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13. SUMMARY:

(C) Recently, I have had occasion to talk to a number of Brazilian Army Officers who were formerly strong supporters of former Governor CARLOS LACERDA. These included Col. SEBASTIAO FERREIRA CHAVES, Col. ANTONIO MIRANDA, Col. HEITOR CARACAS LINHARES, and Col. FRANCISCO BOAVENTURA.

Francisco Boaventura Carvalcanti, Jr

1. (C) From this, it appears that about the time LACERDA began talking about a "Broad Front" alliance with KUBITSCHIEK and COULART against the present Government, aroused some concern among a number of officers who had been loyal supporters for many years and these officers met, and delegated Col. SEBASTIAO CHAVES (who has just been invited by Governor Elect ADRIU SODRE of Sao Paulo to head up the State Military Police of that State) to go and see LACERDA and ask him what his intentions were.

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 REPORT NO. 2 802 0215 6
 PAGE 2 OF 2
 ORIGINATOR
 GUARDA RIO DE JANEIRO

2. (C) LACERDA told Col. CHAVES that his moves were largely tactical, to secure as broad a political base as possible so as to avoid having his political rights cancelled and to capitalize on the fact that the large groups of voters who had been devoted to GOMLART and KUBITSCHKEK were now leaderless and it was his idea to step in and fill that vacuum, winning over enough of their very large blocs of voters to win the Presidency in 1970. Col. CHAVES, an idealistic hard-liner was shocked at LACERDA's political opportunism but agreed to convey LACERDA's explanation to the other LACERDISTA Army officers.
3. (C) Later, when LACERDA began denouncing the revolution which he had once proudly claimed as his own, this group of officers decided to call on LACERDA in a body (with the exception of BOAVENTURA, who is serving in Natal in Rio Grande do Norte, Col. HELIO LEMOS who is serving in Baga, Rio Grande do Sul, was also absent). Former Vice-Gov. RAFAEL DE ALMEIDA MAGALHAES went with them. LACERDA received these officers and repeated the same general story to them saying that some of the things he said were necessary to win over the leftist votes but that they could have confidence in him. Despite LACERDA's eloquent appeal, these officers were unsatisfied with his explanation and fearful that his new policy of denouncing the revolution and attacking senior Generals would lead to division in the ranks of the Army. While they did not break openly with LACERDA, they no longer look to him for political guidance.
4. (C) Col. BOAVENTURA, returning to Rio from a trip to his command in Natal went to see LACERDA and was totally opposed to his dealings with KUBITSCHKEK who has been anathema to this group for years. He then published a letter disassociating himself from LACERDA's rapprochement with KUBITSCHKEK.
5. (C) These officers did not seem to have a fixed opinion as to who had gained or lost most between LACERDA and KUBITSCHKEK. All felt, however, that it had strengthened the CASTELLO BRANCO-COSTA E SILVA coalition in that it had further weakened the military support within the Armed Forces for elements who approve the present government and its chosen successor.
6. (C) Other generally pro-LACERDA officers, such as Army Major General AFFONSO ALBUQUERQUE LIMA, Maj. Gen. DUTRA DA CASTILHO, and Marine Corps Commandant VADM HEITOR LOPES DE SOUZA have told me, within the last week, that they have drifted away from LACERDA who "seems to be returning to his communist origins."
7. (C) A peculiarity of the present political military situation is that as LACERDA seeks a confrontation with the government as he has so often done in the past, this is the first time he must move up to that confrontation without substantial military support. His erratic political zigzagging, his espousal of many points of leftist programs including violent attacks on the U.S., his lack of judgement and balance, have alienated many military men who, for more than 15 years, have been his loyal followers.
8. (C) Col. MIRANDA feels that only his former State Secretaries or officials who were Air Force officers, such as retired Col. GUSTAVO BORGES and retired Traffic Director, AMERICO FONTENELLE still support him. Retired General SALVADOR MANDIM, who occupied a high post in the Guanabara State Administration under LACERDA came to my office to express his solidarity for me following LACERDA's attacks on me, stating that he is practically no longer on speaking terms with LACERDA.

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