

Caretaker Who Toppled Brazil's Finance Minister Sues Federal Savings Bank

Contributed by Roberta Lopes
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Francenildo dos Santos Costa, the caretaker whose March 14th testimony contradicting earlier public testimony by Brazil's former minister of Finance, Antonio Palocci, caused the resignation of Palocci, says he is suing the Caixa Econômica Federal (Federal Savings Bank) for US\$ 8 million (17.5 million reais)

Wlício Chaveiro Nascimento, the lawyer of Costa explains that his client has taken this decision because the Brazilian banking institution did not protect information about his client's bank account.

In the suit he filed claiming damages, Nascimento says that after the balance sheet of his bank account became public, his client "suffered extreme embarrassment and distress, among other reasons, because everyone now knew he was an illegitimate child."

Costa also had his "... individuality and moral image violated," says the lawyer's brief.

Nascimento said the request for damages was based on the known amount that the Caixa was spending on advertising to maintain its corporate image.

Nascimento says the state owned bank must pay damages to his client because it permitted access to information about his bank account, which became public.

According to Nascimento, the Caixa acted to "frighten" Costa and "induce public opinion to a false interpretation" (which was that Costa had been bribed by politicians).

Nascimento declared that under the country's bank secrecy laws, the Caixa had an obligation to protect Costa's bank account information.

He went on to say that by making such information public Costa's dignity and honor had been harmed and he has been forced to change his residence regularly and is no longer able to live together with his wife and child because he now "represents discomfort and a threat" to the rest of his family.

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