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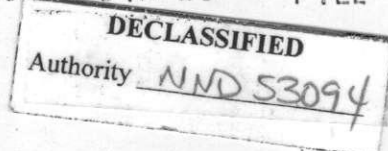
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CONFIDENTIAL 707 FM ARMA, JUL 69. SUBJECT: (U) THE
GENERAL ARAGAO CASE.

1. (C) GEN. ARAGAO SURRENDERED DIRECTORATE OF SUPPLY
FROM WHICH DISMISSED BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE AT 1530,
9 JULY, HE TURNED OVER DIRECTORSHIP TO LEGAL SUCCESSOR
SURGEON GENERAL OLIVIO IN CEREMONY AT ARMY MINISTRY, A
FAIRLY LARGE NUMBER OF GENERAL OFFICERS AND A FEW CAP-
TAINS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE, BUT MOST OF THOSE PRE-
SENT HAD FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENT TO ATTEND CHANGE-OVER,
GEN. ARAGAO HIMSELF HAD BARRED PRESS AND HE REPORTEDLY
CONFINED HIS SHORT TALK TO PERFUNCTORY STATEMENTS,
THE CEREMONY HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY AFTER-
NOON TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CUSTOMARY HALF-DAY WORKING
SCHEDULE IN ARMY AND THUS ATTRACT LARGER TURNOUT,
ACCOUNTS OF NUMBER PRESENT WOULD INDICATE THAT ORGANIZERS
HAD REASON TO BE DISAPPOINTED.

2. (C) FOLLOWING CEREMONY, ANOTHER ARAGAO LETTER TO THE
ARMY MINISTER BEGAN TO CIRCULATE WITHIN ARMY MINISTRY
AND ELSEWHERE IN RIO. I READ THE LETTER AT ARMY MINIS-
TRY THIS MORNING AND IT IS EXTREMELY PROVOCATIVE IN
THAT IT ACCUSES LYRA TAVARES OF BEING DECEITFUL, WEAK,
A DREAMER, AND A MAN OF DUBIOUS REVOLUTIONARY CREDEN-
TIALS. THE LONG LETTER MUST NOW BE IN HANDS OF THE MINIS-
TER WHO DUE IN FROM BRASILIA TODAY, IT WOULD APPEAR
THAT HE HAS THREE OPTIONS OPEN TO HIM IN RESPONSE TO
THE NEW CHALLENGE: (1) ISSUE A REPRIMAND AND CIRCULATE

ACT: DIA-20 FILE-1 (21) ZIM/GG



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IT WIDELY; (2) GIVE ARAGAO HOUSE ARREST, OR (3) URGE THE PRESIDENT TO RETIRE ARAGAO UNDER THE TERMS OF IA-5. THE FIRST OPTION WOULD CONSTITUTE A SUITABLE ACTION WITH THE ADVANTAGE OF NOT INVITING EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY FOR ARAGAO AND LEAVING THE OTHER MORE EXTREME ALTERNATIVES OPEN. EITHER OF THE OTHER TWO WILL TEND TO GIVE ARAGAO AN AURA OF MARTYRDOM WHILE ENCOURAGING TIME-HONORED BRAZILIAN TRADITION OF TRUE FRIENDS AND MEN OF CHARACTER STEPPING UP TO PAT THE PENALIZED ONE ON THE BACK. 3. (C) GEN. ARAGAO IS NOW AT HOME WITHOUT ASSIGNMENT AND HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS ARE EITHER UNDEREMPLOYED, UNEMPLOYED, OR UNDER SURVEILLANCE. MOST OF HIS SUPPORT HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED BY THE MINISTER'S OFFICE AS HAVING COME FROM GEN. AFFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE LIMA AND HIS ASSOCIATES, AS WELL AS A FEW ISOLATED LETTER PEDDLERS SUCH AS COL. SEBASTIAO CHAVES, A STUDENT AT THE SUPERIOR WAR SCHOOL, AND A STUDENT CAPTAIN AT THE OFFICER'S ADVANCED SCHOOL WHO IS NOW BEING INVESTIGATED. THE ARMY MINISTER'S STAFF IS FULLY CONFIDENT WITH RESPECT TO THE UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT OF SUCH KEY ELEMENTS AS 1ST ARMY CG SYSENO, GEN. CASTILHO, CG OF THE VILA MILITAR GARRISON, AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ARAGAO'S PEOPLE ARE SPREADING RUMORS OF ALLEGED SUPPORT IN AN EFFORT TO DRUM SOME UP AND TO PROMOTE CONFUSION. 4. (C) YESTERDAY'S FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL IN O GLOBO HAS REPORTED DONE MORE THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE ACTION TO DEFLATE THE ARAGAO BALLOON. THE EDITORIAL URGED THE ARMED FORCES TO REMAIN UNITED AND TO FINISH THE JOB THE REVOLUTION SET OUT TO DO. IT ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE PRESS AND THE CONGRESS WERE THE PROPER ROUTES FOR DISSENT AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS. THE EDITORIAL WAS SUGGESTED TO GLOBO'S PUBLISHERS BY THE ARMY MINISTER'S OFFICE. MOREOVER, LATTER ALSO ENLISED COOPERATION OF INFLUENTIAL JORNAL DO BRAZIL PUBLISHER NASCIMENTO BRITO TO GAIN AGREEMENT FROM SOMETIMES DEFIANT O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO PUBLISHER JULIO MESQUITA NOT TO PUBLISH ANYTHING INFLAMMATORY CONCERNING THE ARAGAO CASE. COMMENT: (C) APPARENT WILLING COOPERATION OF NEWS MEDIA APPEARS TO BE VITAL INGREDIENT ON SIDE OF STABILITY. WHILE ARAGAO AND HIS ASSOCIATES WILL CONTINUE TO FIRE BROAD SIDES, THE IMPACT APPEARS TO BE EASING. AT THIS STAGE, LYRA TAVARES' POSITION SEEMS SHAKEN BY THE

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ARAGAO CHALLENGE WHICH AIMED AT PRESIDENT BUT
WILLINGLY ABSORBED BY THE LOYAL ARMY MINISTER, IF
LYRA DECIDES TO GO THE FULL ROUTE, HE MIGHT RESIGN
TO PROVIDE ESCAPE VALVAL FOR PRESSURES AND DISCONTENT.

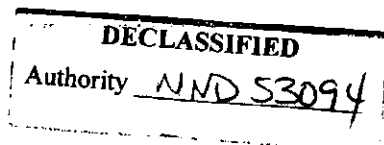
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