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 TO : Department of State
 INFO : AmEmbassy MONTEVIDEO
 AmConsuls BELEM, BELO HORIZONTE, CURITIBA, PORTO
 ALEGRE, RECIFE, SALVADOR, SAO PAULO
 FROM : AmEmbassy Office BRASILIA DATE: October 6, 1967
 SUBJECT: The Frente Ampla: Present Position and Prospects
 REF : (A) Brasilia A-12 of July 28, 1967; (B) Brasilia 895;
 (C) Brasilia 1109; (D) Brasilia A-51 of September 22,
 1967; (E) Brasilia 966; (F) Brasilia 1132
 SUMMARY

After numerous unsuccessful attempts to come to terms with the Costa e Silva administration, Carlos Lacerda reactivated his Frente Ampla (Broad Front) in early September. The main support for the Frente comes from the opposition MDB and is leftist-oriented. This leftist trend was reinforced when Lacerda met recently with João Goulart in Montevideo and obtained the latter's blessings for the Frente. Goulart, former President Kubitschek and others are supporting Lacerda's opposition initiatives in hopes of channeling whatever success he might have to their own benefit. The administration, although irritated by the Frente, has thus far not responded officially to Lacerda's attacks. It has, however, given warning to its own supporters and to proscribed politicians that it may act against them if they adhere to the Lacerda-dominated movement. Although the Frente nominally exists to bring about a vague "redemocratization," Lacerda, as its leader, hopes to use it to carry him to the Presidency. His movement is

- Enclosure No. 1: Newspaper clipping from September 5, 1967 issue of Correio da Manhã (Department only)
 Enclosure No. 2: Newspaper clipping from September 26, 1967 issue of Jornal do Brasil (Department only)

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already seriously threatening the MDB and has provided a challenge to the administration. By keeping his movement in a position of active opposition, by projecting it as the only alternative to the perpetuation of military rule, and by probing the administration's weak points, Lacerda can hope to exploit what tension may be produced as a result, a tactic at which he is a master.

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Introduction

1. The Frente Ampla (Broad Front), Carlos LACERDA's organization of opposition elements in Brazilian political life, proceeded through three stages of development before its birth as a true political movement. The Frente's conception--the conclusion in October 1966 of the so-called Lisbon Alliance between Lacerda and former President KUBITSCHKE--was followed by a lengthy, relatively quiet gestation period, during which Lacerda was careful not to antagonize the supporters of President-elect and then President COSTA E SILVA (Ref A). The fact that Lacerda rarely criticized the new administration in its first five months indicated that he hoped to come to terms with Costa e Silva, looking to the indirect Presidential election of 1971. Lacerda's overtures fell on deaf ears, however, for Costa e Silva showed little desire to support his presidential ambitions. Faced with this attitude and provided with the spark generated by the confinement of his journalistic spokesman Helio FERNANDES, Lacerda broke his silence and began lambasting the administration in a series of late August editorials published in Tribuna da Imprensa. After this renewed burst of activity, the Frente was officially born at a September 4 organizational meeting attended by Lacerda, Kubitschek, and a number of other leading advocates of the movement (Ref B). The Frente's first steps were directed toward gaining publicity and adherents. Of crucial importance in this initial phase were Lacerda's late September meetings in Montevideo with ex-President João GOULART, after which a joint statement was issued calling for "redemocratization" and support for the Frente (Ref C).

The Frente's Objectives and Lacerda's Strategy

2. The Frente's public objectives, announced after its September 4 meeting, demonstrate the movement's leftist flavor (Enclosure 1). Briefly stated, the Frente, a "populist and nationalist"

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movement, is said to strive for a union for pacification and normalization of the democratic process; a policy of national development; a "sovereign" foreign policy; the defense of national wealth; a policy of support for the laboring classes; autonomy in national education. It is noteworthy that these goals are all contained in slightly different form within the MDB party program, which itself resembles older PTB documents. This leftist orientation was reinforced by the Lacerda-Goulart statement (Enclosure 2) which was clearly aimed at attracting Goulart's old labor support to the Frente.

3. More significant than the stated objectives are the immediate practical aims of the movement which were not mentioned specifically in the Frente's program--direct election of the President, amnesty, revision of the Press and National Security laws. They reflect both the diverse nature of the Frente and Lacerda's key role in it. Despite Lacerda's recent assertions to the contrary (Ref D), the Frente is tied to his political apronstrings, and he most certainly considers it as an expedient to further his own presidential ambitions. While other active politicians may indeed be interested in a vague "redemocratization," they can only realize this goal through a successful strategy carried out by Lacerda, and for him, this ultimately includes the Presidency. Thus, those who see no future in the MDB's feeble challenge to the present system are ironically forced into furthering the fortunes of a man whom they may abhor politically, but whose alternative does not now exist.

4. As for the proscribed politicians, principally Kubitschek and Goulart, their support for the Frente and Lacerda is as opportunistic as Lacerda's current courting of his former political enemies. It should be noted that Lacerda came to them and not vice-versa, and that he now admits he erred in opposing them in the past. To men who were so violently criticized by Lacerda, this must be satisfying. The two former Presidents also presumably feel that only Lacerda is capable at present of campaigning effectively for the legal revisions and broad amnesty which would bring them back to the political scene. While they must realize that such objectives are well down on Lacerda's list of priorities, his support offers at least a dim hope--and one which they would not have without him. They and others in their situation are willing to gamble on the possibility that Lacerda will somehow succeed and that they will be able to channel his efforts toward their own ultimate benefit. This is admittedly a long-shot.

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5. For these reasons, Frente backers are content for the present to allow Lacerda a free rein in pursuing his own personal strategy. The first stage of his campaign has already been somewhat successful: He has managed to put together the semblance of a political movement, gained publicity for it, and projected it as a challenge to the administration and to military rule in general. This initial, limited success is partially due to the lack of a strong opposition, and the Frente has quickly become the focus of domestic politics. One might assume that the second stage would include efforts to broaden the Frente's congressional and popular base, and increase its agitation on the political scene. Without an incident putting the administration in an unfavorable light, however, this would appear difficult to accomplish. A spark was almost provided when the government clumsily brought in Kubitschek to testify about his activities (Ref E), but the administration's error was mitigated when he was allowed to leave the country peacefully. Lacerda's call for "popular mobilization" also seems doomed to present failure without some kind of motivating incident, since major elections are three years away. Even Goulart's backing of the Frente will probably not immediately increase Lacerda's ability to call out the ex-President's labor supporters (although it may in the long run), given the enforced inertia in the labor movement. Besides this, a statement was issued on October 2 in the name of the VARGAS family questioning Lacerda's sincerity in calling for "redemocratization," and declaring that there was an "unsurmountable barrier" between the labor class and certain Frente leaders,

The Frente, the Administration and the Political Parties

6. It is difficult to assess the Frente's actual strength since a list of adherents has never been announced, nor have the members of its Committees for Program and Coordination been named as promised at the September 4 meeting. At present it is probable that approximately 25 or 30 congressmen, mostly from the opposition MDB, are firmly committed to the movement, while an equal number are perhaps favorable, but still testing the political winds. Non-parliamentary support is less clearly defined due to the lack of an organizational structure within which figures might be identified. While certain supporters of Lacerda, Kubitschek and Goulart can be singled out, the vague promises to bring all proscribed politicians and representatives of the laboring and student classes into the movement have not yet materialized.

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7. The Costa e Silva administration, while irritated by Lacerda's outbursts and his attempts to erect a more formidable opposition structure, has maintained its silence, not once responding officially to Lacerda's thrusts. It has made clear, however, through the leadership of its ARENA party, that it will not tolerate defections from its congressional base without some kind of punishment for dissidence. ARENA support for the Frente has thus far been slight, with only a handful of administration congressmen currently identified with the movement. Some observers, in fact, see the formation of the Frente as beneficial to ARENA. In this view, the administration, desirous of maintaining cohesion in its ranks, would begin to pay more attention to its own party and give it a more significant role in the legislature. On the repressive side, there are reliable reports that a decree is being prepared to regulate the activities of those deprived of their political rights. The present reluctance of ex-President Janio QUADROS to adhere to the Frente can be seen as a partial result of this policy, and there are certainly others who share his view.

8. While ARENA seems secure at present against the Frente's initiatives at gaining supporters, the MDB, whose ties of unity are only precariously woven, is undergoing a crisis in its ranks which threatens to weaken it further, perhaps to the point of its eventual absorption into Lacerda's organization. Certain opposition congressmen such as Renato ARCHER (Kubitschek's spokesman and Frente Executive Secretary), Oswaldo LIMA Filho (Goulart's representative) and Lacerdistas Raul BRUNINI and Padre Antonio GODINHO have been committed from the beginning. The Frente was given a surprising boost when MDB leaders Deputies Martins RODRIGUES, Mario COVAS and Senator Josaphat MARINHO attended the organizational meeting. Another potential source of MDB support is the group of so-called immaturos (immature ones)--young, leftist Deputies impatient with the MDB--some of whom have joined the Frente already. Besides these, many opposition members are reluctant to oppose even a nascent movement which may some day find a modicum of popular acceptance. This attitude was evident when MDB National President Oscar PASSOS was unable to call a party meeting in order to condemn the Frente. Passos himself was forced to withdraw his opposition to the movement and, on September 27, the MDB Executive Directorate issued a statement saying that the party would not place restrictions on members who adhered to Lacerda's movement (Ref F).

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Prospects

9. Although the Frente Ampla poses no present danger to the Costa e Silva administration, it is still a source of concern, mainly because of Lacerda's past history of success in producing a politically charged atmosphere within which he can agitate, needle, and conspire. His libertarian pretensions are certainly secondary to his desire for the nation's leadership and, as of now, his only hope lies in changing the present electoral system. This change could come about through normal congressional processes of constitutional amendment, but such an amendment would be extremely unlikely without the administration's backing. On the other hand, Lacerda over the next two years or so, may begin to amass enough support in Congress to press more effectively for electoral reform. This would, however, necessitate a change within the Frente from its present leftist orientation to one of greater moderation. There are no signs that this will come about, nor that Costa e Silva will lose his control of the political middle ground. Only a disaster in the economy or a major political error by the administration could open a significant wedge for Lacerda in the Congress. Even dissension within the Armed Forces would not necessarily bode well for Lacerda, since his military support is now slight.

10. Lacerda could, of course, attempt to bring about "popular mobilization," or the leading of the people into the streets, as promised. One wonders, however, how successful this tactic would be in view of the relatively tranquil political atmosphere which now exists. It is by no means clear that the bulk of the population is dissatisfied with Costa e Silva--in fact, he has benefited by contrast to his more rigid predecessor. Even if Lacerda could call out the masses, this alone would not guarantee a change in the political system. The administration is not completely impervious to public opinion, but, barring an unlikely mass uprising, it can maintain itself in power, even if not widely popular.

11. A look at the present makeup of the Frente points out that Lacerda's traditional supporters within the ex-UDN have not come forth in large numbers, and that the movement has taken a definitely leftist cast. Many ex-Lacerdistas are comfortably ensconced in the administration's ARENA party and are unwilling to jeopardize their positions, not to mention the benefits of patronage, by adhering to an opposition movement. While Lacerda might like to broaden the political outlook of the Frente, it appears that

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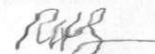
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the movement will be forced to move increasingly toward the leftist extreme, where dissatisfaction is prevalent, and where respect for orderly processes is even less than Lacerda's. His meeting with João Goulart while increasing the Frente's potential acceptance among labor leaders, can only act to diminish further any residual traditional support he might have had. It is also noteworthy in this respect that Lacerda has never stated that he would refuse the assistance of such exiled extremists as Leonel BRIZOLA, although the latter recently re-emphasized his strong antipathy toward Lacerda. Internally, the Frente will most likely continue to exist as a conglomeration of opposition political views, and political enemies. Although the movement is outwardly unified at present, either success or failure could serve to highlight these contradictions and produce the same kind of dissension in Frente ranks which Lacerda is attempting to sow within the administration and the nation as a whole.

12. For the immediate future, Lacerda and his strange bedfellows in the Frente can be expected to follow their present line--to seek as much publicity for the movement as possible; to attempt to increase its support throughout Brazilian political life; to embarrass and try to provoke the administration into errors. While to some this strategy might appear to be aimless agitation, it is part of Lacerda's longer range plan which is based on the assessment that the administration will falter in some way and boost the Frente's and his stock. No one can safely predict what the next three years of the Costa e Silva administration will bring. In view of Brazil's many problems, some dissatisfaction and frustration is always bound to be present, particularly if Costa e Silva does not change his rather complacent way of governing. In this respect, Lacerda has the advantage of being on the attack rather than on the defensive. By keeping his movement in a position of active opposition, by projecting it as the alternative to the perpetuation of military rule, and by probing the administration's weak points, he can hope to exploit what tension may be produced as a result--and, if nothing else, Carlos Lacerda is a master at creating and exploiting tension.

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Source: Correio da Manhã
September 5, 1967

NOTA OFICIAL

Ao final da noite, foi distribuída a seguinte nota oficial assinada pelo sr. Renato Archer:

"A Frente Ampla constitui-se num movimento popular e nacionalista com os seguintes propósitos fundamentais: 1 — união dos brasileiros para a pacificação do País e para a normalidade do processo democrático; 2 — retomada da política de desenvolvimento nacional, com expansão do mercado externo, pelo aumento da produção e do salário; 3 — execução de uma política externa soberana, apenas subordinada aos objetivos permanentes da Nação brasileira; 4 — política de defesa das riquezas nacionais; 5 — ampliação das conquistas sociais, sobretudo por maior presença e participação dos trabalhadores na política econômico-social; 6 — preservação da autenticidade da cultura brasileira e apoio aos professores e estudantes na luta pela autonomia da educação nacional para a liberdade e prosperidade do povo.

Para atingir esses objetivos, a Frente Ampla resolveu criar uma comissão de coordenação e uma comissão de programa e instituir uma secretaria executiva que será dirigida pelo deputado Renato Archer.

Assim constituída, a Frente Ampla espera contar com a participação de todos os democratas e convida o povo para a próxima mobilização."

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Source: Jornal do Brasil
September 26, 1967

O Pacto de Montevideu

É a seguinte a declaração conjunta assinada pelo ex-Presidente João Goulart e ex-Governador Carlos Lacerda:

"Convencidos da necessidade inadiável de promover o processo de redemocratização do Brasil, reunimo-nos em Montevideu.

Sabemos o que significam as privações e as frustrações do povo, especialmente dos trabalhadores, os que mais sofrem as consequências da supressão das liberdades democráticas.

Sabemos o que quer dizer o silêncio de reprobção dos trabalhadores, submetidos à permanente ameaça da violência e privados do direito de reivindicar seus direitos.

É preciso que se transforme, corajosa e democraticamente, a estrutura de instituições arcaicas que não mais atendem aos anseios de desenvolvimento do País. É preciso assegurar aos brasileiros o aproveitamento das riquezas nacionais em favor do seu povo e não de grupos externos e internos, que sangram e exploram o seu trabalho.

Ninguém tem o direito de suprimir pela mistificação, pela usurpação total do Poder civil, ou pelo ódio, as esperanças do País de solucionar, pacificamente, os grandes problemas do nosso tempo.

Pensamos que é um dever usar todos os recursos ao nosso alcance na busca de soluções pacíficas para a crise brasileira, sem cultivar ressentimentos pessoais, nem propósitos revanchistas.

Não nos entendemos para promover a desordem, mas sim para assegurar o estabelecimento de verdadeira ordem democrática, que não é a do silêncio e da submissão.

O salário mais justo, mais do que nunca, é uma exigência do trabalhador, esmagado pela pobreza, e de todo o País, para a expansão do mercado interno.

A retomada do processo democrático, pela eleição direta, é essencial para conquistar, ao mesmo tempo, o direito de decisão, que pertence ao povo; e a pacificação nacional, instrumento de mobilização do Brasil para o esforço do desenvolvimento com justiça social e autonomia nacional.

Queremos a paz com liberdade, a lei com legitimidade, a democracia não como uma palavra, mas como um processo de ascensão do povo ao Poder.

A frente ampla é o instrumento capaz de atender com esse sentido, responsávelmente, ao anseio popular pela restauração das liberdades públicas e individuais; pela participação de todos os brasileiros na formação dos órgãos de poder e na definição dos princípios constitucionais que regerão a vida nacional pela retomada dos esforços para formular e pôr em execução as reformas fundamentais; e a reconquista da direção dos órgãos que decidem do destino do Brasil.

A formação desse movimento — uma verdadeira frente ampla do povo, integrada por patriotas de todas as camadas sociais, organizações e correntes políticas — é a grande tarefa que nós cabe realizar com lealdade e coragem cívica, mobilizando nossas energias e concentrando-as, sem desfalecimento, para reconduzir o Brasil ao caminho democrático.

Movidos exclusivamente pela preocupação com o futuro do nosso País, não fizemos pactos. Não cogitamos de novos Partidos, nem de futuras candidaturas à Presidência da República.

Conversamos sim, longamente, com objetividade e respeito, sobre a atual conjuntura política, econômica e social do País.

Não temos ambições pessoais, nem o nosso espírito abriga ódios. Anima-nos tão-somente o ideal que jamais desfalecerá de lutar pela libertação e grandeza do Brasil, com uma vida melhor para todos os seus filhos.

Assim, só assim, evitaremos a terrível necessidade de escolher entre a submissão e a rebelião, entre a paz da escravidão e a guerra civil.

Montevideu, 25 de setembro de 1967.

João Goulart — Carlos Lacerda".

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