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C O N F I D E N T I A L 929. FM ARMA, SEP 69.

1. (C) SOURCE OF INFORMATION IS AN ARMY LTC, CURRENTLY A MEMBER OF A MILITARY INQUIRY COMMISSION INVESTIGATING SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN BRAZIL. HE IS A USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCEN, POLITICALLY IN GENERAL ORLANDO GEISEL'S CAMP. INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED DURING TWO HOUR VISIT WITH AARMA GREEN EVENING OF 9 SEP. SOURCE HAS NUMEROUS CONTACTS AMONG STAFF OFFICERS AND COMMANDERS OF KEY ARMY UNITS MENTIONED IN REPORT.

2. (C) OFFICER SAID HE WAS WILLING TO PREDICT THE MILITARY JUNTA WOULD FALL BEFORE NEXT MONDAY AND POSSIBLY AS EARLY AS THURSDAY, 11 SEP. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD PERSONALLY LIKE TO SEE GEN. ORLANDO GEISEL IN THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR BUT HE IS CONVINCED THAT GEN. AFFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE (LIMA HAS NOW, OR WILL SOON HAVE, THE ARMY SUPPORT NECESSARY TO PROJECT HIMSELF INTO THE PRESIDENCY.

3. (C) EVENTS OF LAST TWO WEEKS, BEGINNING WITH COSTA E SILVA'S STROKE, FOLLOWED BY THE JUNTA ARRANGEMENT AND CAPPED BY AMBASSADOR ELBRICK'S KIDNAPPING, WHICH HAS RESULTED IN STRONG HARD LINE REACTION OPPOSING THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO COMPLY WITH THE KIDNAPPER'S DEMANDS, HAVE GIVEN AFFONSO THE OPPORTUNITIES HE NEEDS TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF KEY MILITARY COMMANDERS IN RIO'S VILA MILITAR AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY. SOURCE STATED THAT AFFONSO CAN NOW COUNT ON KEY GENERAL JOAO DUTRA DE CASTILHO, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION AND VILA MILITAR

ACT: DIA-20

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GARRISON COMMANDER; GENERAL ADAUTO BEZERRA DE ARAUJO, AIRBORNE BRIGADE COMMANDER; AND GEN TASSO VILLAR DE AQUINO, ARMORED DIVISION COMMANDER WHO IS RESPONSIVE TO WISHES OF GENERAL RAMIRO TAVARES GONCALVES, A FERVID AFFONSO SUPPORTER AND EX-ARMORED DIVISION CG NOW COMMANDING THE 9TH MILITARY REGION IN CAMPO GRANDE, MATO GROSSO. SOURCE SAID GEN RAMIRO WAS IN RIO SUNDAY, PRESUMABLY TO HELP AFFONSO LINE-UP VILA MILITAR SUPPORT AND TO PLEDGE SUPPORT OF 9TH MILITARY REGION. "FROM RIO DE JANEIRO TO THE NORTH, ALL ARMY UNITS ARE READY TO SUPPORT GEN. AFFONSO", SAID SOURCE. HE SAID ALSO THAT GENERAL ITIBERE GOUVEA DO AMARAL, MINAS GERAIS'S 4TH REGION AND 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION CG IS A STRONG AFFONSO MAN.

4. (C) TWO GARRISONS ARE STILL QUESTION MARKS, ACCORDING TO SOURCE. THE SAO PAULO GARRISON AND THE 3RD ARMY IN RIO GRANDE DO SUL. THE SAO PAULO GARRISON WOULD BECOME RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT, HE SAID, IF THE 3RD ARMY FELL INTO LINE. IN THIS CASE, THE SAO PAULO GARRISON WOULD BE ISOLATED AND WOULD EVENTUALLY FOLLOW THE REST OF THE ARMY. IN AN ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN 3RD ARMY SUPPORT, AFFONSO WAS SAID TO HAVE SENT HIM EMISSARIES TO RIO GRANDE DO SUL ON TUESDAY AND THEY WERE EXPECTED BACK IN RIO WITH THEIR REPORTS THURSDAY AFTERNOON. IF THEY RETURNED WITH 3RD ARMY BACKING, AFFONSO WOULD THEN BE IN A POSITION TO PRESENT THE JUNTA WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI, WITH THE NECESSARY ARMY BACKING TO FORCE HIMSELF INTO THE PRESIDENCY.

5. (C) SOURCE HAD NO READY ANSWERS REGARDING THE MECHANICS AND LEGALITIES OF GRACEFULLY DISPOSING OF THE DISABLED PRESIDENT, THE JUNTA, AND THE MILITARY HIERARCHY. HE WAS CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT A BLOODLESS BRAZILIAN SOLUTION TO THESE PROBLEMS COULD BE FOUND, AND THAT AFFONSO'S FAST GROWING MILITARY SUPPORT WOULD DECIDE THE ISSUE IN HIS FAVOR.

COMMENT: (C) EVALUATION OF THIS INFORMATION SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SOURCE'S AFFILIATION WITH GEN. ORLANDO GEISEL. GEN GEISEL'S CHANCES FOR THE PRESIDENCY APPEAR TO DEPEND ON THE JUNTA REMAINING IN CONTROL LONG ENOUGH FOR IT OR THE MILITARY HIERARCHY TO OPT TO REPLACE THE TRIUMVIRATE WITH ONE MAN. COMMITTING HIMSELF FULLY THIS POINT TO OBTAINING THE PRESIDENCY, MAY, IF HE FAILS IN THE ATTEMPT, CAUSE AFFONSO TO BURN HIMSELF OUT PREMATURELY AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. IN WHICH CASE, GEISEL COULD ONLY GAIN. IT APPEARS DOUBTFUL, AT THIS JUNCTURE, THAT GEN.

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AFFONSO HAS THE STRONG VILA MILITAR BACKING SOURCE WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY, MOREOVER, SOURCE MIGHT BE ADVERTISING AFFONSO'S ALLEGED PROGRESS FOR PURPOSE OF SAFEGUARDING GEISEL'S CREDENTIALS, AS PURIST WITH NO POLITICAL AMBITION. GP-3.

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