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C O N F I D E N T I A L

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MULT

ACTION

DISTR CJCS SJCS(03) J3(12) J5(02) NMCC(01) IADB(01) SECDEF(07)

ASD:ISA(09) ASD:PA(01) GC(01) CSA CSAF CNO(07) CMC DIA(25) MCCC

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RR RUCRJCS

DE RUESUA 3528 1452040

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R 252000Z MAY 70

FM AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4987

RUCRJCS/DIA

INFO RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6116

RUESEI/AMCONGEN RECIFE 3342

RUESUP/AMCONGEN SAO PAULO 4887

RULPAL/USCINCSO

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIO DE JANEIRO 3528

SUBJECT: ALBUQUERQUE LIMA -- ARAGAO CANDIDATE LOSES IN MILITARY CLUB ELECTIONS

REF: USDAO MSG 0371, R 181430Z MAY 70

CINCSO FOR POLAD

1. AN EFFORT BY GENERALS MONIZ DE ARAGAO AND AFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE LIMA TO ELECT THEIR CANDIDATE TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CLUBE MILITAR APPARENTLY HAS FAILED. PARTIAL BUT ALMOST COMPLETE UNOFFICIAL RETURNS FROM THE ELECTIONS, HELD MAY 20 IN ARMY GARRISONS AND "CIRCULOS MILITARES" THROUGHOUT BRAZIL, SHOW GENERAL WALTER MENESSES PAES SUPPORTED BY THE MAJORITY OF PROMINENT GENERAL OFFICERS, CLEARLY IN THE LEAD OVER THE ARAGAO-ALBUQUERQUE LIMA CANDIDATE, GENERAL MENDES PEREIRA. THE PRESS OF MAY 22 REPORTED THE VOTE TO BE RUNNI 1,795 FOR GENERAL WALTER AND 1,175 FOR HIS ADVERSARY. THE RACE WAS CLOSEST IN GUANABARA, WHERE GENERAL WALTER HAD 1,164 VOTES AND GENERAL MENDES PEREIRA 979. FINAL

PAGE 1

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RETURNS ARE EXPECTED SOON.

2. GENERAL ARAGAO, WHO IS SOMEWHAT DISCREDITED IN CERTAIN ARMY SECTORS BECAUSE OF MAVERICK ATTITUDES DISPLAYED UNDER COSTA E SILVA, APPARENTLY SAW THE MILITARY CLUB ELECTIONS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEST HIS PERSONAL PRESTIGE. GENERAL ALBUQUERQUE LIMA, WHOSE MANEUVERS AT THE TIME OF THE COSTA E SILVA SUCCESSION CRISIS ANTAGONIZED MANY MEMBERS OF THE CURRENT MILITARY POWER GROUP, REGARDED THE ELECTIONS AS A MEANS OF IMPROVING HIS POLITICAL POSITION. ARAGAO ACTIVELY SUPPORTED GENERAL MENDES PEREIRA, AND ALBUQUERQUE LIMA, THOUGH HIMSELF NOT PARTICIPATING ACTIVELY, DID NOT RESTRAIN HIS SUPPORTERS FROM DOING SO.

3. GENERAL WALTER'S VICTORY IS A BLOW TO BOTH ARAGAO AND ALBUQUERQUE LIMA, THOUGH THEY MAY TAKE SOME SOLACE IN THE CLOSENESS OF THE RACE IN GUANABARA, SEAT OF THE CLUBE MILITAR. A HEAVY ABSTENTION (REPORTED TO BE FROM 50 TO 60 PERCENT NATIONALLY) COMPOUNDED THEIR LOSS, INDICATING NARROW APPEAL OF THEIR ILL-DEFINED REFORMIST-NATIONALIST CAUSE. UNDOUBTEDLY ANOTHER FACTOR IN THE HIGH ABSTENTION RATE WAS A RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF MANY ARMY OFFICERS TO SEE THE CLUBE MILITAR RESUME ITS PRE-1964 POLITICAL ROLE. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT MANY ABSTENTIONS IN MENDES PEREIRA CAMP REFLECTED POOR CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT.

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PAGE 2

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