

Brazilian Adman Says Ex-President Cardoso's Party Bilked Him of US\$ 3.9 Million

Contributed by Gabriela Guerreiro
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Brazilian advertising executive, Marcos Valério, told Brazil's Joint Parliamentary Investigation Commission that is probing charges of vote-buying in the National Congress (the CPI on vote-buying) that he was bilked to the tune of US\$ 3.9 million (9 million reais) by the PSDB in 1998.

According to Valério, the campaign of the former Minas Gerais gubernatorial candidate, Eduardo Azeredo, incurred a total debt to him of US\$ 4.84 million (11 million reais). Azeredo is now a senator and national president of the PSDB.

Valério recounted that he was repaid only US\$ 881 thousand (2 million reais), leaving US\$ 3.9 million (9 million reais) outstanding.

When asked what caused him to overlook the PSDB's pending debt, he replied: "Let's be honest. I wasn't going to fight with the federal government at the time." The president of the Republic in 1998 was Fernando Henrique Cardoso, of the PSDB.

The adman made public a list containing the names of 79 individuals who supposedly received campaign funds in 1998.

The loans, according to Valério, were negotiated with the current vice-governor of Minas Gerais, Clésio Andrade, who was president of the PFL in Minas at the time and candidate for vice-governor on Azeredo's ticket.

Andrade used to be Valério's business partner, and that is why he made the loans, Valério said. He didn't provide any details on the origins of the funds that were transferred to Azeredo's campaign.

The president of the PSDB, Azeredo, stated through his press office that he will not comment on the new declarations, since he already gave an explanation in the voluntary defense he submitted on August 2 to the Parliamentary Investigation Commission on the Post Office.

On that occasion Azeredo admitted that his treasurer, Cláudio Mourão, did not report all the funds used to pay for the campaigns of candidates who ran for deputy on Azeredo's ticket.

According to the senator, Mourão asked SMP&B, one of Valério's firms, to contribute financial support to the legislative candidates. He did not include these sums in the campaign expenses reported by Azeredo, because he believed that they should be reported by the legislators.

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