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1. Reaction to Goiás Intervention

During the drawn-out crisis surrounding the figure of PSD Governor Mauro BORGES of Goiás, the dominant attitude here toward the affair was one of anxiety and perplexity. Federal intervention in the neighboring state had been widely predicted after the President's harsh statement regarding the Supreme Court decision, and when it came to pass on November 26 the perplexity about the Government's seeming vacillation in Goiás came to an end.

Popular reaction to the Federal intervention in Goiás was, in the main, slight. As far as could be ascertained, the man in the street did not appear to link the fate of democracy in Brazil to the outcome of the Borges affair; the gist of remarks most often heard

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by Consulate officers was that the Governor was fighting to defend the family fief. Moreover, popular attention was immediately diverted by Carlos LACERDA's attacks on the Government's policies and personnel (see Item 3 below).

In Minas Gerais political circles, perplexity also disappeared in the face of intervention; but a lingering anxiety remained, particularly in the ranks of the state PSD. Although he did not comment publicly on the intervention, Governor MAGALHÃES PINTO got in touch with the Minas Gerais UDN representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, expressing his hope that the Minas bench would uphold the intervention. Most local politicians did not expect the Goiás intervention to set off a chain reaction against state governors, although some PSD leaders differed on this point. The warmest support for the intervention came from the Belo Horizonte press which unanimously welcomed the presidential action in unseating Governor Borges (Contel 12, Info Rio 37). The question of whether the President had capitulated to the (anonymous) hard line in the Goiás case was naturally argued back and forth by political observers. Some saw a presidential surrender, but an equal number asserted that the President had exerted his own will in resolving the affair.

Comment. The prestige of the President and his administration does not appear to have been damaged in Minas as a result of the Goiás intervention.

The principal concrete result of the Goiás intervention here has been the state PSD's worried turnabout on the question of prolonging the gubernatorial term of office. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

2. Prolongation of Gubernatorial Term Passes First Hurdle

For the past several months the State Legislative Assembly has been carrying on a desultory debate over the question of prolonging the gubernatorial term of office from January 1966 to March 1967, to make it coterminous with the term of the President (see weekly summaries). The prolongation idea, first broached in July by the state PTB, was openly stimulated by Magalhães Pinto in September (A-31, September 30, 1964). What the Governor's legislative leadership in the State Assembly was proposing was a state constitutional amendment to make the prolongation possible, but the opposition PSD was successfully obstructing the work of the Assembly to prevent the extension.

Suddenly it was announced on December 1 that the PSD had agreed with Magalhães Pinto's UDN-run coalition that the constitutional amendment could be passed by a simple majority (instead of the two-thirds vote required) voting for it at two separate legislative sessions. On December 5, by a vote of 45-13, the State Assembly approved the first reading of the constitutional amendment extending the terms of the Governor and Vice Governor. Ten of the thirteen negative votes were cast by the PSD (the others came from two PSP Deputies and

one UDN Lacerdista), but the PSD had made the initial approval possible by answering a quorum call and not filibustering. The State Assembly is scheduled to recess on December 10, and will not open again until February 1965, at which time it will again take up the prolongation amendment.

Comment. Political commentators have had a field day arguing back and forth the alleged reasons for the PSD's sudden shift. The most likely reason was succinctly voiced by State Secretary of Government Roberto RESENDE, who told the Consul that "the PSD would rather have [Vice Governor] Clovis SALGADO after 1966 than an Army interventor." It seems highly probable that the state PSD came to this conclusion in the wake of the Goiás intervention, for the party's sudden about-face followed almost immediately on the heels of the unseating of Mauro Borges.

This Magalhães Pinto-PSD deal has other advantages for both sides, and is part of the Governor's quiet pursuit of PSD and PTB support in his unavowed, but obvious, desire for the presidency. As previously noted (A-44, November 25, 1964), Magalhães Pinto hopes to use the accord with the Minas Gerais PSD as an entering wedge for support from the national party. He also seeks to show the CASTELO BRANCO administration that he is a "revolutionary leader" who is capable of attracting support from the other camp. The state PSD will probably get some cabinet positions if and when the extension goes through in 1965.

The main fact that emerges from all this maneuvering is that the state's leading political forces do not expect a gubernatorial election to take place, as currently scheduled, in October 1965. Whether the State Assembly has the right under the Federal constitution to extend a Governor's term is also open to question. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

3. Little Support for Lacerda's Latest Sortie

Governor Lacerda's violent attacks on Cabinet members and his exchange of letters with the President have been in the limelight for the past week. The main result of the bitter exchanges has been erosion of local support for Lacerda.

The Belo Horizonte press has seemingly vied with the Guanabara Governor in seeking vitriolic expressions to express its displeasure with his attitude. Consulate officers have heard little but criticism of Lacerda -- e.g. "a hundred times worse than Jânio," "half-crazy," "a congenital destroyer of Presidents," -- in conversations with persons who might normally have been expected to support him. Local businessmen, in particular, were outspoken in their strictures. Although many are not happy with the Government's financial policies, they still support Castelo Branco and feel that Lacerda's attacks have done only harm. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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4. Leftist Students Gain in University Elections

Left-wing student groups were victorious in a series of elections held at the University of Minas Gerais to choose new leadership for various Academic Directorates (A-47, December 2, 1964). Elections were held at the Schools of Law, Economics, Engineering, and Veterinary Science. The defeated slates were supported by incumbent student leaders who had been placed in office after the March 31 revolt.

Comment. The victory by the left-wing candidates did not come as a surprise, as the left has consistently controlled the Academic Directorates at the University. The newly-elected leaders will probably hold their political activities to a minimum for the present, since the Army is still keeping a close watch on student affairs. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

5. Belo Horizonte Garrison Commander Promoted

The commander of the Belo Horizonte Army garrison, Colonel Dióscoro Gonçalves do VALLE, was promoted to Brigadier General on November 25, along with other officers. Shortly afterwards, it was announced that he would retain command of the Fourth Infantry Division, which is the Belo Horizonte garrison, which command he had been exercising on an interim basis since shortly after the March 31 revolt.

Comment. Valle's promotion was expected. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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