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TO : Department of State
FROM : Amembassy BRASILIA Office
SUBJECT : PDC Moderates Gain in Rio Convention
REF : São Paulo's A-370 & A-384

AIR POUCH
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SUMMARY

Brazil's Christian Democratic Party (PDC) held an Extraordinary Convention in Rio from January 31 to February 2. Although press accounts of the Convention were sketchy, the meeting appears to represent a victory for the moderate and conservative forces of the party who have been waging an intra-party fight with the radical nationalists, led by ex-Minister of Education Paulo de Tarso.

The Convention laid down a set of principles which, while maintaining the party's "centrism," affirm the need for "democratic legality," the party's opposition to Communism, and its support for the Alliance for Progress. The Convention's resolutions attempted to maintain party unity by 1) limiting the party's left from associating with the radical Frente de Mobilização Popular (FMP) and 2) avoiding the sensitive presidential candidate issue.

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Introduction

The PDC Convention that met in Rio de Janeiro, Palácio Pedro Ernesto was a result of the growing feud within PDC. The fight appears to some degree to be a personal one and to center around the personality of Paulo de Tarso (Federal Deputy-São Paulo) but as a party with an ideological base, the issues are often couched in ideological terms.

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The party's problem harkens back to Paulo de Tarso's short service in the Ministry of Education (June to October 1963) when many party members objected to his independence, his stinginess with patronage for his own party, as well as close ties to the left and its ideas. Consequently, Tarso was the subject of a much publicized PDC National Directorate meeting on August 30 and another on October 24.

The first meeting followed Tarso's speech in Bogota attacking the Alliance for Progress. The Directorate among other things accepted Tarso's excuse for the speech, weakly endorsed him in the Ministry and suggested that party members disassociate themselves from supra-party groupings like the Frente de Mobilizaçao Popular (FMP) and the Ação Democrata Popular (ADP). The second meeting followed Tarso's resignation from the Goulart Government, reportedly at the bidding of the leftist supra-party FMP; this time the party's Directorate censured Paulo de Tarso's political behavior, forbade participation in supra-parties and put out a call for an Extraordinary Convention.

Thus, the ex-Minister of Education is most directly the cause of the recent convention. But possibly a more essential cause is the growing awareness of the party's basic disunity. Though everyone within the PDC swears ideological loyalty to the same Papal Social Encyclicals, members of the Brazilian PDC seem to be spread across the political spectrum from old Marshal Juarez Tavora (Federal Deputy-Guanabara), a strong voice against Marxism, to Plinio de Arruda Sampaio, possibly more powerful than Tarso as a leader of the party's São Paulo young radicals.

A recent example of this disparity can be found in Everado Magalhães Castro (State Deputy-Guanabara) who left the party for the UDN after several months of verbal exchanges with PDC leftists. He marked his leave-taking with a denunciation of Communist infiltration in the party.

The Convention

The party's moderate President, Nei Braga, Governor of Parana, keynoted the convention in his opening speech, calling for structural reforms and attacking inflation in the same breath. He further stressed, as he has in many recent speeches, the centerist stand of the PDC and broadly attacked all extremists.

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As if in answer, Paulo de Tarso gave an early speech seeking the support of the party for the Communist-dominated CGT, the Paulo Freire literacy method, Petrobras and efforts against the Hanna mineral holdings. Reportedly, Tarso received loud cheers from a clique in the balcony and jeers from the delegates on the floor.

There seems to be little doubt that the party's conservative and moderate elements were more in evidence at this convention than at the last annual party convention held at Aguas da Pratas in May 1963. (São Paulo's A-370). The convention was made up of representatives of all of the party's state directorates rather than chosen from the party's rank and file as the annual conventions are. The important work of the convention were two resolutions and a number of theses under the heading "line of political action."

The Non-Participation Resolution

The first resolution forbids party members from participating in political organizations which are outside of the normal party structures, such as the two congressional groups, the leftist Frente Parlamentar Nacionalista (FPN) and the conservative Ação Democrata Parlamentar (ADP). Probably the resolution was aimed more at the Frente Mobilização Popular (FMP), the growing leftist organization often identified with Leonel Brizola and connected to the FPN. Since it was very much the purpose of the Convention to obtain national party support for the National Directorate's decision to censure Paulo de Tarso and to cut him off from the FMP, by this resolution alone it might be said that the convention achieved its purpose. Though Deputies Arruda Camara (Pernambuco) and Aniz Badra (São Paulo) have already resigned from the ADP, Paulo de Tarso's reaction to the resolution will probably not be so simple. Indications of the necessary sophism have already appeared in the words of Jose Richa, a PDC Federal Deputy from Parana and the President of the party's Juventude Democrata Cristã (JDC), who has stated that the prohibition only means that from now on the PDC will be officially represented in FPN meetings by a member designated by the party.

The Presidential Resolution

The approaching 1965 Presidential campaign presents several serious problems for the leadership of the PDC. Like any political party, the PDC will attempt to identify itself with a winner. Also as a small but growing party it will be anxious to maintain its own image. The party has a weak Presidential, though possibly viable Vice Presidential, candidate in the party's President Nei Braga. It is known that certain elements of the party strongly support

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the candidacy of Carlos Lacerda (the Rio de Janeiro State Directorate has already announced its support for the Guanabara Governor), but such a move would probably split the party for good.

Franco Montoro (Federal Deputy-São Paulo) and other party centrists, probably including Braga, favor a "Third Force" position that would back a centerist candidate with dissident elements of other parties. Indications are that an effort will be made at the party's annual convention, set for March 27 in Bahia, to push the idea, but enthusiasm for the proposal is low, especially since the principal possible candidate, ex-Minister of Finance Carvalho Pinto, is reluctant to commit himself.

With the party badly split, the convention wisely postponed discussion of the sensitive issue and merely stated that the PDC would support a candidate who would guarantee the legitimate transmission of the Presidential office, who would represent the true interests of the nation and who would govern in "a tranquil climate and with authority that assures, at the same time, national development with reforms in the national structure."

The Convention Platform

The last annual party convention, May 1963 at Aguas da Prata, São Paulo, was dominated by the party's leftists (São Paulo's A-370). There has since been some disagreement as to which platform was adopted at that time, a statist, anti-foreign capital program reportedly proposed by a group of leftist São Paulo delegates, or a trimmed-down moderate platform which later appeared in the press. (São Paulo's A-384). Party members by their actions seem to accept the former as the real work of the May convention. Paulo de Tarso's resignation from the Goulart government, with the rationale that he was a "leftist" and could not put up with Goulart's conservative actions, was defended in the name of the Aguas de Prata platform. The conservative Rio de Janeiro State Directorate came to the Rio Convention determined to set aside the May statement of principles.

Therefore, the Rio Convention's eight statements are significant as measures, not so much of where the PDC stands but, of which corrections the delegates of this convention wished to make on the party's image. Though it seems quite clear that the drafters of the program wished to maintain the "centrist" image of the party by impartially attacking Communism and Marxism, Capitalism and "Neo-Capitalism" (this theme has been continually pumped by the party's President and

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by its leaders in the Federal Chamber, Franco Montoro), it seems equally clear that a principal preoccupation of the drafters is to offset any misunderstanding of the party's basic anti-Communist stance. The PDC, according to the document, "rejects Communism and Marxism as materialistic and totalitarian doctrines that subordinate all political, economic and social life to the State that, for its part, is an instrument of single party, dominated by a new class." It further states that the PDC recognizes "the incompatibility of Christian Democracy and the totalitarian regime" (that governs Russia) and denounces "the activities of the Communist Party as projections of Russian interests in other countries." The eighth statement, a general endorsement of student groups and unions with a warning that they should represent the interest of their class and not be placed in the service of "parties or groups foreign to them," can reasonably be read in the context of the Brazilian Catholic hierarchy's growing preoccupation with Communist subversion of Church related organizations and Communist attempts to capture the rural labor movement. (See Brasilia's A-83).

The platform encouragingly assumes a positive posture on several issues upon which the party has not recently taken a direct stand. It endorses the Alliance for Progress, President Kennedy's policy toward Latin America "now adopted by his successor," ALALC and even the EEC.

Conclusion

The Rio Convention appears to have accomplished what the National Directorate and party's moderates intended when they called the Convention in October 1963. The Aguas da Prata program and the speeches of Paulo de Tarso and other party leftists have been balanced somewhat by a moderate program and a resolution which may curtail the radicals' activities. The party's moderates have produced a statement which gives equal verbal weight to "structural reforms in line with Christian principles" and "unwavering maintenance of democratic legality."

The Convention would seem to reaffirm that the PDC does have a significant following of progressive and positive nationalists who are anti-Communist and are not necessarily ill-disposed to the United States and the Alliance for Progress. But it also indicates that the party, which can produce such diverse statements of policy, is suffering from the severe stresses and strains of disunity. The

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fight will probably continue at the meeting of the party's National Directorate which is scheduled to meet in Brasilia on February 27 and the annual convention which will meet in Bahia on March 27.

For the Ambassador:


Robert W. Dean
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure: 

As stated

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Enclosure 1
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Portuguese Text of Eight Statements of Platform of PDC Convention,
February 1964 (as they appeared in O Estado de São Paulo,
February 3, 1964).

1 - O PDC considera básico para a solução concreta dos problemas nacionais: a) a realização de reformas estruturais na linha dos princípios cristãos; b) a manutenção intransigente da legalidade democrática.

2 - O PDC face ao capitalismo: rejeita o capitalismo e o neo-capitalismo que mantêm a primazia do capital no processo econômico. A democracia cristã entende que essa primazia deve caber ao trabalho. Ademais, tanto o capitalismo como o neo-capitalismo subordinam a vida econômica, política e cultural aos detentores do capital.

3 - O PDC face ao comunismo e ao marxismo: rejeita o comunismo e o marxismo como doutrinas materialistas e totalitárias que subordinam toda a vida política, econômica e social ao Estado que, por sua vez, é um instrumento de um partido único dominado por uma nova classe. Além disto, o marxismo não altera a relação de domínio do capital sobre o trabalho, apenas substitui o capitalismo privado pelo capitalismo do Estado.

4 - O PDC face aos Estados Unidos: Distingue o povo norte-americano, o governo norte-americano e grupos econômicos norte-americanos. Quanto ao povo norte-americano, a democracia cristã solidariza-se com ele. Quanto ao governo norte-americano, a democracia cristã reconhece o esforço da política do Presidente Kennedy, agora adotada por seu sucessor, para modificar as relações entre os Estados Unidos e os países sub-desenvolvidos da América Latina. Quanto aos grupos econômicos dos Estados Unidos, o PDC afirma que existem conflitos de interesse entre a economia brasileira e as daqueles grupos. Isto gera para o Brasil o dever de elaborar uma política econômica independente, que deve aceitar o capital estrangeiro desde que caiba ao Poder Público brasileiro determinar os setores de aplicação desse capital, a rentabilidade de tais ajudas para o País e dos dispositivos de segurança e preservação de nossa cultura, de nossa independência política e da nossa opinião pública.

5 - O PDC face à Aliança para o Progresso: julga que deve ser cumprido rigorosamente o estabelecido na Carta de Punta Del Este, reservando-se o direito de denunciar todos os desvios cometidos em sua execução.

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6 - O PDC face à URSS: distingue os povos russos do governo soviético, este dominado pelo Partido Comunista. Solidariza-se com os povos russos e reconhece incompatibilidade entre a democracia cristã e o regime totalitário do governo vigente naquele país e denuncia as atividades do Partido Comunista como projeções dos interesses russos nos outros países.

7 - O PDC face à Comunidade Econômica Européia e a ALALC: defende a integração econômica, social e política da América Latina, como forma de superar o subdesenvolvimento. Reconhece a importância da Comunidade Econômica Européia para a paz mundial, e trabalha para que acima do interesse de grupos sejam estabelecidas relações de verdadeira cooperação e apoio aos povos que lutam contra o subdesenvolvimento.

8 - O PDC face às atividades sindicais e estudantis: reconhece a legitimidade e utilidade das organizações sindicais e estudantis como órgãos representativos de setores fiscais da comunidade nacional. Afirma que tais organizações devem estar a serviço dos interesses das classes que representam e denunciará todo o desvio dessa linha para colocá-los a serviço de partidos ou grupos a ela estranhos.

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