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BIOGRAPHIC DATA

BRAZIL

Vice Adm Ernesto de MELLO BAPTISTA

August 1968

(U) NAME: Vice Adm Ernesto de Mello Baptista
(MEH-loh bahp-TEES-tah), Navy.

(U) POSITION: Director General of Hydrography
and Navigation, Navy, since 1 Feb 1966.

(C) SIGNIFICANCE: A volatile and outspoken line officer, he is considered professionally competent. He wielded considerable influence in the navy during the early and middle 1960's, but his influence has waned since 1965 because of his outspoken opposition to administrative policies affecting naval organization. He was strongly opposed to increasing leftism in the navy and took an active role in the Apr 1964 revolt that ousted leftist-tending João Goulart from the presidency. He served as Minister of the Navy from Apr 1964 until Jan 1965, when he resigned because of his outspoken opposition to the administration's proposal to create a Ministry of Defense (which would have reduced navy influence) and because of his dissatisfaction with the resolution of the embarked-aviation problem (the air force was given jurisdiction over all fixed-wing aircraft operating from the navy's aircraft carrier). He was passed over twice for promotion to full Admiral, in 1965 (he publically denounced the administration's promotion policies) and in 1966 (he absented himself from duty for three months in protest). He is a close friend of and is strongly influenced by Adm Levy Penna Aarão Reis (appointed Commandant of the Naval War College 31 Mar 1967).



(U) 1966

(S) POLITICS:

(S) International: Anti-Communist, very friendly towards the United States, and friendly towards all foreign military representatives in Brazil. He openly disagrees with some U.S. policies; he believes the U.S. is trying to mold other countries in its own image and objects to the attitude that what is good for the United States is good for other nations. During World War II, he was a member of the Integralistas, a Fascist-oriented organization.

Declassified Per E.O. 12958
Defense Intelligence Agency
By AX Date 15 Sep 84
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GROUP-3
DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS;
NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED.

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Authority MNDS3094

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(C) Internal: Considered middle-of-the-road in political orientation, he has no apparent party affiliations. He considers himself a nationalist and believes some major industries should be state controlled. Strongly anti-leftist, he refused to serve under Adm Pedro Paulo de Suzano, Minister of the Navy from 1962 to 1963; was one of 15 officers to return the Naval Order of Merit to the Minister of the Navy to protest its being awarded to ultraleftists; and he formally protested actions of Adm Silvio Borges de Motta, Minister of the Navy from 1963 to 1964. He played an active role in the Apr 1964 revolt that ousted leftist-tending João Goulart, President, Sep 1961-Apr 1964.

(C) PERSONAL DATA:

(U) Birth: 15 Dec 1907 in Natal, State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil.

(C) Family: Wife, Ligia Varela de Mello Baptista (may also use Varela; married about 1943; very attractive, charming, always well dressed; speaks some English, very pro-U.S.). Children (3): Gilda Varela (f), born 1 Oct 1944; Paulo Emilio (m), born 8 Aug 1945; Loreley Varela (f), born 16 Apr 1950.

(C) Description: Portly build (5'7", 170 lbs), brown hair, brown eyes, olive complexion; fleshy cheeks and jowls, pronounced nose. Dresses neatly, takes pride in his appearance. Friendly, warm and charming; strong but not dominating personality. Talkative but often vague and philosophical in conversation. Has written many technical articles for navy publications; enjoys Shakespeare, has translated some works into Portuguese. Enjoys social gatherings; drinks very moderately; did not smoke in 1966 although previous reports indicated he was a moderate smoker. Member of the Naval Technical Institute, the Geographic Society and the Portuguese Literary Society. Will respond to judicious flattery.

(U) Languages: Native Portuguese, good Spanish and English.

(U) Religion: Roman Catholic (devout).

(U) Decorations: Brazilian Order of Naval Merit, War Services Medal (2 stars), Admiral Tamandaré Medal of Merit, Military Medal (Gold Clasp).

(U) CIVIL EDUCATION: Attended Externato Burlamiqui Moura and Escuela Polytechnica, both in Rio de Janeiro.

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(U) CAREER:

1925-1928 - Midshipman, Naval Academy, graduating as Probationary Ensign, 20 Dec 1928.

1929 - Commissioned Ensign, 3 Oct 1929.

? - Navigator, cruiser Bahia.

1930 - Instructor, Naval Academy.

1931 - Student, Specialization Course for Fleet Officers, school unidentified. Promoted to Lt (j.g.), 27 Aug 1931.

? - Executive Officer, minelayer Camaquan.

1933 - Promoted to Lt, 16 Aug 1933.

1935 - Student, Hydrography and Navigation Courses, given by Directorate of Hydrography and Navigation.

1942 - Student, U.S. Navy Submarine Chaser Training Center, Miami, and student, U.S. Navy Fleet Sonar School, Key West, Fla.

1943 - Member, Brazilian Naval Commission, Miami, Fla. Promoted to Lt Cdr, 7 May 1943.

? - Officer in Charge, Antisubmarine Warfare Tactics, Admiral Marques de Leão Training Center, Rio de Janeiro.

? - Chief, Division of Planning, Directorate of Instruction.

? - Commander, destroyer Babitonga.

1947-1948 - Preliminary Command Course and Command and Staff Course, Naval War College, Rio de Janeiro.

? - Chief, Hydrography Department, Directorate of Hydrography and Navigation.

1949 - Promoted to Cdr, 25 Jul 1949.

? - Captain of Ports, State of Rio Grande do Norte.

? - Commander, Natal Naval Base, Natal.

1953 - Student, Advanced Command Course, Naval War College, Rio de Janeiro.

1953-1954 - Commander, training ship Guanabara, until 7 Feb 1954. Promoted to Capt, 20 Jan 1954.

1954-1955 - President, Military Planning Commission for Construction of Naval Bases, Feb 1954-Nov 1955.

1955-1958 - President, Inspection Commission for Ship Construction in Japan, Nov 1955-14 May 1958.

1959 - Commander, cruiser Tamandare, 15 Jan-19 Mar 1959. Promoted to Rear Adm, 9 Mar 1959.

1959-1960 - Commander, 4th Naval District, 26 May 1959-24 Nov 1960.

1960-1961 - Subchief of Staff, 2d Section (Intelligence), Navy General Staff.

1961-1962 - Subchief of Staff, 1st Section (Organization) and 2d Section (Operations), Navy General Staff, 21 Apr 1961-13 Jul 1962.

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August 1968

- 1963-1964 - Student, National War College, Rio de Janeiro, 13 Mar 1963-15 Jan 1964. Orientation tour of U.S. with school group, Aug-Sep 1963. Promoted to Vice Adm, 19 Feb 1964.
- 1964-1965 - Minister of the Navy, 18 Apr 1964-17 Jan 1965 (resigned because of differences with President over the manning of naval aircraft).
- 1965-1966 - Unassigned; attached to the Gabinete (Executive Office). Confined for three days in Aug 1965 for protesting against presidential decree on embarked aviation.
- 1966-Present - Director General of Hydrography and Navigation, Navy, from 1 Feb 1966 (did not occupy position Dec 1966-31 Mar 1967 because of his displeasure at being passed over for promotion).

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