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(Classification and Control Markings)

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align itself "to the opposition party even if it doesn't wholly represent the communist ideas," (ENCL. 1) As a part of winning over (?) the MDB to ARENA philosophy he drew parallels to the requirement of Ex-President Castelo Branco cassating a number of MDB members in 1966 in the state of Rio Grande do Sul because they were still influenced by the leadership of Leonel Brizola and the MNR from Uruguay. Adding that it is not the case in Rio Grande do Sul at this time, the MDB is loyal to Brazil, which shows that "Democracy is a process of permanent transformation."

3. (C) Newly promoted 4 Star General Fernando Belfort BETHLEM arrived on the scene in Porto Alegre to assume command of the III Army and in the presence of Army Minister ~~FROTA~~ Army Chief of Staff ~~FRIZZI~~ and outgoing III Army Commander Oscar Luiz, pledged his loyalty to the 1964 revolution and the destruction of communism. He described the communists as powerful and always involved in corruption, contaminating youth, and cowardly terrorism (enclosure 2). The theme for a follow-on luncheon was "Security provides the climate for order which is indispensable to the maintenance of law and constitutional powers."

COMMENT: (C) Passarinho is known as the "mouthpiece" for ARENA and as a party Vice President is given close attention. His pronouncements (see para. 2) are one, a warning to the voters to beware of the MDB party and further a warning to the party that if they overstep their bounds, it is easy to return to more cassations. About two days ago, after our weekly volleyball game, he was in a tirade that the large government organizations eg. FUNAI (National Indian Foundation) are now being infiltrated with the idea of causing more unrest and problems for the government. During his Senate speeches he is most tactful, while in private he is very adamant.

General Bethlem is known as a favorite of President Geisel so we can assume that his opening speech (encl. 2) in III Army was either prompted or influenced by the President. He chose his words carefully by including the efforts of the state police, reserve personnel, Navy, and Air Force stationed in Rio Grande do Sul in the 1964 Revolutionary ideals. But he also let it be known that he had no intentions of being "soft." Remember that General Dilermando did the same thing when he assumed command of the II Army. On Dilermando's other visits he verified the responsibility of the armed forces for national security and that he intended to "extricate them from our midst" (encl. 3 dated 1 June 76).

Although being corrupt still carries the connotation that one is a communist, it is encouraging to note that the theme is beginning that communism is no longer the threat it once was. As that idea grows, it should also lead to a better acceptance of President Geisel's program for "distensão" and a lessening of the mania that there is a communist behind every tree and democracy cannot function without severe restraints.

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Agency

*Handwritten initials and date*

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DD FORM 1 SEP 63 1396C

REPLACES DA FORM 1044-1, 1 AUG 60 AND DA FORM 501, 1 AUG 60 WHICH MAY BE USED UNTIL 1 JAN 68.

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