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Brasilia 628

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENCY OF CONGRESS

REF: BRASILIA 574

1. WHILE PRESIDING OVER JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS APRIL 12, SEN. MOURA ANDRADE ANNOUNCED AS EXPECTED THAT THE REJECTED ARENA LEADERS' PROPOSAL TO REFORM RULES OF CONGRESS, ON GROUNDS PROPOSAL UNCONSTITUTIONAL. ALSO AS EXPECTED, ARENA LEADER IN CHAMBER, ERNANI SATIRO, APPEALED AGAINST DECISION AND MATTER REFERRED CONSTITUTION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEES OF SENATE AND CHAMBER.

2. MOURA ANDRADE, IN WHAT CAN ONLY BE CHARACTERIZED AS CRAFTY MOVE, HAS CONVOKED JOINT SESSIONS FOR APRIL 11, 12 AND 13--

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PRECISELY DAYS WHEN PEDRO ALEIXO IMPEDED FROM PRESIDING OVER CONGRESS SINCE HE PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC DURING COSTA E SILVA'S ABSENCE IN PUNTA DEL ESTE. IN EXPLAINING HIS DECISION REJECT ARENA PROPOSAL, MOURA ANDRADE MADE SPECTACULAR SPEECH WHICH CAST HIM IN ROLE OF PROTECTOR BOTH OF INDEPENDENCE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH AND OF CONSTITUTION ITSELF. LABELED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING PROPOSAL AS "ABSURD SOPHISM." SESSION ATTENDED BY ABOUT HALF OF MEMBERSHIP SENATE AND CHAMBER, PREDOMINANTLY FROM MDB WHO GREETED SPEECH WITH HEARTY APPLAUSE. ERNANI SATIRO'S REPLY WAS POOR PERFORMANCE WHICH DREW LITTLE SUPPORT FROM AUDIENCE.

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3. COMMENT: DESPITE MOURA ANDRADE'S ABLE HANDLING OF MATTER, STILL APPEARS THAT ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT LOSE THIS BATTLE. CONSTITUTION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEES CONTROLLED BY ARENA AND WILL BE ABLE TO FIND ARGUMENTS FORMALLY TO REBUT MOURA ANDRADE. AS MARIO COVAS, MDB LEADER IN CHAMBER, COMMENTED TO EMBOFFS TODAY, "IT'S DIFFICULT TO SEPARATE JURIDICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS FROM POLITICAL ONES." SINCE COMMITTEES HAVE NO TIME LIMIT FOR PREPARING REPORTS NOR WILL

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MOURA ANDRADE BE UNDER ANY OBLIGATION CALL MATTER BACK TO FLOOR, LOOKS LIKE ISSUE WILL DRAG ON FOR AT LEAST COUPLE MORE WEEKS.

EXEMPT. TUTHILL  
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