post 1964 governments have made little effort and less progress and he believes that reforms would engender popular support.

To satisfy his ambition, to build a solid political base for the future and to facilitate the administrative and developmental efforts of his government, Antonio Carlos is likely to use all the political, patronage and budgetary powers at his disposal to try to bring the entire political structure of Bahia under his direct control. His chances of doing so are good. He has good relations with President Medici and with the military leaders in Bahia. The opposition MDB is very weak. He will inherit most of the supporters of the present governor, his old friend Iair Viana. The traditional political machine of his erstwhile mentor, Juracy Magalhães, which is now controlled by its founder's son, Vice Governor Jutai Magalhães, is still the most powerful group in Bahia in traditional political terms -- it controls one third of Bahia's 36 municipalities -- but its power is largely irrelevant under a system in which the state legislature is weak and tame and the governor is not elected directly and therefore does not have to woo the support of the municipalities. The colorless Jutai's municipalities probably will fall under Antonio Carlos' sway. Probably the most serious challenge to his authority will come from that faction of the ARENA party linked to former governor Antonio Loureiro Junior, who has emerged from political hibernation and is seeking a seat as a federal deputy which he will easily win. Nevertheless, although Loureiro is only in his early forties and is probably the most popular figure in the state, his group has slight organizational strength at present and is unlikely to limit Antonio Carlos' freedom of action significantly.

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In sum, if Antonio Carlos can keep his temper and his ambitions under control, he could be a truly outstanding governor and an important political figure in Brazil for years. He is a dynamic, competent administrator. He has Presidential and military support. He will have almost total political power within the state. He is determined to succeed in a job which he hopes will not be the final step in his political career. He is well attuned to the priorities of the Medici administration and will strive to realize them in Bahia. He has some high quality personnel and his state has begun to lumber out of economic stagnation and thus will provide him with some resources with which to work.

Enclosure:

Picture of Antonio Carlos Magalhães

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