

TELEGRAM

OUTGOING

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

EMBASSY OFFICE BRASILIA

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Control:

Date: 03-072

March 21, 1966

12:50 p.m.

ACTION: Ambassador RIODEJANEIRO PRIORITY 192

SUBJ: Adauto Cardoso Interview on Succession

1. Chamber of Deputies president Adauto Lucio Cardoso's interview, published in Jornal do Brasil March 20, was main topic of conversation over weekend in ^{Brasilia} ~~Brasilia~~ political circles -- where contents of interview were known by Saturday. Cardoso's call for more ARENA hopefuls to throw hats into ring was viewed with dismay by ARENA leaders spoken to thus far. Pedro Aleixo was unhappy when discussing matter March 19. Rondon Pacheco (ARENA SecGen) commented to me that Cardoso interview was most inopportune, since ARENA had all but settled on Costa e Silva as its candidate, and "We don't want complications." But they appear to realize that willy-nilly they do have a complication. General feeling seems to be that Cardoso has opened field to other potential candidates. "Ele abre o Jogo," was most frequently heard view over weekend.

2. Basic question of course is whom Cardoso was speaking for. Tentative feeling here has it that he issued call for more candidates on own, without direct prompting from President. Cardoso is known to be concerned with dignity and prerogatives of Chamber itself (see para 2 Brastel 149 to Rio), and this implicit in his remarks re "lack of liberty in body politic to

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carry out a succession as authentic as possible." Cardoso also quite capable of independent action. Nonetheless, it too early conclude Cardoso spoke entirely on own.

3. Costa e Silva's reaction to this will be significant. Our estimate is that, continuing avowedly "presidential" behavior, he will either not comment or limit himself to statesmanlike remarks to effect that president of Chamber fully qualified to speak, other names mentioned are most worthy figures, etc. His supporters in and out of military, however, likely interpret Cardoso interview in most unfavorable light. Tribuna da Imprensa can be expected see Castello Branco plot behind interview. Some rise in tension and worsening of relations between Costa e Silva and President would seem almost inevitable, although perhaps temporary.
4. Opposition NDB can only welcome this sign of restiveness in administration camp.

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