SUBJECT: NUMBER OF "POLITICAL" PRISONERS IN BRAZIL

1. ARMY G-2 HAS INFORMED MILGP THAT 500-TERROIRIST-PRISONER FIGURE GIVER IN MURICI INTERVIEW INCLUDES ALL PRISONERS CHARGED WITH VIOLATION NATIONAL SECURITY LAW, WHETHER ARRESTED ACTUALLY IN HANDS OF ARMY (WHICH HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL SUCH PRISONERS) OR TEMPORARILY DETAINED BY SOME OTHER MILITARY OR CIVILIAN AGENCY.

All official estimate last April placed the number of terrorists in prison at approximately 500, and that current figure of 500 seems reasonable, considering both arrests made since April and release of terrorist prisoners during kidnapping episodes.
ACTION:

2. In addition to terrorist prisoners over whom army has jurisdiction, there apparently is a "grey area" which would include individuals arrested for low-level "political crimes" (e.g., youths involved in attempted street demonstrations, distribution leaflets, etc.) who are not charged under the national security law. Also in this category would be persons arrested and held for investigation of possible subversive links or basis leads developed from arrest and interrogation of terrorists. In both cases detention likely be of relatively short duration unless investigation bears out initial indications of terrorist involvement. Number of prisoners in such situation obviously variable, figure would be significantly smaller than 500.