

May 21, 1973

Mr. James F. Shea, Labor Officer
Consulate General of the
United States of America
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Dear Jim:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 15 with the attached news clippings which we find of great interest.

In line with what appears to be a new ambiente in Brazil, there is a very interesting article in today's New York Times relating to the position taken over the weekend by some ten bishops and three archbishops highly critical of the unwarranted arrests, the tortures and the fact that many of these detainees who remain in jail sometimes months before being brought to trial, if ever. It was a rough statement but refreshing to read in the Times. Bill Doherty brought me up-to-date on the recent snafu in Brazil and apparently thinks that Jesse Friedman's explanation to the Minister of Labor has clarified this situation to everyone's satisfaction. I was willing to believe this until you reported that no representative of the Minister of Labor appeared at the ICT graduation ceremony. This may be significant in itself.

It is true that John Doherty has been assigned to Brussels but as of now, no one seems to know his departure date. I hope to learn more about the situation when I see John in Buenos Aires on May 30 when I will be arriving as a fraternal delegate to the CGT Extraordinary Congress which starts May 31 and ends June 2. There are all sorts of rumors emanating from Buenos Aires with reference to the Congress and what is likely to emerge from it. It is no secret that Jose Rucci would like to use the opportunity to reactivate ATLAS or in lieu of this, jointly with the Spanish trade union movement such as it is, attempt to create the Ibero-American Confederation of Labor. However, the close friends we have in the Peronist labor sector are showing no enthusiasm for either one of these proposals and are likely to oppose any proposal which would rupture or terminate their relations with the AFL-CIO. There are additional rumors that the

UFTU and the WCL have been invited to send delegates. I find this difficult to believe because of the strange anti-communist posture of the "62" leadership. I suppose all we can do is be patient and see what really transpires during the Congress. San Sebastian, who has been in contact with the majority of the CGT leaders reported that privately they are opposed to the isolation of the CGT in any third world entity and I myself feel that a number of CGT leaders would hesitate about permitting the CGT to become involved in some uncertain international labor adventure which would oblige them to break relations with the ITS structure. We are also informed from official sources in Buenos Aires that no foreign delegate to the congress will be permitted to use the Congress as a forum for ideological purposes.

There seems to be a widespread belief that Peron will address the Congress. A ten-man delegation, headed by Rucci, was supposed to fly to Madrid and personally invite Peron to address the Congress but on May 12, Rucci was obliged to announce that the trip to Madrid had been cancelled. The report went on to say that the trip was cancelled because of internal conflicts within the CGT centering around the designation of the new Minister of Labor. Whether Peron will speak at the Congress or not at this moment is problematical.

In Washington the big issue, of course, is Watergate. It is estimated that millions of Americans watched the Special Senate Committee hearings the first two days of the hearings and the interest will continue unabated until after the key witnesses have testified. This can mean another three or four weeks or longer. For your information, I am attaching the AFL-CIO Executive Council resolution on the Watergate scandal which I think you will find of great interest.

Mike leaves for Geneva on May 29 and will be gone until the end of June which means that I will have to return almost immediately from Buenos Aires with a one-day stop over in Lima, Peru and no possibility whatsoever on this trip to visit you in Brazil, much as I would like to.

All here are in good health, quite busy getting ready for the convention in October, but we do miss you.

With best wishes and warmest personal regards,

Cordially,

Andrew C. McLellan
Inter-American Representative

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Encl.