

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

INSTABILITY IN BRAZIL

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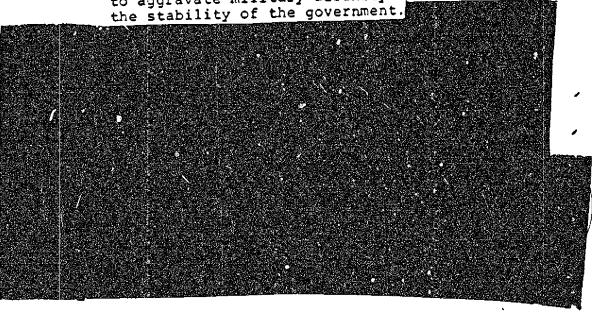
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY Directorate of Intelligence 11 September 1969

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

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Introduction

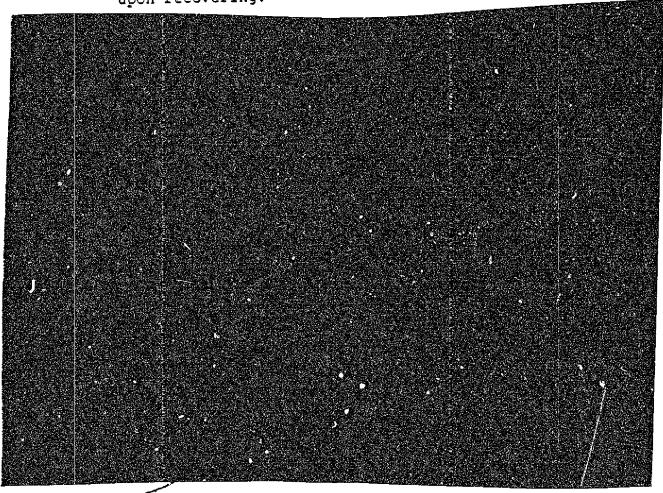
The developments of the last ten days in Brazil--President Costa e Silva's debilitating stroke, the kidnaping of Ambassador Elbrick by left-wing terrorists, and growing military dissatisfaction with the government--have combined to aggravate military disunity and thus threaten

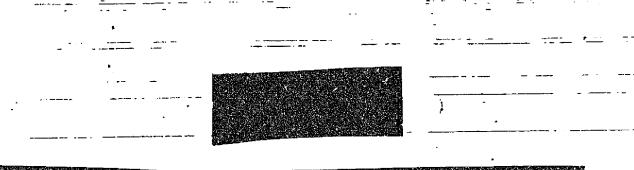


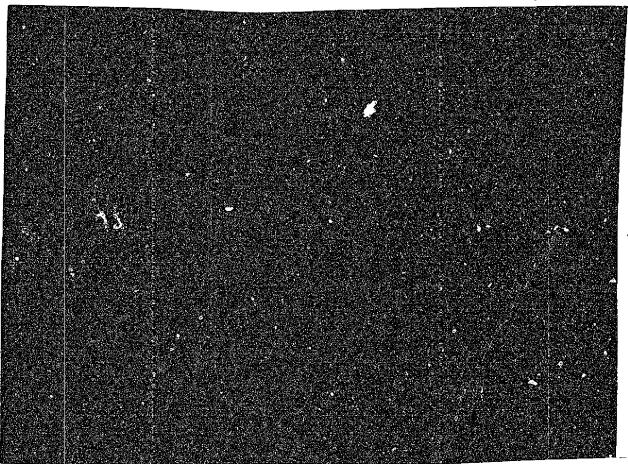


Background:

a severe stroke on 30 August. The Brazilian military, which has been the locus of power since the 1964 revolution that ousted leftist President Joao Goulart, decided to bypass the constitution and assume "caretaker" direction of the government. The three military ministers formed a triumvirate to govern during the President's "temporary impediment" under the authority of Institutional Act 12, which they decreed on 31 August, and of all previous institutional acts and the constitution. The Act expressly states that the President will resume power upon recovering.







- deal with rising military discontent, it was faced with a crisis that might have strained even a well-oiled decision-making machine. US Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick was kidnaped by left-wing extremists on 4 September. The kidnapers left a manifesto stating conditions for his release. These included publishing the manifesto, which contained a bitter antigovernment and anti-US diatribe, in the usually censored press and subsequently releasing 15 political prisoners to another country. If their conditions were not met, the abductors vowed to "execute" the ambassador.
- 8. The manifesto was signed by the Revolutionary Movement 8 October (MR-8) and the National Liberation

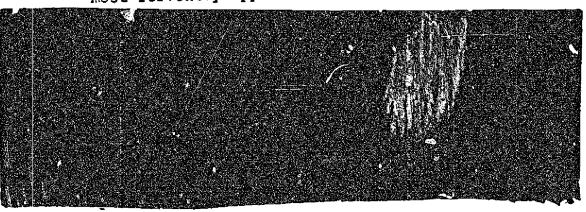
Action (ALN). The MR-8 is a terrorist group made up mostly of students; it reportedly has links to several dissident Communist and other extreme leftist organizations. Many of its members, who had engaged in successful bank robberies, were rounded up by Brazilian security forces this summer before they could implement their plan to undertake rural querrilla warfare.

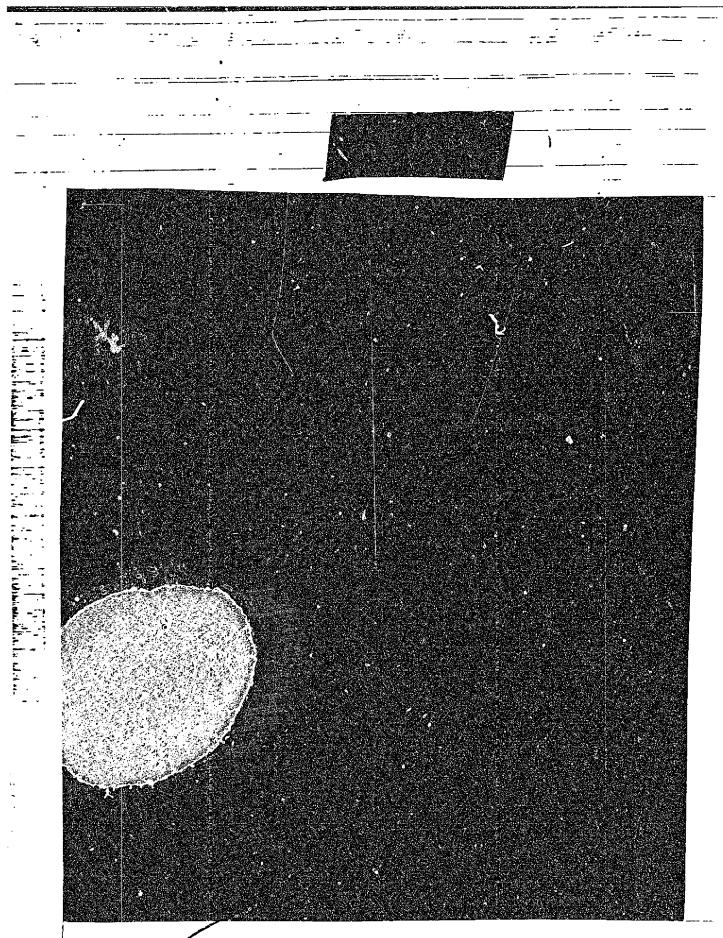
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Their probable involvement in the kidnaping would account for the professionalism displayed by the abductors.

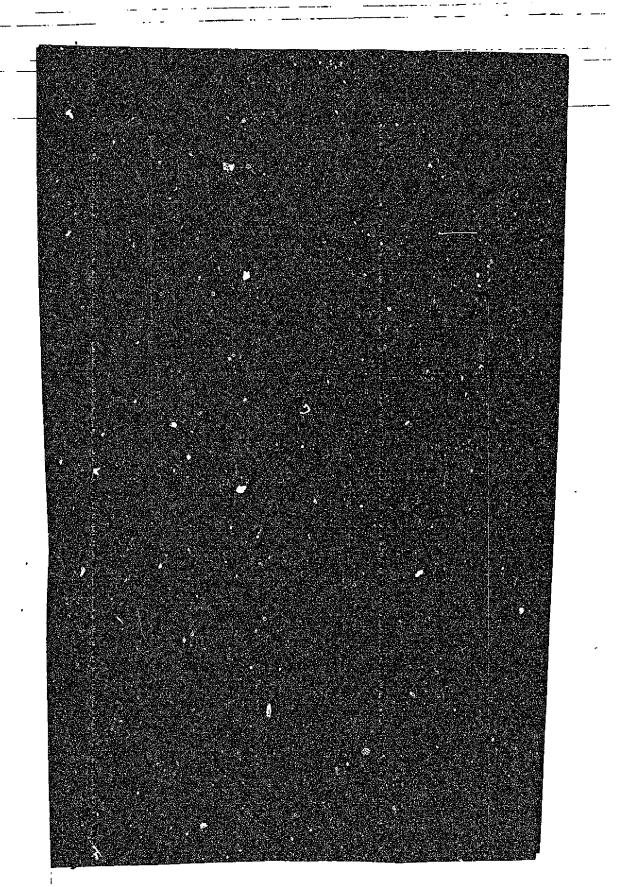
They have been responsible for many robberies and armed assaults and evidently for the assassination of US Army Captain Chandler in Sao Paulo in October 1968.

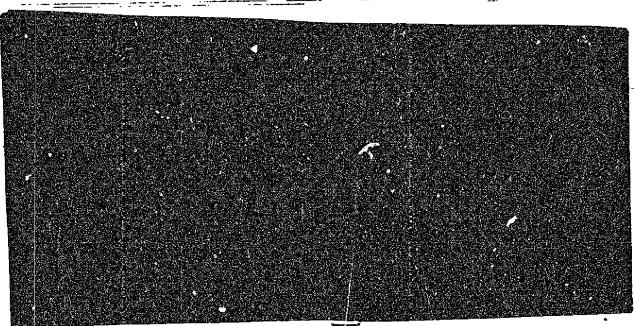
agreed to the kidnapers' terms. The 15 prisoners whose release was demanded turned out to be some of the military's most prized captives and included prominent extremist student leaders, Communists, terrorists, and a mixed bag of other left-wing radicals. Even had the prisoners not been notorious, many in the military would have opposed the ransom deal as a humiliating sell-out to the forces they most fervently opposed.





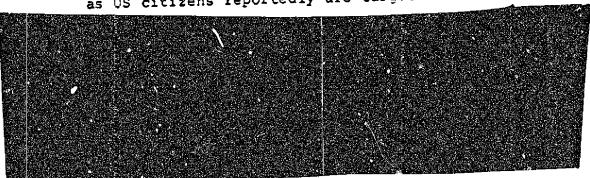
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17. Almost certainly there will be a wideranging crackdown on anyone who appears even faintly
subversive. The government has armed itself with
broad powers to "guarantee the national security."
Many arrests have been made, including some persons
suspected of being involved in the kidnaping of
Ambassador Elbrick. Many leftists and opposition
leaders have taken cover in the expectation of an
even wider purge. The government is not likely to
lift its curbs on the press, nor is it likely to
tolerate criticism from opposition groups such as
the church, students, or workers.

18. One result of the government's tough line may be to force persons previously unwilling to risk punishment to turn to one of the several leftwing extremist groups as an outlet for their opposition. Left-wing terrorism invites counterterrorism from the right; moreover, it contributes to military disunity because officers cannot agree on how it should be controlled. Despite the government's best efforts, continued incidents of terrorism are likely to occur. Government and military leaders as well as US citizens reportedly are targets.



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