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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION
BRANCH

FROM : AmConsul, SALVADOR

DATE: May 27, 1966

SUBJECT: Biweekly Summary

REF :

- A. Oliveira Brito Leaves the MDB
- B. Mendes Retires from ARENA
- C. Government Leader Shot
- D. Elections in the PETROBRAS Labor Union
- E. Lomanto an Ambassador?
- F. Press

A. Oliveira Brito Leaves the MDB

1. Federal Deputy and ex-PSD leader Oliveira Brito formally broke with MDB and has entered the ranks of ARENA. In a letter to MDB President Regis Pacheco, Brito stated that conditions imposed upon him and his followers by the Executive Cabinet of the MDB in regard to his stand in favor of Luiz Viana's candidacy for the Bahia governorship were intolerable. He also lamented the disappearance of the comprehensive spirit of the PSD in the MDB organization and objected to the decision of the state MDB Directorate to take a stance of opposition to the Lomanto Junior administration, rather than condemn individual acts of the administration.

2. Seven State Deputies of the PSD ranks followed Brito into the ARENA.

3. MDB President Pacheco, in a Manifesto sent to the Bahia MDB organization, stated that the reasons given by Brito for leaving the party were not convincing, and defended the need for party discipline in matters agreed to at party conventions. The tone of the Manifesto was conciliatory and intended to promote loyalty in the remaining ranks of the MDB.

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4. Comment: Brito's determination to support the Luiz Viana candidacy is said to be based on his gratitude to Viana's intercessions in his behalf following the Revolution. It is reported that Brito is involved in at least three political-military inquiry cases and would normally have been deprived of his political rights as a member of the Goulart cabinet were it not for the intervention of Viana and possibly other high officials in the Administration. His entry into ARENA is viewed with considerable disgust by the purists and hard-liners in the organization and will do little to strengthen political loyalty of its membership. Nevertheless, Brito is a national political figure and brings with him into the party a fairly strong contingent of ex-PSD adherents.

B. Mendes Retires from ARENA

5. Federal Deputy João Mendes Filho, whose efforts to gain the governorship of Bahia failed, has announced that he will leave the ranks of the ARENA following the ARENA convention on May 26.

6. Comment: This action is a logical outcome of the frustrations which resulted from Mendes' abortive attempt to counteract the personalistic and autocratic method by which Luiz Viana Filho was selected as ARENA's representative for the governorship. The Consulate has learned that the plot to launch Mendes' candidacy was frustrated because of untimely disclosure. His name was to have been presented to the ARENA State Convention as a carefully prepared surprise maneuver.

C. Government Leader Shot

7. State Deputy José MEDRADO, leader of the Lomanto forces in the Legislative Assembly, was shot during a visit to his home town of Santa Terezinha, where his father is mayor. The attack arose from an altercation with the president of the City Council during a meeting of the Council.

8. Medrado was hit three times at close range. Two bullets traversed his body but he is surviving the incident. All the details are still somewhat hazy but the animosity between Medrado and the Councilman stems from a long political feud exacerbated by post revolutionary incidents. The assailant, who was caught in flight, died the same day from a bullet wound received in circumstances not yet well disclosed, which imply either suicide or a revenge execution on the part of pro-Medrado forces.

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9. Comment: Although this occurrence has shocked the state and will have a detrimental effect on Governor Lomanto's leadership in the Legislative Assembly, it is being viewed more as a local incident with little generalized political ramifications.

10. A few days before the incident, Deputy Medrado received an invitation to visit the United States as a Leader Grantee. He was planning to go to the United States in April of next year. At present it seems unlikely that he will be able to take advantage of his invitation since there is a possibility that he will not regain free use of his legs.

D. Elections in the PETROBRAS Labor Union

11. The Petroleum Extraction Workers of PETROBRAS have been balloting since the 23d of May to determine which of two slates will direct their union. Voting will cease today. Originally three slates were proposed but the candidates of one failed to gain approval of the labor and police authorities. Although efforts have been made by leftist elements to boycott the elections, a fair turnout has been reported and a quorum of ballots is expected. The election has been peaceful, according to latest reports.

E. Lomanto an Ambassador?

12. There have been rumors for some time that Governor Lomanto Junior would like to be nominated Ambassador to Italy or to the Vatican when he leaves office. He has decided not to run for the Senate, although a number of his supporters would like him to do so in order to have him remain active in the political scene. He will have great influence in determining the successor to Senator Aloisio de Carvalho. State Deputy Wilson Lins is hopeful that he may gain Lomanto's support for the post, but this seems doubtful in view of Lins' active part in the João Mendes case.

F. Press

13. Senators Kennedy and Fulbright garnered much free publicity in local newspapers with their theories and alarums about Brazil and Latin America.

14. Friendly A TARDE first averred editorially that the GOB should do some stock-taking when American senators were at pains to criticize. Later, however, the paper agreed with the city's and other dailies in applauding what was considered a "Decisive Reply" by Castello Branco. A TARDE's article used, in fact, uncharacteristically strong language: "The era of Brazil's colonization has passed!"

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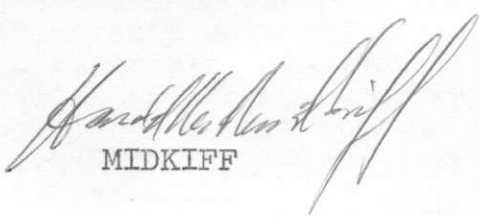
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15. Well - the João Calmon Show finally hit town. The Evangelist came bearing the gospel according to St. Chateaubriand, spoke in the temples of government, excoriated the devils of TIME/LIFE/O GLOBO, and left again trailing clouds of Associados' passionate prose. Calmon spoke to both the Legislative Assembly and the Camara de Vereadores, and on the (happily Associados-owned) TV station. The sound and fury was calmly reported by independent A TARDE and JORNAL DA BAHIA; the city at large, if increasingly aware of Calmon's gospel, continued unaroused.
16. JORNAL DA BAHIA goes on testing its anti-US wings, long-grounded by fear of the Revolution. The US position in Viet Nam arouses JB's fears and criticisms several times a week, and now the Alliance for Progress is getting a working-over via intentional misrepresentation and sarcasm: the German government without any AFP or BID has managed to give Brazil more help than the US; the local highway director couldn't get the AFP people to understand his English well enough to assist in construction of a certain road, but the same language served well enough to gain Swedish assistance.
17. And all papers worried about China's newest nuclear bomb explosion, enjoyed the unusual rain of US satellite parts in Paraná, and noted the involvement of ex-Consul Cecil Cross with bad men in Goias. JORNAL DA BAHIA, naturally, editorialized its accusation of Cross as straw-man for the sale of non-existent lands, evoking the dread names of Dillinger, Capone and "Chicago's international gangster mob".


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