

ORIGIN/ACTION			DEPARTMENT OF STATE			Pal 2 Braz		
ARA-10			AIRGRAM			FOR RM USE ONLY		
A/R			CONFIDENTIAL			AIR POUCH		
RA			NO.			HANDLING INDICATOR		
EA			TO : Department of State			RECEIVED		
E			INFO : BELEM, BELO HORIZONTE, CURITIBA, PORTO ALEGRE, RECIFE, SALVADOR, SAO PAULO			DEPARTMENT OF STATE		
L			FROM : AmEmbassy Office BRASILIA			RS/AN		
GR			SUBJECT : Attitudes of the Military in Minas Gerais			ANALYSIS BRANCH		
VT			REF : 1. Attached is a memorandum from the Consulate in Belo Horizonte concerning military attitudes in Minas Gerais. The memorandum is a companion piece to Brasilia's A-110 of December 8, 1967, and Porto Alegre's A-8 of August 15, 1967, reporting on the military in the states of São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul, respectively.			DATE: February 16, 1968		
R			2. The memorandum reports that the military in Minas Gerais strongly support the administration's policies and are loyal to the President. Dissatisfaction is discerned only within a small group which is worried over Carlos Lacerda and the Frente Ampla. Despite its uneasiness, this group is said to recognize that the President's forbearance toward Lacerda may be the best solution, since drastic action against him might make him a martyr and thereby increase his and the Frente Ampla's popular appeal. This attitude, and the apparent general satisfaction of the military in Minas Gerais with the administration's policies as a whole, are in contrast with reports that hardline elements are strongly pressing the President to move against Lacerda and to make major ministerial and policy changes in his administration.			FEB 21 1968		
RMY			TUTHILL			BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS		
SD			Enclosure: As stated.			FEB 21 1968		
USIA			GROUP 3 - Downgraded at 4 year intervals. Not automatically decontrolled.			POL: Herbert S. Okun		
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Belo Horizonte:WEPrice:drw:2/13/68			POL: Herbert S. Okun					
Clearances:			Action: ARA/BR - NAN - File					
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A-178 - Brasília

Enclosure

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To: Amembassy Office, Brasilia: POL
From: American Consul, BELO HORIZONTE
Subject: Attitudes of the Military in Minas Gerais

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BHZ: 8
AMERICAN EMBASSY
BRASILIA, BRAZIL

1. Summary: There are no basic differences that can be discerned in the attitudes of the Military in Minas Gerais as compared with those reported as prevailing in the States of São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul. In conversations during the past few months with commanding officers and senior and middle grade officers in the Army and Air Force it is evident that all are fervently anti-Communist and determined that Communism will not be permitted to regain a foothold in the country; they are strong supporters of President Costa e Silva and his policies and are of the opinion that he continues to follow and extend policies along the lines as set forth by former President Costello Branco based on what they consider to be the principles of the 1964 Revolution; they stand firmly against dishonesty and corruption in Government and are scornful of politicians they believe to be implicated in nefarious practices which they feel injure the prestige of the Government internally and the country internationally; they are solidly against the granting of amnesty to cassated politicians; they are conscious of the Army's historic role as guardian of the nation's welfare, of the decisive part the Army has taken in the country's Political developments, and the part it played in the 1964 Revolution; and they hold the United States in high esteem and regard it as Brazil's firm friend and ally and the first bulwark of its defense.

2. Attitude Towards President Costa e Silva: There is every evidence that the vast majority of officers feel a sense of loyalty towards President Costa e Silva which is believed to run deeper than a surface loyalty. For the most part officers, especially those in the top and senior echelons can be regarded as "hard-liners." They approve the President's policies and actions as they concern his continuance of the principles of the Revolution, his measures to stabilize the country's economic situation and his program of development, and to control the cost-of-living index.

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Drafted by: WEPrice:t

2/13/68

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While they approve they are watchful, but the President certainly can count on their wholehearted support as long as he follows the principles of the Revolution. Even if he should find it necessary to deviate, and he has a sound reason to do so, he would continue to receive their support. Only in one area do a few officers show some indications of dissatisfaction, and this stems from impatience more than anything else, wherein they favor a more forceful handling of the situation as it relates to LACERDA and the Frente Ampla. But even this small group admits that the President's policy of forbearance in dealing with the thorny problem is probably better than availing himself of a more direct or drastic action. In his defense they reason that such action could tend to make Lacerda a martyr and thus increase his appeal and the appeal of the Frente Ampla to certain politicians and the people, a situation they do not wish to occur.

3. Attitude Towards Communism: Communism is anathema to officers of all grades and, as far as can be ascertained, this holds true of the rank and file. They are ever on the alert to detect and thwart the threat of Communism wherever found. In this connection they are watchful of labor unions, student organizations, and leftist groups which are suspected of organizing subversive activities. Since the guerrilla incident in the Serra de Caparaó region during April 1967 which alerted the Army to this danger, officers have been carefully watching for any recurrence of this situation and are actively training their forces to meet this eventuality. Some of the really "hard-liners" feel that cassation did not go far enough soon enough, but declare that at this point in time cessation as a political weapon should be sparingly and judiciously used. Granting amnesty to cassated politicians, even to Mineiro Juscelino KUBITSCHKE, and certainly not to QUADROS or GOULART, is not advocated, quite the contrary they are adamant in their attitude towards cassation as they believe this would show weakness on the part of the Administration, a weakness which could be exploited and could eventually prepare the way for a return to the pre-1964 Revolution conditions.

4. Attitude Towards the United States: Officers without any known exceptions are friendly towards the United States and genuine admirers of the American military establishment. They go out of their way to make their feelings known to the consular officers. Their cordiality and willingness to cooperate or comply with the slightest request is certainly a refreshing attitude to experience. The older officers are proud of their association as allies serving along side the military forces of the United States in World War II, and others in the recent Santo Domingo crisis. Many have participated in military training programs in the United States and in the Canal Zone. All have glowing memories of their association with military counterparts and of the practical results they derived from the programs.

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The top echelon and many other officers follow closely political events and their implications, and the military actions taking place in Vietnam and Southeast Asia and are sympathetic to the problems the United States faces there.

Officers, while certainly having a sense of nationalism, coupled with patriotism and pride of Service, do not let it unduely cloud their thinking or distort their sense of values as it concerns their attitude towards the United States. That is not to say this ideal condition will always exist because questions are being asked about such issues as the F-5 and Mirage case, the Hudson Institute Survey of the Amazon region, and even the soluble coffee negotiations and how these affect relations between the United States and Brazil. Among younger officers the spirit of nationalism is more pronounced and in this region reflects to some extent the emotion some Mineiros feel in having their mineral deposits exploited by foreign companies.

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