

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Goias Crisis. President Castello Branco told federal deputy last night November 26 that intervention decreed in State of Goias because government had proof Governor Borges was to be figurehead in counter-revolution against regime engineered by Goulart, Brazola and other exiles in Uruguay. President summoned Deputy Euclides Triches, who is leader of PDC with 19 members in Chamber, to explain reasons for intervention and seek support of PDC.

2. President told Triches that at time of March 31 revolution had been impossible set sufficient evidence against Governor Borges to catch him under punitive Article 10 of Institutional Act. During intervening months, according to President, exiles in Uruguay through communists and other leftists in Goias managed to get Governor's ear and convince him that counter-revolution was necessary, that it could be successfully staged, and that he would be President of Brazil after present regime liquidated. Borges is said to have agreed to the plan and to have allowed communists and allies to begin to implement it in sense of selecting training sites, gathering men and arms and starting formation of counter-revolutionary bands. Triches said President claimed have copies secret correspondence between Borges and exiles in Montevideo concerning these plans, appeared absolutely convinced truth of his story and maintained that intervention was only way conspiracy could be nipped in bud and guilty punished.

3. Triches reminded Embassy officer to whom foregoing related

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that Goias had ideal geographical location for launching this type operation, surrounding capital as it does and bordering on large number other Brazilian states. He said few hundred men in each of several localities in state would be sufficient to begin very serious campaign against government and that would be extremely difficult to locate and eliminate guerrillas this type because of enormity of state.

4. Triches said he told President that he should submit all proofs possible to Congress at time he sent message requesting intervention be approved. President also said he would provide all he could without compromising sensitive sources and channels of information. President agreed with Triches that case as presented to Congress must rest on own merits completely and be totally divorced from Supreme Court decision November 23 granting preventive habeas corpus to Borges. In response to question, Triches said army in Goias would now attempt get detailed proof on ground of conspiracy but added that was difficult lay hands on some guilty parties because they had gone into hiding.

5. With respect to congressional action on intervention decree, Triches was of opinion vote would be close but favorable. He estimated virtually all UDN would favor, virtually all PTB against, with majority PSD voting for. He left impression administration wanted to avoid possibility too close vote by securing small party support and therefore summoned Triches to try swing his party's 19 votes in favor. Triches said at present party would vote 12 for and 7 against.

6. Comment: Whatever merits of this matter, Triches left impression he believed President's story in essence true. It is probably not coincidence President called him in, since in addition to leading PDC, Triches is full reserve colonel Brazilian Army and known to be well respected by military circles as well as in congressional circles. He is also member of Chamber of Deputies important committee on national security which may have role to play in processing intervention decree through Congress. He is known to Embassy to be unusually reliable, sober and serious-minded individual, but we cannot rule out possibility in this case of his feeling obliged for many reasons to pretend to accept validity President's presentation.

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7. Story of direct Borges involvement in counter-revolutionary plot and acceptance offer presidency by leftist and communists is difficult to believe. No fool, Borges knew he was under investigation and could ill afford involvement at this time in plot overthrow government, even if he so inclined. Moreover with elimination of principal PSD presidential candidate under Institutional Act, Borges with firm base political support in Goias state and growing national reputation, must have viewed prospects for jump to national political arena as at least as great through future elections as through risky revolutionary attempt. It even hard to believe that President Castello Branco would accept this story, but, if he did, this would go far toward explaining seemingly sudden hardening of his approach to Goias case.

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