

Vice President-Elect  
(since 15 October 1978)

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An engineer turned politician, Aureliano Chaves is held in high esteem by a wide variety of groups and individuals. Because of this broad base of good feeling and his competent performance as Governor (1975-78) of Minas Gerais, Brazil's second most populous state, he has long been seen as a man with a bright political future.

Early in 1978 President Ernesto Geisel hand-picked Chaves to be President-elect João Figueiredo's running mate. The choice was duly ratified in April by the official government party (ARENA), and the Figueiredo-Chaves ticket won the indirect national election of 15 October. On 15 March 1979 the new administration will take office for a six-year term. Still young (49), Chaves could be in a good position to become President in 1985, thereby bringing about a peaceful transition from military to civilian rule.

The more liberal elements in Brazil respect Chaves because of his past support for congressional autonomy and his current advocacy of political reform. At the same time, however, he has managed to avoid alienating military conservatives because he is a staunch anticommunist who does not engage in demagoguery when presenting his reformist ideas. A trusted supporter of both Geisel and Figueiredo, Chaves apparently subscribes to their gradualist approach toward introducing a greater measure of democracy in Brazil. In a January 1978 press interview, he recognized the need for political reconciliation but opposed a general amnesty as impractical at this time. In another interview the following month, he appeared to be amenable to the creation of a Brazilian socialist party; but he made it clear that he would rely entirely on Figueiredo's timing in all such matters.

Attitude Toward the United States

Chaves is friendly toward the United States, which he visited in 1975 on a Foreign Leader Grant. He believes, however, that this country's emphasis on human rights has needlessly exacerbated relations with Brazil, encouraging the government's opponents

(cont.)

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Brazilian adherence to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, also believes that US efforts to have Brazil back away from its 1975 nuclear treaty with West Germany--which would give Brazil the full nuclear fuel cycle--have been misdirected. The Vice President-elect apparently admires President Jimmy Carter's special advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and likes to quote him in impromptu speeches.

#### Early Career and Personal Data

Chaves holds an engineering degree from the Electrotechnical Institute of Itajubá. He taught at his alma mater and was a director of Electrobrás--the Brazilian Electrical Enterprise--before turning to politics. Subsequently, he was a deputy (1963-64) and cabinet member (1964-66) in Minas Gerais and then a member of the Federal Chamber of Deputies (1967-75).

Chaves is [redacted] a forceful public orator. He seems to prefer improvised speeches, that include quotations from Montesquieu, Montaigne, Shakespeare and the Bible. Married to the former Minelvina Sanches, the Vice President-elect has three children. He speaks a little English. 25X6

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