



Ref.: IRP-AV/sn

To All Section and Group Members Working with Audiovisual Material

Dear Friends,

RE: VIDEO "SHADOWS ON THE STREET"

1. This video can be freely viewed within AI membership.
2. This video must only be shown in its entirety- that is, the film is to be viewed as it is.
3. There should be no clipping or editing of this film.
4. Under no circumstances is the film allowed to be shown in Brazil. This is a contractual responsibility placed on all the filmed material to protect the witnesses.

With best wishes,

Wayne Minter.

AV Coordinator

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*Caio Fidei*

## PART ONE

**Morning in in a shanty town in Rio de Janeiro. The city once famous for carnival is becoming better known for carnage - the slaughter of children.**

**On the 22nd of July 1993, this video footage captured a group of street children having a party, outside the Candelaria church in the centre of Rio. Within twenty-four hours many of them will be dead, gunned down as they slept. Days later, four suspects were arrested for the murders, three of them turned out to be police officers. For two of the survivors, 15 year old Rogerio and his girlfriend Beti who was 14, it was like losing their family.**

**BETI:** At midnight, everybody was laughing, playing. It felt like a farewell. The two of us met on the street. I was like a mother to twenty streetkids in Candelaria. I looked after them, washed them, washed their clothes. Then some people came and put an end our happiness.

**Beti's own family had been destroyed by poverty of one of Rio's many shanty towns. After six years of wandering the streets, she had made the steps of Candelaria church her home. It was here, in the middle of the city's financial district that she assumed the role of surrogate mother to many of the younger children. Kids like Michel, who was eleven, and who had fled the abuse of a violent father. After just two months here, she would watch eight of them die.**

**BETI:** There was a party on the eve of the massacre. We were over there, and it was filmed. Everyone was happy. They were dancing Sarapatel and singing "Who is it ? Who likes to eat Sarapatel?" It was very emotionally, as if they were saying goodbye.

**In the weeks leading up to the massacre, the Candelaria group had swelled to more than sixty children. They were an embarrassment to the banking and office workers, from whom they begged. Only a handful of them were over fifteen and the youngest was barely eight. Leader of the group was Come-Gato, the Cat-eater. On the night of the massacre the killers would make sure he was the first to die.**

**MICHEL:** In the afternoon, Come-Gato sent someone to get a few tins of glue. We got some food and sat on the grass. A policeman came, took the tins of glue and arrested our friend. We got upset and someone damaged the police car. They said they would be come back.

**ROGERIO:** We scattered about - some under the porch, some by the church, some on the news-stand roof, waiting for them to come. Then two cars came, two Chevettes, one yellow, the other coffee-coloured. A lot of guys got out. One of them went behind a pillar to piss. Another removed the car's numberplate. A hooded man crossed towards me, firing his gun, threatening to kill me. I saw them finishing Caolino off. They were killing him and I ran off.

I called the police. When I got back to Candelaria it was surrounded by journalists.

BETI: Here are the outlines of the dead boys. But one is missing. He died four days later, so he isn't here. Here there are only seven. One was in front of that news-stand. Another one was here. One there, one here. Another one here. My son, Pimpolho, was lying here. He was the youngest of the group. He was ten. The son I loved most was lying dead here.

**Rio's death squads normally do their killing clandestinely - dumping their victims in back alleys or in the hills that circle the city. But with the Candelaria massacre, they went public, gunning the children down in the heart of the city and leaving the corpses as a warning to others.**

**These terror tactics worked. Even at the funeral, many of the survivors hid their faces, terrified of the killers who were still at large. But Beti would not be bowed, she talked openly to the press, even naming the policemen who had threatened them hours before the massacre.**

**And then a military policeman who could neither explain why his gun was missing nor provide an alibi was arrested. Subsequently two more policemen and a taxi driver were also caught. None had alibis, all were identified by the children. As usual, the police tried to dismiss their evidence.**

POLICE CHIEF: There is no proof that a military policeman was involved in this. We have the testimony of a young girl who witnessed the killings. The two men were hooded and in plain clothes. Nothing points to the military police.

CROWD: Careca! Present! Justice! Justice!

**Even as the mourners called for justice, the investigation was already being denounced by human rights lawyer Julio Cesar, when it became clear that the investigating officers hadn't even recorded how the bodies were found.**

JULIO: You know, maybe 80 or 90% of the Brazilian population are not included in the citizenship. So the police exists to protect this 10% against the 90% who are not considered citizens. And the streetkids are part of this 90%. It's a fact that the kids here, the children, when they see a policeman they are scared to death, I mean, because a policeman is a symbol of violence, of death for them, and the reason of it, I think - for instance, these kids in Candelaria, they learned it the hardest way.

**Julio had helped Beti and the other children, acting as their adviser at the preliminary hearing when they gave the judge a detailed explanation of what happened and formally identified the killers face to face. By doing so, they knew they were in even**

greater danger and asked the state for protection. It was promised, but never happened. And incredibly, the accused were simply confined to barracks while the judge decided whether there was enough evidence to bring them to trial.

A breakthrough happened when the head of the military police internal affairs department, Colonel Valmir Brum, took up the case saying he would try to secure enough evidence to convict the killers. With a reputation for uncovering corruption within the force, Brum had become one of the few policemen whom the public and the children felt they could trust.

BETI: It's like everything happened in slow motion. All I can remember is the noise of the gunshots. Everything was so slow, you know? I tried to run but couldn't. I saw my friend Caolino jumping in the air as he died. I called him and he tried to run towards me but was hit by another bullet. The guy who shot him looked at me. If I had said anything, he would've killed me.

BRUM: How many kids were there that night?

BRUM: Sixty children. So more than eight might have been killed.

BETI: Maybe. The others weren't because it was so slow and everyone was trying to run away. They wanted to shoot everybody on the ground. They came from everywhere... no one could get away.

BRUM: Didn't Michel identify one of them?

BETI: Yes, but only because I pulled his ear. At the safe house, he said he'd say nothing. So I told him "Michel, you must say what you saw. If these guys are released, you'll die."

MICHEL: A security guard from town was among them. And now he wants to kill me because I said he was there. He's free and the authorities do nothing about it. We tell the judge and he thinks it's a joke. They arrest them but release them the next day. Now he wants to kill me. I have nowhere to go.

BRUM: Michel is one of the key witnesses of Candelaria. The fate of some of the accused is in his hands. We know he's a child, with a child's perception. But he experiences life as an adult. He's been on the street a long time. We must give credit to all the witnesses, not just Michel. There is also Wagner. He wasn't a child but a car washer who was in the wrong place at the wrong time as far as the criminals are concerned.

WAGNER: I went to Maua Square. A man inside a car pulled a hood over his face. They ran at us and put a gun in my face. They beat us and told us to get into the car. After they sped off, one of them sat on me and asked my friend "Do you know me? Remember me?" He didn't say anything. He shot me, and when I woke up I was in Flamengo.

Because Wagner was the only victim who survived and because he saw the killers so clearly, he was found a job outside Rio. When he returned to talk to Colonel Brum and

**Beti, Brum provided protection for him.**

WAGNER: I was here. Another one here and another one over there. Then I woke up and started to walk. I saw the cars and followed them. I walked to the petrol station to ask for help and then fell to the ground.

BETI: Where did they shoot you?

WAGNER: Here, here, and here. Another bullet is stuck in the back of my neck.

BRUM: The weapons they used were 38 calibre and 9 mm. These weapons are used by the police. What happened in Candelaria is very depressing. We came to the conclusion that our society is sick and in need of urgent treatment in a First World intensive care unit. After the Candelaria episode and the death of eight children, people were calling not to denounce it, but to say that more should be killed because they disturbed people so much.

ROGERIO: We all steal really. On the street, you have to steal. If you ask for a job, no one gives you one. And even if you beg no one gives you anything. So the only way not to starve is to steal.

BETI: Those buckets down there, were the food buckets. You can still see them today. We kept some clothes kept there, too. As you can see, this was our wardrobe. To this day, these things are here. Even my dead son's clothes are here. It's that woollen jumper there, you see? I can see his jumper today. It's incredible that the clothes still exist but the owner doesn't. It's really strange. Sometimes we only had two pieces of clothing and they had to be dried quickly. So we put them here to dry. Here they dry in seconds, in half an hour. So we had a drier, which most people haven't.

**Having so many kids living rough in the centre of the city was bad for business and in a place as violent as Rio, it was inevitable that someone would move against them.**

BRUM: Today we have policemen involved with death squads. They are hired hands of businessmen and shopkeepers who want to get the streetkids and young offenders away from their businesses.

BETI: A hooded man came from over there. It's amazing. Here on this corner there was a security guard called Paulao. He didn't like us. How come this security guard didn't see the hooded man? How come they didn't hear us? How can a massacre happen right here in the city centre, in such a wellknown place? It was all planned.

BRUM: Candelaria is an untypical case. Extermination groups don't normally work that way: Leaving their victims exposed out in the open, to be found and seen by the public. That was a really well organised plan to shock public opinion.

**Ottavio Gedes has investigated the tactics of the death squads and believes there are powerful forces behind the Candelaria massacre.**

OTTAVIO: I've no doubt that it was announced. It's as if the password was given. "The animal is going to strike" - the extermination password. So the news-stand was closed, the security guards weren't on patrol. A taxi rank nearby, which has about ten drivers, was empty that night. Candelaria was a fictional place, a deserted Candelaria.

BETI: This is the church of Candelaria where we'd go in and muck about a bit. We'd run around the church, and the priest would tell us to get out. My dream is to get married. I feel like a bride entering the church. But I don't see the groom at the front. Hello darling! Where were you, my love. They spend a fortune on flowers just to throw them away afterwards. I'll cover the cross with them. Open up, mate. It was a pleasure seeing you. I'll put them on the cross. This cross represents the Candelaria massacre. This is where my friend Caolino died. May God bless these children and give them light. Wherever they are they're in a good place.

## PART TWO

**One year after the streetchildren were massacred outside the Candelaria church, the killers had still not been brought to trial and the judge had still not set a date for the hearing. This is common in Rio where cases against death squad members are often dropped. Should this happen in the Candelaria case, Beti and the other witnesses would be easy targets for reprisals. At this point the three accused policemen were still simply confined to barracks but for how long. So Beti went to the Central Criminal Courts to try and find out when, if ever, the case will be heard.**

BETI: I'd like to know about the Candelaria case.

MAN: Information to either of the parties is not allowed.

Only to the relevant lawyers.

BETI: Only to the lawyers.

MAN: Yes, with credentials. Unfortunately, I can't help you.

BETI: OK, thank you.

JULIO: The military police uniform in Rio leads into impunity. Now, there is this phenomenon I call carnivalisation. It's when you take something and uses it in the opposite way to how it was supposed to be used. And what's happening here is the carnivalisation of violence, the carnivalisation of death.

**There have been more massacres including one in a shanty town in which 21 people were murdered. Colonel Brum has arrested 33 suspects. All of them police officers.**

Woman: They wanted to kill the children, the whole of my sisters family. My sister saw them. They were hooded.

Reporter: Were they policemen?

Woman: All military policemen, hooded.

BRUM: It's no use just thinking of the police as a degraded police, corrupt police, and sick police force, without thinking that society is also sick. Unless there is a change in society the police will only be its reflection. It's not the police who are violent. Society is violent.

**In Brazil it is the military police who patrol the streets. They are taught law only as a secondary subject, there primary training is in combat.**

BRUM: Today there are real war operations in the city centre against armoured security vehicles. This wasn't then norm when the criminals didn't have weapons capable of piercing an armoured car. So today, we almost have an urban war.

OLD MAN: These are the older weapons, and these are the new arrivals. These revolvers

come from different police stations. They're arms from homicides. First they go to the ballistic experts. Then they are kept here until a judge requests them. 160,000 weapons. This is a bazooka, seized in a slum by the drugs squad. This is an AR15. It's a Colt 223. The problem is there's no room to work. We risk getting lost in here. Look, this is an Uzi from Israel, isn't it? Two Uzis, see?

POLICEMAN: This is one of the points where we get in. When we get to the slum, we startle them because they don't see us coming. They never get involved with the police. They know it's a bad deal. If they kill police on patrol, there'll be a big reprisal. We'll enter the slum and attack.

GILBERTO: Police. It's a warning. A warning that the police have arrived. This is the reality. It means you should stay put. Keep calm. You mention the slums and people tremble. It's the underworld. It's the underworld in terms of hygiene. What prevails here is the rat. There are two worlds here, the human world and the rat world. There's a colony rats down there. Pretty soon the whole place will cave in. Beautiful children are born here despite undernourishment and all the difficulties. Look, blond hair and blue eyes. We have beautiful people in our community, but they don't develop. Look, beautiful eyes. I'd be rich with eyes like that. Look, all mixed up, food with excrement.

OLD WOMAN: You should come here in the evening. The place is crawling with rats. They run under our legs and climb up. It's frightening. While we're asleep, they bite our ears.

GILBERTO: Society thinks that there are no good people in the slums. You're looking at one example. I've lived here 30 years and I'm decent. I have no addictions. But 40% of society doesn't face this everyday fact. They assume that everyone in the slums is a drug dealer or an outcast. And that's how the violence starts.

JULIO: We have this illusion that we can easily detect good from evil, and when you come to Rio, you find out that you know very little about it. For instance so many corpses of young people arrives at these legal institutes that receives these corpses, that I was there the other day talking to the guys and you could see how excited they get when some pretty young girls arrive there. And they talk about them as if they were alive, you know. And you have the feeling that sometimes they even flirt with them. It's disappearing, this distinction between to be dead and to be alive. It's like to be dead is just one of the many ways of existing. Life is becoming very cheap. It's worth almost nothing now.

POLICEMAN: Pigs are used for eating corpses, so the problem can be disguised. They dump the corpses and let the pigs loose. The pigs do the job and no one ever finds the corpses.

**Unlike the other six witnesses to the Candelaria massacre, who fled back to the shanty towns, Michel is still living on the street - an open target. He spends his time begging, delivering drugs for a pusher and getting high on glue, another common cause of death**



**among the street children. This is where he lives, underneath a freeway, with twenty others. The youngest is just eighteen months old.**

MICHEL: About ten kids sleep here, and another ten over there.

MICHEL: This is glue.

MICHEL: It's a way to get your head spinning round. To see things.

FRIENDS: We see strange things. We see mirages.

MAN: I'm the commandant here.

MICHEL: Commandant!

MAN: I'm the commandant and you're dead. Commanded? Who will you blame if I kill you? Want to see how I can kill you?

**Brazil now has the greatest disparity between rich and poor, anywhere in the world. There are more than seven million children living on the streets. They have no civil rights, are denied health care and education. In other words, officially, kids like Michel don't exist. During 1994 one of Rio's streetchildren was murdered every day.**

BETI: Michel, do you remember when we wanted to buy a marble stone for Comegato's grave? What message would you write on it?

MICHEL: Even though he's dead, I'd ask him to carry on protecting us, to help our friends and to save us when evil comes to kill us.

**Hoping the dead will protect you is as realistic an option as any for Rio's streetkids. The Governor, Nilo Batista, was the one who promised protection for the Candelaria witnesses. Beti was desperate to keep him to his promise and repeatedly tried to see him and repeatedly was ignored. Finally, she decided to gate-crash the Governor's palace.**

BETI: I want to speak to Nilo Batista.

POLICEMAN: You can't film in here. Wait outside.

### PART THREE

BETI: This is what everybody thinks Rio de Janeiro is like. But in reality it isn't. This is the courtyard. This is where we do the washing. Here's the toilet. This is my grandmother who looks after everyone. She's bringing up this one, and that one too. The fridge.

**Beti is pregnant, for the second time. She miscarried shortly after the massacre. Now, she pays her first visit to a doctor, although she is not sure whether she is seven or nine months pregnant.**

BETI: Can't we do this later? I'm very nervous, I've never done it before.

DOCTOR: There's nothing to fear.

BETI: You've done it? I feel so ashamed.

BETI: I looked it up in here. I went to the doctor on September 1st. I'm seven and a half months pregnant. So I'm due on the 1st of October. I'll have two children then. This one and that one.

ROGERIO: Bullshit!

BETI: She's not my grandmother by blood, but as good as. She took my mother in when she was days old, from the street. She's brought up more than 20 kids. My mother got involved with drug trafficking and she had to leave us, you know? Later on, we heard she'd been killed.

**Michel's mother was also involved with drug traffickers because his father abused them both. One New Year's Eve, she was murdered, her body was found on a football pitch and Michael fled to the streets. He has only seen his Grandmother three times since that day seven years ago.**

GRAN: So you've decided to pay me a visit? Where have you been?

MICHEL: On the street.

GRAN: On the street? With whom?

GRAN: In my opinion, it's very clear. If any of those policemen think he's testified, he'll die. He'll die, you understand? It's not what I want, but it would be a relief. Because seeing him like that - he's not suffering, I am. You want to help me, keep me company, but you abandoned me ages ago.

MICHEL: If I had a gun, I'd kill my father.

GRAN: And where would you go? To jail.

MICHEL: No I wouldn't. I'm a minor.

GRAN: And being a minor means you can do anything? Not always. I see many minors with their mouths full of ants. You'll be another one. I wouldn't want that to happen. Michel, I'm your grandma not your father.

MICHEL: A father who abuses his son!

GRAN: Michel, stop telling lies.

MICHEL: Lies? Do a blood test.

GRAN: A blood test, for what? On whom, you? You're worse than your father. He didn't do half the things that you've done.

GRAN: He says his father abused him. That never happened. It's his way of getting revenge against his father. I was trying to bring Michel back home. But I don't want him any more. Not any more. It's not possible.

JULIO: From a small hut in a slum in Rio you can see a party, a very fancy party going on. And you can see from your window the details of the party. As much as somebody living in a penthouse can watch a shooting by the military police in a slum.

**It is becoming clear that one of the aims of massacres like Candelaria is to drive the children off the streets and back into the slums. But tension in the slums is now at such a pitch, the police no longer enter the shanty towns without the governors permission. Ottavio Gedes believes the Candelaria investigation was their last chance to combat their corrupt image.**

OTTAVIO: The military police investigated and opened the extermination closet. But that didn't strengthen the force. Instead, it created a superhero, which was Colonel Brum. Brazil loves soap operas. It likes to create superheroes. It has a constant need of heroes.

BRUM: The problem in Rio is the lack of leadership and good example at certain levels. In a way, they elected for having that profile: a policeman, a fearless person, who will fight all crimes in the same indiscriminate way without worrying about hurting the interests of A, B or C. Marion, Kevin Costner is out of a job.

JULIO: Rio de Janeiro It's a city of extremes. No other place in the world, that I know, puts together so close the sordid and the sublime.

After being ejected from the Governor's palace, Beti has still not been allowed to see Nilo Batista. We tracked him down electioneering at the opening of a new motorway and asked him how he'd devoted so much money to that rather than fulfilling his promise to protect the survivors of the Candelaria massacre.

BATISTA: We spend a lot of money on streetkids. But they're the city's responsibility. You should ask the mayor that question. According to the Childrens Statute, children are the council's responsibility, not the state's. The State is responsible for young offenders.

But Governor Batista has his own problems. He is now under investigation, because his name appeared on a list of senior officials and police officers who had been taking bribes from an illegal gambling drugs and arms smuggling ring. The list was discovered

when the ring was smashed by internal affairs investigators. Batista's position became untenable when the list was leaked to the press. The man accused of doing this is the head of the investigation, Colonel Brum.

BRUM: I've had a meeting with the commander - general in which the commander said everything he wanted, without giving me the right to reply. Chief of Police. My friend, I'm dismissed. Just a minute. Do you mind if I swear? No, it's just that I'm here with... I didn't tell the commandant to f\*\*\* off because I've still got manners, you understand? Colonel Iran is coming here and I'll pass the post on to him. After that, I'll be off the map. After talking for a month about what has been happening, the day has finally come. I have been dismissed today for naming the authorities who should be an example. If to prevent crime is to be a star, then I'll be a star my whole life. If we have to go naked in Playboy in order to prevent a crime, then we'll go naked. When they find out Captain Celso is being transferred to the military cabinet they'll think I'm sending a spy. Think about it, I'm serious. Keep your head up.

JULIO: As you go deeper and deeper as I have to defend human rights. The biggest challenge a human being can have in Rio at this moment is fight for human rights. You have now a perverted leisure metropolis. Because the informal economy, illegal activities - smuggling, killings, robbery, drug traffic, children prostitution, all these kind of activities that could provide money with no work, established as the main activity of the city. Rio would have a natural vocation to tourism, but who would like to come to a place with such a fame of violence?

JULIO: It's like an elite of upper and middle class and rich white people that are protected by these angry dogs, you know, around them, barking and biting a huge crowd of dark skinned people who are trying to get a small slice of this richness. And it's a very fragile balance. Brazil is really, it's a society walking on a tightrope and there is no net underneath. So anyone who falls dies.

BETI: Lorinho. Branco. Marcos. Neilton. The late Careca. The late Comegato.

As with children everywhere, the street kids find safety in numbers. As the numbers who take to the streets grow, so groups, like this one, get larger. Rather than go hungry, they will steal, reinforcing the hatred felt by local shop keepers and business men. They represent tantalising bait to the hired death squads. Are they another Candelaria waiting to happen?

Rio's urban war continues. The Brazilian government recently moved 65000 soldiers into the city. But the real problems of poverty, corruption and the police involvement with death squads, are not being addressed. Colonel Brum is still on suspension and there has been no progress in the Candelaria case. The accused men are still in their

barracks.

Michel was arrested for transporting drugs, served a short time in juvenile detention before he escaped during a riot.

Tired of living in hiding Wagner returned to Rio. Again the government failed to give him protection and two weeks after his return he was shot five times, by men believes were military police. He is in hospital waiting to be called to testify.

Rogerio is in prison serving time for theft.

And Beti has had a baby boy. They are together in the one room slum which they share with 16 other people. Her third family. She no longer has the time to tramp the corridors of power or doorstep the governor looking for some sort of justice for the murder of her eight friends. But can there ever be justice in a country where every six hours another child is murdered.

END