

AIRGRAM

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NO.

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO ; RIO DE JANEIRO and RECIFE

FROM : Amconsul, BELEM JM

SUBJECT : LEGISLATIVE MESAS ELECTED IN AMAZONIA

REF : ---

RECEIVED DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MAR 9 12 44 PM 1967

DEPARTMENT OF STATE BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

DATE: March 3, 1967

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1. The legislatures in all the states of Amazonia have now elected their governing boards (mesas). As expected, the elections resulted in the selection of the ARENA-sponsored slate of officers in each state (see enclosure for the composition of the mesas). However, in every state but ACRE, ARENA gave partial representation on the mesa to the MDB—in some states, because of legislative custom, in others, to honor requests from ARENA governors aimed at bettering relations with the opposition. As noted below, the elections gave some indications of future executive-legislative relationships in the respective states.

2. ACRE. The Acre mesa is composed of a wholly new slate of men, who, with the exception of the Assembly President, were elected to the legislature for the first time on November 15. It is probable that they were selected by Governor Jorge Kalume for that very reason, i.e. because of their lack of association with the past administration of Edgard Cerqueira. Cerqueira, himself an ARENA member, was not supported by Kalume and was subsequently beaten in his bid for a Senate seat. His administration, particularly toward the end, was also tainted by rumors of corruption. Thus, the mesa election signified, at least symbolically, a fresh start for the Kalume government.

3. AMAZONAS. The election of the mesa in Amazonas was an obvious result of attempts by Governor Danilo Areosa to demonstrate his claim that he will not heed party labels, if individual deputies are willing to work for the good of the state. He reportedly persuaded the MDB and ARENA to combine on a common slate of officers, and the mesa was later elected unanimously. Areosa's efforts to bring the two groups together and provide for a tranquil legislative period are in direct contrast to those of ex-Governor Arthur Reis who had no use at all for any group in opposi-

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tion, regardless of the personalities concerned. The MDB has already promised to support Areosa's development programs, as long as they are not "partisan" in content.

4. MARANHÃO. The mesa election in Maranhão demonstrated again the bitter opposition of the MDB to the Sarney government. The 31 to 9 ARENA majority followed a long-standing custom of proportional representation on the mesa and included the names of two MDB deputies on its slate. The MDB, however, cast blank ballots at the election, and the two designated deputies later resigned for "party considerations". The fact that neither gave notice of the action before the election is seen as an attempt to embarrass the government and show the MDB's firm and continuing opposition to Sarney. Because of the large ARENA majority, however, Sarney should have little trouble with the legislature. It is likewise evident that the small, but vocal MDB will attempt to discredit Sarney at every turn and take advantage of governmental errors, which will, almost naturally, come.

5. PARÁ. In Pará, the MDB has continually stressed its support for the government of Alacid Nunes. The listing of an MDB member on the ARENA list was a symbolic gesture, probably made at the insistence of the Governor, as there had not been a past history of proportional representation for opposition groups on the mesa. The mesa election was a surprising victory for Nunes vis-a-vis the pro-Jarbas Passarinho faction of ARENA. He succeeded in placing his father-in-law and political advisor, Abel Figueiredo, in the top elected Assembly slot. The other members are either pro-Nunes or neutral. One remaining problem is the actual number of deputies to be seated in the Assembly. The case (described in Belém's January Political Summary) is now being handled by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. Since the mesa was elected by a legislature consisting of 41 deputies, the election could be nullified if the Tribunal designates a lower number. Vice Governor Renato Franco, however, told Consulate officers that the Assembly will go on functioning with 41 deputies and that there were good indications that the Tribunal would uphold this number.

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Enclosure to Belém's A-41
dtd 3/3/67 to the Department

LEGISLATIVE MESAS IN AMAZÔNIA

I. ACRE

- a. President - Eloy Abdul (ARENA)
- b. Vice President - Waldy Viana (ARENA)
- c. 1st Secretary - Darcy Fontenele (ARENA)
- d. 2nd Secretary - Francisco Fernandes (ARENA)

II. AMAZONAS

- a. President* - Vice Governor Ruy Araujo (ARENA)
- b. 1st Vice President - Afremon Monteiro (ARENA)
- c. 2nd Vice President - João Valerio (MDB)
- d. 1st Secretary - Augusto Pessôa Montenegro (ARENA)
- e. 2nd Secretary - Tupinambá de Paulo e Souza (ARENA)
- f. 3rd Secretary - Ismael Benigno (MDB)
- g. 4th Secretary - Rafael Faraco (ARENA)

III. MARANHÃO

- a. President - Manoel Gomes (ARENA)
- b. 1st Vice President - Acrisio Viegas (ARENA)
- c. 2nd Vice President - Iolanda de Holanda (MDB-resigned after election)
- d. 1st Secretary - Telemaco Ribeiro (ARENA)
- e. 2nd Secretary - Merval Melo (ARENA)
- f. 3rd Secretary - João Sandes Macedo (MDB-resigned after election)
- g. 4th Secretary - Jose Ribamar Colins (ARENA)

IV. PARÁ

- a. President* - Vice Governor João Renato Franco (ARENA)
- b. 1st Vice President - Abel Figueiredo (ARENA)
- c. 2nd Vice President - Ney Peixoto (ARENA)
- d. 3rd Vice President - Simpliciano Medeiros (ARENA)
- e. 1st Secretary - Alfredo Coelho (ARENA)
- f. 2nd Secretary - Antonio Guimarães (ARENA)
- g. 3rd Secretary - Antonio Mergulhão (ARENA)
- h. 4th Secretary - Santino Sirotheau Corrêa (MDB)

* Note: In Amazonas and Pará, the Vice Governor is automatically President of the Legislative Assembly.

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