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FROM: Brasilia

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 44, October 5, Noon

PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT 44, POLAD/CINCSO 11, INFORMATION PRIORITY
RIO DE JANEIRO 128.

Chamber adjourned 8:30 p.m. October 4 to reconvene October 7, for consideration of state of siege bill. Over weekend bill will be considered by Justice Committee. Vieira de Mello (PSD-Bahia) is rapporteur. He has informed Embassy he opposes bill.

General atmosphere in Congress at moment is one of opposition, coming principally from 1) UDN which views bill as preliminary to administrative intervention in Guanabara and Sao Paulo; 2) Part of PSD which regards proposal as attempt to usurp or bypass congressional powers and resents attempt to shift blame for crisis to Congress; 3) Rightist Democratic Parliamentary Action (ADP); 4) Leftist Nationalist Parliamentary Front which fears bill might be used against CGT and other Leftist organizations; 5) PSP which is party of Sao Paulo Governor de Barros.

On other hand, factors working in bill's favor are: 1) "Damned if we do and damned if we don't feeling among many congressmen, that is, approval would be capitulation to Goulart yet disapproval would lay congressmen to charge that it is Congress that is responsible for country's difficulties, thus leading to possible illegal action by administration against Congress; 2) strenuous efforts of influential leaders Tancredo Neves and Martins Rodrigues to bring reluctant members of PSD into fold;

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-2- 44, October 5, Noon from Brasilia

fold; 3) possibility that PTB opposition may weaken particularly since right to strike is not one of rights suspended by bill. Other observers however, believe that restriction on right of association could be used against unions. PTB Chamber Leader Bocaiuva Cunha reportedly indicated he would go along with bill as did key Grupo Compacto figure Temperani Pereira. CGT in Rio reportedly now considering its position which will then be reflected by Left in Congress.

Benedito Cotinho, POL writer for Diarios Associados, estimates 40 percent of Congress already committed to oppose bill while 60 percent are undecided.

Key to outcome probably rests with PSD which had large number deputies who still making up their minds. UDN is attempting to mobilize by phone and telegram friendly press, labor, student and business associations throughout country to mount public opinion campaign against bill. Brasilia which normally semi-deserted on weekend is filling with returning congressmen with many informal caucuses being held.

Although difficult pinpoint (#) special powers, it appears that control over censorship, seizure, search etc. could be used against extremist for Right and Left.

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(#) Omission, correction to follow.

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CORRECTION ISSUED: 10-6-63

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CORRECTED PAGE TWO

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-2- 44, October 5, Noon from Brasilia

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