

## Report from Rio by Geraldo Lino

### 'Lula' program shocks Brazilians

*The cultural underpinnings of Brazil's New Age party are showing as the presidential campaign quickens its pace.*

As the October Brazilian presidential elections draw near, the perverse cultural matrix of the Workers Party (PT), has come into view, exposing the ideology which has served to turn a groupuscule of left-overs from the the armed struggle against the military government in the 1960s and '70s, into a protagonist in the spread of anti-Christian beliefs and practices in the Brazilian political scene.

The PT leadership, whose candidate "Lula" da Silva is a major contender for President, decided to present the party's program for public discussion. On March 13, Brazilians were stunned when newspapers revealed elements of that program, which included proposals to legalize abortion, civil marriage of homosexuals, and free access to contraceptive methods. The initiative to include such controversial proposals in the program came from the PT Gays and Lesbians Group, one of the many groupings of the party's "rainbow coalition." As one might expect, it triggered a furious reaction from many sectors of society, especially from the Catholic Church.

"The PT's political platform, which includes the approval of abortion and homosexual marriage, is an affront to the teachings of the church," Rio de Janeiro Cardinal Dom Eugenio Sales told *O Globo* on March 16. The outrage of the church leadership was that much greater because the announcement of the PT program coincided with the opening of the Fraternity Campaign, a traditional initiative of the Brazilian Catholic Church, whose theme this year was "the family." The

campaign's primer, entitled "The Family. How Is It Doing?" makes a vehement attack on the "culture of death": "Society creates and multiplies death through hunger, the depreciation of the person, the search for profit without ethics, urban and rural violence, aggression against women and children, and the deification of postures and values which degrade the human being."

Belo Horizonte Archbishop Dom Serafim Fernandes de Araujo, who is also the vice president of the Brazilian National Bishops Conference (CNBB), declared in an interview with the March 18 *O Estado de São Paulo*, that the PT proposals were "regrettable." "Both are unmovable convictions of the church. Accepting abortion or marriage between homosexuals means changing the Gospel," he said.

While not stating so openly, the archbishop suggested that the Catholic Church might prove a major obstacle to the PT's electoral ambitions. "The church will not work against anybody's candidacy, but with Lula or without him, it asserts that it will not accept abortion nor any sense of death, and it will not accept the marriage between men and men and between women and women."

The PT's proposals raised opposition even among some of its traditional allies within the Theology of Liberation wing of the Catholic Church. Speaking to the March 14 *Jornal do Brasil*, Msgr. Arnaldo Beltrami, spokesman for Brazilian Cardinal Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns, blasted the idea of homosexual marriage: "The

church is completely opposed to this kind of marriage. It is a biological matter, a genetic law." Cardinal Arns is linked to the Cuban-spawned São Paulo Forum.

Even some PT parliamentarians denounced the proposals. On March 15, Congresswoman Benedita da Silva, who headed a congressional investigation into the mass sterilization of women in Brazil, told Lula personally: "These items cannot be part of a government program because they are flawed." Congresswoman Irma Passoni suggested that such things happen because the party's leadership is controlled by radicals.

Confronted with such a barrage of criticism, candidate Lula publicly stated that he is against abortion and that he does not necessarily regard the party's proposals as his own. Referring to himself in the third person, he told *O Globo* March 17: "Lula cannot impose his program upon the party, and neither society nor the party can impose its program upon Lula."

Yet it should come as no surprise that these proposals could be floated at all by the PT, given the attitude which that movement shares with other Ibero-American radical and pro-terrorist left-wing parties gathered in the São Paulo Forum, namely, open hostility to the Christian roots and values of western civilization. As the January 1994 *EIR* Special Report "Shining Path North Explodes in Mexico" put it, "It is neither Christian charity nor love of one's fellow man, nor the idea that man is created in the image and likeness of God, which unifies the ranks of the PT, but rather the most materialistic of concepts, based on the lowest instincts of social hatred and of sexual promiscuity among men, women, and homosexuals, who consider the structure of the family as one more relationship of 'domination' that must be overturned."