



DIVISION FOR LATIN AMERICA

Department of International Affairs United States Catholic Conference

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March 22, 1972

Emilio Garrastazu Medici
President of the Federative Republic of Brazil
Brasilia, D.F.
Brazil

Dear Mr. President:

Information currently available suggests that the famed peasant leader, Manuel da Conceição Santos, together with Luís dos Santos, currently prisoners of DOPS at Sao Luís Police Headquarters are being denied their civil rights. These include their right of due process in the courts and the basic human rights not to be subjected to forms of interrogation which amount to torture.

The information on which these charges are based may be incomplete or inaccurate, although it comes from persons in Brazil familiar with the situation. Nevertheless, the charges are serious, are regarded as such by the world community, and, lacking contrary evidence, are wholly credible. They are simply among the most recent in a long series of reports emanating from Brazil which testify to the systematic suppression of civil liberties and the use of torture as an accepted method of interrogation.

By denying the request of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to send an investigative team to look into these charges which have circulated widely throughout the rest of the world, the Government of Brazil appears, in effect, to be acknowledging the truth of these charges.

As North Americans who appreciate and admire the greatness of Brazil and deeply love the Brazilian people, we urge you 1) to assure the full protection of the law and a just trial to Manuel da Conceição and Luís dos Santos and 2) to allow an international team of impartial observers to investigate the long-standing and widespread charges of systematic repression, torture and violation of basic human rights.

We remain, Sir, in the cause of order, progress and liberty.

Yours sincerely,

(Rev.) Frederick A. McGuire, C.M.
Director