CENTRE FOR BRAZILIAN STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Civil society in Lula's Brazil

Kathryn Hochstetler

Working Paper Number
CBS-57-04

Centre for Brazilian Studies
University of Oxford
92 Woodstock Rd
Oxford OX2 7ND

Civil society in Lula's Brazil

Kathryn Hochstetler
Research Fellow in Politics,
Centre for Brazilian Studies

Working Paper
CBS-57-04

Abstract

This paper presents an overview of the Lula government's relationship to civil society organisations as a whole. By focusing on issues of both governing processes and substantive policy outcomes, it identifies which civil society organisations and which substantive issues were most effectively included in the administration's first year. Overall the conclusion is that many civil society organisations were more-satisfied procedurally than substantively in the first year. In addition, an emerging coalition of actors is poised to initiate significant pressure around a set of issues broadly classifiable as rural, especially land claims and genetically modified crops, and a few have entered into opposition. To help understand these actions, the paper introduces a distinction between protest intended to pressure a government and protest which represents opposition to the government. It concludes with three possible scenarios for the future of relations between civil society and the Worker's Party government.

Resumo

O presente texto procura oferecer um panorama da relação entre o governo Lula e as organizações da sociedade civil como todo. O texto, au enfocar ambos os processos de governar e os resultados concretos da política, identifica quais organizações da sociedade civil e quais assuntos substantivos foram mais efetivamente incluídos durante o primeiro ano do governo. Em termos gerais, a conclusão é que muitas organizações da sociedade civil ficaram mais satisfeitas em termos de sua inclusão no processo político do que com os resultados concretos do primeiro ano. Também, uma coalizão emergente se prepara para iniciar reivindicações significativas sobre um grupo de assuntos classificáveis como rurais, especificamente demandas para terra e contra os transgênicos. Algumas organizações já entraram em oposição aberta ao governo. Para entender essas ações, o texto introduz uma distinção entre protesto como 'pressure' (que tem como objetivo fazer reivindicações ao governo) e protesto como 'opposition' (que tem como objetivo expressar oposição ao governo). O texto conclui com três cenários alternativos para o futuro das relações entre a sociedade civil e o governo do Partido dos Trabalhadores.

This paper has greatly benefitted from discussions and seminars at the Centre for Brazilian Studies, Oxford University. In particular, I would like to thank the following people for numerous and helpful discussions of the PT, while absolving them of any responsibility for my errors of fact and interpretation: Fiona Macaulay, José Augusto Pádua, Kurt von Mettenheim, Leslie Bethell, Margaret Keck, Mauricio Rands Barros, and Miguel Carter. The paper was also improved by comments and queries following presentations at the University of California at Riverside, the Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of London, Oxford Brookes University, and the Society for Latin American Studies.

In 1978, Brazilian anthropologist Roberto da Matta wrote that much of Brazilian political culture could be summed up by the question, "Do you know to whom you are speaking?" (Matta 1978). The question implied the importance of hierarchy and status in Brazilian politics, and presumed that those who heard the question would respond with silence and awe to their "superiors". At just about the same time, however, political events were beginning to undermine his insightful analysis. New actors were emerging in Brazilian politics who responded to both the military government and traditional Brazilian hierarchies with their own agendas of political transformation, using an array of tactics that were anything but silent and respectful. In 1980, an alliance of unions, social movements, intellectuals, the progressive church, and other opponents to the military government chose to push forward the process of political change by forming the Workers' Party, the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* or PT.

This paper looks at that alliance 24 years later, about one third of the way through the term of the Workers' Party's first national president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula). Civil society organizations (CSOs) – a term used here to refer to a full set of non-governmental, non-profit voluntary associations including unions and social movements[1] – greeted Lula's election with enthusiasm, and many actively supported his campaign. Over 15 months, that initial approval has given way to real concern about what CSOs read as a continuation of the neoliberal economic model of previous governments. They are clearly impatient with the slow pace of social change and the next months will see extensive social mobilization and protest. At the same time, reading the political content of that protest accurately depends on understanding the difference between protest as pressure and protest as opposition.

Both kinds of protest involve the same activities, including street demonstrations, collective letters and pronouncements, and petitions. For Brazilian civil society, the list of activities also includes occupations of land and buildings. The distinction between the two kinds of protest depends on knowing how participants themselves are framing their activities and the purposes behind them. CSOs' assessment of the purposes of the government as well is at the heart of the different

[1] Civil society is a heavily contested concept in social theory and a partial synonym of related concepts like social movements, popular organisations, the third sector, and non-governmental organisations, among others. The debate is in part a definitional one, with different analysts including and excluding particular categories of actors, but it is also a normative debate about the impact of these actors on key collective outcomes such as democracy and social equity. Some of the extensive theoretical literature on civil society is discussed in Cohen and Arato (1992) and Seligman (1992). See also McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (1997) as an example of an approach that uses a different label (contentious politics) to discuss a very similar set of empirical referents. This Working Paper does not enter directly into the normative debates about civil society, but simply uses the term to indicate that it refers to actors who fit the classic definition of civil society as voluntary associative life between the levels of families and individuals and the state.

framings. *Protest as pressure* departs from the assumption that CSOs and the government fundamentally share the same purposes. As it appears most frequently in the Brazilian CSO statements below, it reflects an understanding that the government is too weak to carry out the shared purposes without being pushed by CSOs, especially in the face of countervailing pressures. In contrast, *protest as opposition* presumes that there is limited agreement between the government and CSOs on aims which are important to CSOs.

During the first 15 months of the Lula administration, most social protests were designed to pressure the government to carry out a shared agenda with CSOs. CSOs were fairly pleased with their access to the new government and joined in a number of processes designed to guarantee their participation in decision making. While they were unhappy with the slow pace of substantive achievement, they tended to believe that the administration and Lula personally intended to carry out a new social agenda. By the end of the first year a few CSOs, notably environmentalists, were beginning to take positions of open opposition in response to a series of plans with which they actively disagreed. In the second year, other CSOs have moved to a kind of interim position that still expresses some hope for shared purposes, but will initiate strong waves of pressure looking for confirming results – soon.

Political parties and civil society organizations

For the most part, academic literatures on political parties and CSOs tend to treat them separately. They are in fact often quite separate and even competing kinds of political actors. Many civil society organizations operate well outside the world of electoral politics and prize their autonomy from it. Most political parties are not grounded in specific social organizations either. The most common solidarity relations are between socialist parties and trade unions and between conservative parties and business organizations, but these develop in idiosyncratic and country-specific ways (Thomas 2001). Close relationships between political parties and social movements are quite a bit scarcer, with the green and pensioners parties phenomena as notable partial exceptions. A political party like the PT with its strong foundation in both unions and an array of social movements is thus quite unusual, but provides a provocative case for thinking about the possibilities and limitations of closer links between political parties and CSOs.

Political parties and CSOs perform partially overlapping functions in modern political systems. Parties, unions, and social movements all are mediating institutions that link citizens and the state, turning individuals into collective actors

and articulating their demands and values to political decision-makers. In the 1980s, evidence of party decline led to a general conclusion that parties and such alternative organizations were competing organizations (e.g., Lawson and Merkl 1988). After the 1990s showed the persistence of political parties, the new consensus is that parties and the other mediating organizations are at least potentially complementary representation mechanisms (Bartolini and Mair 2001; Fuchs and Klingemann 1995; Kitschelt 2003). Large numbers of citizens can make use of political parties to express broad programmatic objectives in regular elections, while smaller groups use social movements and interest groups to express their more-intense preferences on specific issues.

The complementarity of these mechanisms from the standpoint of citizens does not necessarily translate into easy relations between them as organizations in their own right. The key here is understanding that their functions only partially overlap. All of the mediating organizations play what Bartolini and Mair call the representation or social input functions of parties: they articulate and aggregate interests and integrate and mobilize citizens (Bartolini and Mair 2001:331). Only political parties have usually been able to play a second set of institutional roles, "including the recruitment of political leaders and the organization of parliament and government (Bartolini and Mair 2001:332)." This is because only political parties have access to authoritative decision-making spaces in most political systems while other mediating actors are limited to the less-authoritative public sphere (Hochstetler and Friedman 2004).

The obvious and not especially novel conclusion is that parties virtually always end up facing contradictions between the demands of expressing social interests and those of winning electoral campaigns and governing. Social movements and interest groups do not face the dilemma themselves, but they do face the dilemma of how to relate to party allies who do. Those party allies, for example, may be calculating whether they can electorally afford to support the extra-institutional participation of their associated social movements (Nylen 2000:114). One of the few empirically grounded generalizations that can be made about the relationship between parties and their allied social groups is that it is nearly always more conflictual when the party is actually in power, especially for leftist parties (Thomas 2001:285). A party in legislative opposition can exercise its expressive role more freely since it is not in a position of actually having to balance claims and create decisional majorities. Partly for this reason, many parties grounded in civil society organizations engage in internal debates about whether to try to win elections if it means moving away from core movement or union principles to attract a majority of

electoral votes and then a majority of legislative support for proposals. The lure of organizing and leading authoritative decision-making on central agenda items – which might not even be discussed by less-sympathetic party leaders – is the primary argument in favor of making the necessary compromises.

These dilemmas are especially acute for political systems of the presidential type, where executives are separately and directly elected by the population. "The presidential office is by nature two-dimensional and in a sense ambiguous because a president is the representative of a clear political option, a partisan option, and of his constituency, sometimes in addition representing his party within the coalition that brought him to power. But the president is also the head of state (Linz 1994:24)." If the executive is too partisan or seen as speaking too much for a particular constituency, he or she will be seen as not fulfilling the head of state role, speaking for the entire population. Because of the symbolically central role of the national president, Lula's election has heightened the potential contradictions and gains in the party-CSO relationship. These were present at lower levels of government, but in more diffuse ways.

The PT way of governing

From its origin in 1980, the PT has openly considered and discussed these kinds of dilemmas, with party activists showing a keen understanding of the tradeoffs and struggling with different preferences within the party for balancing them. At the time of the party's formation, some sympathizers wondered about the wisdom of forming a party at all, and others preferred the larger anti-military umbrella party, the PMDB (Keck 1992). The central question was what a political party could do for the specific constituencies of a possible workers' party that other kinds of social organization could not. In the end, the party's creation arose from "...the conclusion that union representation of members' demands for better working conditions, wages, and other benefits was not enough to ensure a better life for Brazil's working classes. Workers were also citizens, with needs and interests outside the workplace, and they needed to be represented as such in the national political arena (Nylen 2000:129)."

Over the next 22 years, the PT gradually added concrete experience with balancing its dual identities. Due both to Brazil's large number of parties and its own secondary position among them, the PT has always been a legislative minority, although sometimes part of a multi-party governing coalition. The most relevant experiences of governing for understanding the new Lula administration are thus the PT's periods of executive power. The first of these came in the 1982 mayoral elections, followed by a peak of 187 mayoral positions in 2000; the first two PT

governors were elected in 1994, with three in 1998 (Baiocchi 2003a:13). These executive experiences were quite varied in terms of their success and citizen approval (see Baiocchi 2003b). Macaulay and Burton (2003:132) identify a set of key challenges for state governments that provides an excellent roadmap for understanding those of the Lula administration as well:

- the fiscal and political challenges of state administration;
- competing claims on public resources;
- intra-party conflicts between different factions;
- and the need to govern through alliances in a legislature in which the PT was in a minority.

The second challenge most often has involved the dilemma of balancing the demands of public sector unions, a major part of the PT's organized constituency, with other spending priorities. Intra-party conflicts and alliance strategy debates often were oriented around some of the other tradeoffs identified in the previous section.

Over the years, the PT has developed a basic formula for its governing strategy, which the party itself refers to as "*o modo petista de governar,*" or, the PT way of governing (Fundação Perseu Abramo 1997). The model was distilled from both successful and unsuccessful governing experiences at the municipal and state levels, and reflects some moderation in aims and approach by the PT over time. Entering into the 21st century, the PT way of governing includes two essential priorities (Baiocchi 2003a; Nylen 2000; Nylen 2003). The first is a substantive commitment to pursue redistributive policies that favor the poor over the wealthy, while the second is a procedural commitment to incorporating and even institutionalizing popular participation in decision-making. While the two principles are clearly related, they make distinct contributions to helping the PT address the dilemmas of a political party with a strong base in social movements and unions.

The PT stands virtually alone in Brazil as a political party with a strong and specific substantive ideology. Over more than two decades, the exact content of that ideology has changed somewhat, as could be tracked by the varying definitions and prominence of the PT's commitment to socialism (Samuels forthcoming). Despite all the changes, the focus on redistribution toward the poor has remained a bottom line. It is the heart of the PT's appeal to its traditional constituency of organized unions and social movements. As Nylen (2003:104) argues:

Ideology is fundamental to the very identity of the PT as a progressive party of the Left; it functions as the ideational glue for holding together its many different factions

and currents. The party *must* have a "transformational project" that envisions an eventual transformation of the status quo into a more socially just (i.e., egalitarian) future, or it will lose the allegiance of its most expressive leaders and active membership.

While maintaining this ideology is a *sine qua non* for the PT's traditional base, it has sometimes helped the PT electorally as well, by allowing it to be seen as the clearest alternative to politics as usual.

The procedural commitment to participation performs a different role. It also plays well with the traditional base, especially social movements. Baiocchi (2003a:7) traces the participatory vision of the PT to Brazilian urban social movements in the 1970s, who put such demands at the center of their challenge to the military government of the time. Brazil's CSOs have had an unusually strong and well-developed participatory vision that they link to the concept of citizenship (Dagnino 1994; Friedman and Hochstetler 2002). The PT has been a central support, but not the only party, in the development of this vision. Perhaps more important, however, has been the way that broad participation has helped the PT to mediate between its organized base and the larger population that it governs.

> ...[I]n terms of negotiating societal demands, it could create settings where claimants themselves could be part of the negotiation of demands; in terms of governance, broad-based participation could generate legitimacy for strategies of governance, if not improving governance directly (Baiocchi 2003a:21).

This was especially critical since redistributing to the poorest might well mean directing resources away from the comparatively privileged public sector unions and middle class social movements and intellectuals who form much of the PT's base.

This model of governing and the dilemmas it seeks to resolve have their origins in the PT's political experiences at subnational levels. Not all PT administrations have been equally successful at putting the model into practice. While some have made the PT globally recognized for its innovative and high-quality administration, others have been "an object lesson in how not to govern (Macaulay and Burton 2003:131)." One constantly available reason for failure has been the backdrop of unsympathetic national governments with other priorities and practices. When the PT's Lula became national president in 2003, this backdrop finally changed. The PT won the presidency on a platform that continued to uphold the two priorities of redistribution and participation, and an ample majority of the Brazilian population chose its promise of a political alternative to the PSDB. This midterm assessment of Lula's administration evaluates how that government has managed the dilemmas of governing, which have largely reappeared at the national level. The

next sections look at both what the Lula administration has done and what it has *not* done from the perspective of CSOs in the two areas of process and substance. The conclusion sets out three possible scenarios for the remainder of the administration.

The PT way of governing at the national level: process

At the national level, the PT has not been as innovative in developing wholly new mechanisms of participation as in some of its state and municipal administrations. Nonetheless, the party has made credible efforts to include its civil society allies and other citizens in the processes of making political decisions. These efforts have been justified both as ends in themselves, fulfilling the PT's historic commitment to citizen participation, and as mechanisms to try to create social consensus around issues in ways that can help the PT overcome its continuing minority status in the national legislature. This section describes three different kinds of civil society inclusion, and then concludes with a brief discussion of some procedural errors that the PT national administration has largely avoided so far.

The most significant addition to the PT's procedural repertoire with the new administration is the heavy use it has made of Lula as an individual and as *the* representative of national government in its dealings with CSOs. Lula has tremendous personal charisma and credibility among the PT's allied CSOs, and his appointment book as president has made significant room for them. In his first months in office, the country's main newspapers reported on his meeting with representatives of labor, business, indigenous, anti-poverty, religious, and women's CSOs. With these meetings, Lula brought prominence to CSOs' agendas and leaders and had the opportunity to remind them of their shared purposes. With CSOs, Lula praised their work and expressed sympathy for their aims, urged them to join in supporting governmental projects like the Zero Hunger plan – and asked them for patience. Such meetings were effective even well into the administration. In September, for example, Lula met with the executive council of Abong, an organization of NGOs, and the new Abong president later reported, "Abong left with a very positive sense that there is currently a stronger recognition, in the public sphere, of the role of NGOs. Evidence of this was the president's interest in the meeting, extending it and reacting with quite a lot of enthusiasm to the idea that NGOs have an important role to play in the process of South American integration as well (quoted in *Informes Abong* No. 246, 4-10 September 2004)."

A more mixed reception from the landless movement (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*, or MST) shows the possible limits of the strategy. Lula resisted meeting with the MST early in his administration, and the political

gossip section of one newspaper reported that Lula even refused to set an appointment with the organization in March when it insisted on negotiating with him personally ("Painel", *Folha de São Paulo* 16 March 2003). Lula held extensive meetings with the MST in July after the organization initiated a massive land occupation campaign. He raised strong objections from landowners' organizations when he wore an MST cap in the July meetings, and then faced equally strong criticisms from the MST for wearing their cap to meet with them in December, after a year that they judged deficient in land reform results (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-50, 23 December 2003:6).

The most systematic inclusion for CSOs has come in the way the PT staffed the national administration. CSO leaders of all kinds now work within the government on issues they formerly tried to influence from outside. Perhaps the most-notable example came in the use of leaders of the CUT trade union (*Central Unica dos Trabalhadores*), which found itself on the government side of salary negotiations in nine ministries, 53 secretariats, and thousands of second and third level jobs in the government (*Jornal do Brasil* 15 September 2003). Other examples include the first head of the Incra land reform institute, who had strong ties to the landless movement and Minister of Environment Marina Silva, who grew up in the rubber tapper communities of the Amazon and has years of credibility as an environmental activist and legislator. This is a recruitment pattern familiar from the earliest PT administrations, and has equally familiar tensions and allures for CSO activists. They are close to the center of power and able to make decisions, but also find themselves limited by budgetary and bureaucratic constraints that often divide them from those still outside. Those CSO activists who remain outside see their ranks diminished by the exodus of leaders to the government, and these rarely can do as much as the outsiders hope.

Finally, the PT has initiated a number of consultative processes that are similar to those carried out by previous administrations, of the PT and of other parties. These serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, inclusion is intended to build civil society "ownership" of government policies. As citizens negotiate with other stakeholders, they are supposed to make their own compromises and tradeoffs, rather than having them decided and enforced from outside. The second purpose of consultation is to try to create social consensus around proposals that will help carry them through a National Congress that is both fragmented and the ultimate decision maker on national legislation.[1] The PT will make this argument itself, and hopes that

[1] It is sometimes missed that the world-famous participatory budgets also work this way. Only legislatures can actually make spending decisions, and so the translation of the popularly-chosen budget

citizens will also join them in defending the proposals they have forged. So far, the gap between the proposals of consultative processes and actual policy outcomes appears to be wider at the national than it was at the subnational levels. As discussed more in the section on substance, the PT itself is responsible for some of those gaps.

Perhaps the best known consultative mechanism is the Economic and Social Development Council (*Conselho de Desenvolvimento Economico e Social*). Lula promised this Council even before he was formally elected, as a body that would reach social consensus on key economic and social issues. Its make-up has varied somewhat, but it largely follows a classic corporatist framework, with business, government, and union representatives, plus a few others. The membership is divided evenly between business and non-business actors, and union representatives share their quota with both the government and with non-union NGOs who are there to speak for some of the interests left out in tripartite negotiations such as those of the unorganized or unemployed. The council met for the first time in February and produced partial drafts of the pension and tax reform bills in April. It is currently working on proposals for labor reform.

The Economic and Social Development Council addresses issues of central importance to the PT core constituency and is a recognized format for dealing with them. There are signs that it is inadequate, however, from the standpoint of CSOs. The clearest evidence is the fact that when Lula took the pension and tax bills to Congress with an entourage of all the country's governors and his entire cabinet, he had to drive the block from the executive building because of hostile union protesters in the streets (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-17, 6 May 2003:197). In addition, the Congress decided to make numerous changes in the bills, notwithstanding the consultations and the strong public opinion support for the bills: 78% for the pension proposal and 68% for the tax bill (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-18, 12 May 2003:209).

A few months later, CSOs were openly wondering whether government-sponsored consensus-building consultations were adequate as forums for their interests. In August of 2003, many of the PT's traditional movement and union allies including the CUT and MST formed a new Coordination of Social Movements without the PT to discuss similar issues to those raised in the Economic and Social Development Council and to prepare jointly for its meetings. The question of whether consensus with pro-market actors is actually possible or desirable is the

---

into legislation depends on legislators accepting its legitimacy, or fearing popular reprisals if they don't. See Nylen (2003) on some breeches in translation.

most fundamental critique of consultation of this kind. The Abong Director of Institutional Relations, José Antônio Moroni, raised this question after a September meeting of the Council's Special Secretariat reached a broad consensus on their vision from Brazil in 2020: "A question: is consensus possible in a society as complex and divided as ours, where the only form of communication between classes is currently violence? What consensus would that be? (quoted in 25 Sept-1 Oct 2003, *Informes Abong* No. 248)."

A discussion of process would be incomplete without briefly mentioning some of the procedural "sins of commission" which have not happened during the PT's first months in office. Most importantly, there have been no large-scale violent clashes between security forces and demonstrators, despite an increase in land occupations and numerous labor mobilizations.[2] A massacre of protesters or open confrontation with them would severely damage relations between the government and its CSO allies, especially if national security forces were involved. The administration has generally taken a line that asserts both the right to protest and the responsibility for lawful behavior. This may be a difficult line to uphold if the number and hostility of protests continue to rise.

Corruption in the administration would also be a procedural sin of commission. This would likely carry strong repercussions among the PT's voters as well as in its organized base. The support of voters who do not necessarily share the PT's substantive priorities relies on "...competence in the more mundane affairs of city planning, its unwavering opposition to corruption and clientelism, and the broad spectrum of citizens who have become involved in local affairs (Baiocchi 2003a:2)." In the PT's second year, the unquestioned corruption of Waldomiro Diniz, a key assistant of Lula's invaluable right hand man, José Dirceu, has presented a dangerous crack in this reputation. Several different polls showed the government's popularity making its sharpest drop over the time that spanned the emergence of the Diniz case, with the well-known Ibope poll tracing a 12 point drop (66% to 54%) in the government's approval rating from December to the end of March. Lula's approval, which had been untouched by previous skirmishes, also fell (69% to 60%) (*Jornal do Brasil* 27 March 2004). The administration has squashed a congressional investigation into the Diniz case at considerable political cost, and its future depends in part on there being no more cases.

[2] NGOs have reported that both peasants and indigenous people were killed in higher numbers in 2003 than in the previous years (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-48, 9 December 2003:2). For the most part, policing such crimes is a state and local responsibility, but the PT and its allies have been critical of national governments in the past for failing to deal effectively with the problem of violence.

Overall, the procedural side of the first national PT administration is uneven, but has some bright spots from the standpoint of its traditional CSO allies. They have a president who knows and values their work and gives it visibility. They have key decision making positions in the administration. They are being included in decision making consultations. The sticking point for all of these achievements, however, is that they have yet to turn into measurable substantive gains on issues CSOs care about. The next section addresses those concerns.

The PT way of governing at the national level: substance

The substantive baseline of the PT is economic distribution to the poor, what the PT calls an inversion of priorities away from policies that have made Brazil one of the perennial contenders for the title of most unequal country in the world. Historically, the PT has framed this goal in terms of a commitment to socialism, although the exact content of that word has changed dramatically over time. In its winning platform in 2002, however, the words socialism and socialist were conspicuously absent (Hunter 2003:153). As Lula took office in January 2003, the Zero Hunger program was showcased as an initial attempt to address extreme poverty. It quickly became overshadowed by the PT economic team's unwavering commitment to producing a primary budget surplus and maintaining macroeconomic stability and business confidence.

The Lula administration's economic policies are beyond the scope of this essay, except for the basic point that the first year saw, if anything, less space and funding for social programs than in the outgoing administration. The policies produced solid achievements in terms of their stabilization aims, but the already-stagnant economy actually slowed its rate of growth and shrank by 0.2% over the year (*Folha de Sõo Paulo* 28 February 2004). Both inside and outside the PT, critics of the administration are focused on the lack of growth. The worsening economic stagnation has affected civil society organizations directly in that no money has been made available for issues that are important to them. From their standpoint, the lack of social programs spending is a significant "sin of omission" on the part of the new administration. The administration has tried to address the expectations deficit with some delivery on issues that do not cost much money. One example of this kind of policy would be the Lula administration pushing the United Nations member states to make new commitments for gay and lesbian rights. Foreign policy has been a comparatively successful domain for the administration in the view of CSOs, who approve its feistiness in defending Brazil's interests and South-South agreements. Domestic affairs have been much more disappointing.

The high expectations that were generated by the prospect of the PT reaching national office contribute to the disappointment. The expectations went even beyond those who actually voted for the PT, with 71% of Brazilian expecting good government from Lula. A plurality of 24% expected general improvements in government within a year, 16.3% thought they would be visible within 6 months, and only 4.8% expected no improvements. A full 70.7% expected lower unemployment in particular (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-02-45, 12 November 2002:533).

The inflation of expectations can be seen for the landless movement in particular.[3] During the eight Cardoso years, approximately 100,000 families were settled on land. In contrast, the MST wanted 120,000 families to be settled in the first year of Lula's administration and one million by the end of his four years (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-26, 8 July 2003:304). In the end, only the number of land invasions increased significantly in 2003 – 202 by November versus 103 in all of 2002 – amid PT promises to settle 400,000 families by the end of its four years (*Latin American Weekly Report* WR-03-46, 25 November 2003:7).[4] Reported government figures say that 36,800 families were in fact settled in 2003, but 75% of those were placed on land expropriated in six previous administrations. Less than 10,000 families received land made available by the PT administration itself (*Folha de Sõo Paulo* 5 April 2004). Other civil society movements had equally high expectations and disappointments, although not usually expressable in such clear quantitative terms.

In the view of many CSOs, the Lula administration could have chosen other economic paths and outcomes. The Coordination of Social Movements which formed eight months into the administration still believed "another Brazil is possible!" in September, 2003, and suggested a concrete first step: "Non-renewal of the agreement with the IMF; control of currency exchange rates and capital flows, suspension of the payments on the foreign debt and a review of the debt, following the Brazilian Constitution (Coordenaçõo dos Movimentos Sociais 2003)." The Coordination's February 2004 meeting produced a Letter from Sõo Paulo that has lost the optimistic tone of its earlier communications, suggesting its participants are no longer sure that another Brazil is possible. Now in the second year of the administration, the Coordination concluded: "The current policy maintains a clear neoliberal slant and a perverse character, subordinated to financial capital and to the agreements with the IMF, which are harmful to the national interest (Coordenação

[3] Figures on both settled and waiting families are notoriously unreliable and politicized in Brazil. These should be considered approximate rather than final.

[4] The numbers of invasions in 2002 had been unusually low in part because the MST was anxious not

dos Movimentos Sociais 2004)." The Letter set out a schedule of national mobilizations and protests.

At this point, it is useful to return to the distinction between protest as pressure and protest as opposition that opened this paper. The actors discussed so far in this section and many who will join them in the schedule of mobilizations have not yet concluded that the PT and Lula have definitely opted for the wrong path. The Letter from São Paulo blames the heritage of the Cardoso administration and the current administration's Ministry of Finance and Central Bank. It mentions "the government" but neither Lula nor the PT by name. Perhaps the best metaphor for understanding this position comes from MST leader João Pedro Stedile, speaking in a public lecture in Toronto at the end of October. Stedile compared Brazil's situation to that of a traffic circle with three exits: full neoliberalism, light neoliberalism, and the real popular project. For the first 15 months, the PT administration has been cruising around the circle, trying to figure out which road to take out. With the PT itself divided among the three positions, social mobilization was Stedile's key to achieving social change: "It is not so much a question of Lula's will as it is of the balance of power. We in the MST believe that if the people really got involved and got behind the popular project, we could make a real leftist out of Lula (Stedile 2003:13)." In this way, protests were seen as enabling the PT government to make the right choice for change. The director of the National Students' Union (*Unio Nacional dos Estudantes* UNE), Paulo Vinicius da Silva, made a similar analysis around the plans laid out in the Letter:

We are going to invest heavily in social mobilizations and mass protests. Look, in response to every more progressive position of the government, conservative sectors, like the rural movement, immediately speak up and they can count on the support of the press. If social movements don't take the streets, it will be difficult to implement any alternative agenda (cited in Glass 2004).

Thus this round of protests is fairly clearly protests to pressure a still-possibly-sympathetic government, not yet opposition.

The timing of the mobilizations announced in the Letter from So Paulo suggests that CSOs think their pressure and the threat of it should produce some positive results by the time of a proposed June meeting of the Ministerial Summit of the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas in Brazil. So far, CSOs have sent quite carefully modulated messages to the administration and public about their evolving stances and this seems likely to continue. The distinction between pressure and

to damage the PT's chances for electoral success.

opposition, for example, obviously comes from the CSOs themselves. The pattern so far has also been one of gradually stepping up the pressure and expressions of dissatisfaction, and the PT should not assume that its CSO allies will wait forever. Last October, Stedile said that the MST had changed its occupation strategy with the PT in power: "We used to occupy the public offices of the agrarian reform agency, in the days when Cardoso was in power. But now we occupy roads, estates – there is a different focus because the government is no longer our enemy (Stedile 2003:18)." This position gives special poignancy to MST leader Joo Paulo Rodrigues's announcement at the end of March 2004 that "The time limit has already ended." The MST's new plans were "...to invade estates, close roads, organize pickets in public buildings, march to Brasilia, and to occupy agencies of the Bank of Brazil" (*Jornal do Brasil* 20 March 2004). These are not messages that the PT government should be ignoring or misinterpreting.

The protests as pressure, which will certainly be quite visible over the next months, are in response to the absence of positive action by the Lula administration. A smaller group of CSOs has now entered into a position of more openly oppositional protest, following a series of policy decisions which clearly leave no room for their preferred agendas. In particular, Brazilian environmentalists are strongly displeased with the government and find allies on at least some of their concerns, especially around genetically modified crops.

The diversity within the PT has meant a historically mixed relationship between the party and environmentalists. This diversity is nicely illustrated by the three governorships that the PT held after 1998. Acre's governor, Jorge Viana, was a close associate of Chico Mendes, the rubber tapper and environmentalist who was assassinated in Acre in 1988. Along with Lula's Minister of the Environment, Marina Silva, he has had strong legitimacy with many environmentalists inside and outside the region. In Mato Grosso do Sul, in contrast, the governor known as Zeca do PT was a supporter of large scale export agriculture and frequently on the opposing side for environmentalists.[5] In Rio Grande do Sul, the Dutra administration fell somewhere in between, but there were strong historic ties between the PT and environmental organizations like Agapan.[6]

Environmentalists have now decided that Lula and key members of his administration have opted for an orientation like that of Mato Grosso do Sul rather than that of Acre. The letter that more than 500 organizations sent to Lula on 20

[5] Interview with Alcides Faria, Coalição Rios Vivos and Ecoa, Campo Grande, March 2002. Faria was a founding member of the PT in the state.

[6] Interview with Giovanni Gregol, then City Councilman for the PT and founding member of Agapan,

October 2003 stands out as a highly personal statement to the president himself: "It is obvious that the government is not correctly evaluating the scale of the erosion that already affects Your Excellency, and that can still become much worse, in a short time, if the unfolding decisional processes continue to disdain socioenvironmental variables..."[7] The letter is not a rejection of the entire administration, and was conceived in part as a means of support for the embattled Minister of the Environment against other parts of the administration. It singles out three areas of disagreement in particular: the inclusion of numerous infrastructure projects for the Amazon region in the 2004-2007 Multi-year Plan document, lack of action on global climate change issues, and permission to plant genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In addition to the actual content of the policies, environmentalists and their allies had procedural complaints as well. Some of them had participated in 27 national Forums on Development, Participation, and Inclusion, which brought 2200 NGOs together to help shape the Multi-year Plan. Lula told the 170 NGOs who met with him to give their report on the Forums that there had never been a planning process with so much participation and assured them that the partnership would help them demand the results they wanted to see (*Informes Abong* No. 243, 14-20 August 2003). Yet the final Plan contained projects that directly contravened the input of socio-environmentalist NGOs.

As environmentalists sent their letter they were also engaged in preparations for the First National Conference on the Environment, which involved 65,000 representatives of CSOs, many not normally related to the environment. That diverse crowd sent a very strong supporting message for environmentalists, making the prohibition on GMOs one of the four points of consensus coming out of the conference (*Informes Abong* No. 257, 28 November-4 December 2003). This resulted in a small gain on the GMO issue in particular, with the February version of a bill in the lower house of Congress giving the Ministry of the Environment some voice in the eventual approval or disapproval of GMOs. No final legislation or resolution has been achieved, but the opponents to GMOs continue to mobilize. On 11 March in Porto Alegre, for example, CSOs held a "popular tribunal" that found against GMOs for its environmental and social costs. Participants included stalwarts from the PT's traditional allies such as the CUT, the MST, and the students' union.

Environmentalists have less organized support for their other agenda items.

Porto Alegre, June 1990.

[7] The letter is online at http://www.socioambiental.org/website/noticias/noticia.asp?Fil...2003-10-20-13-07.htm, accessed 23 October 2003.

Here they face divisions among CSOs that relate to disagreements on the place of economic growth and employment in national priorities. While Brazilian environmentalists typically adopt a socio-environmental stance that stresses the need to link social and environmental concerns (Hochstetler 2002), the exact balance between the two is contentious, especially in the current economic climate. The government has recently shown some signs of listening to their arguments, however. In his most important speech on the environment to date, at the signing of a Technical Cooperation Agreement between the Ministries of Mines and Energy and of Environment, Lula's language took on a new cast. He stressed that the environmental licensing and oversight agency, IBAMA, was carrying out Congressional laws and that economic projects should be routinely passed through its purview early in the planning process. When environmental protection and urgent development projects clash, as they will, he proposed the model of this Agreement, which put key decision-makers together to work out the details of an exact and situational balance (da Silva 2004). Environmentalists' reaction so far is unknown, so it remains to be seen whether this will return them to a position of pressure rather than opposition.

Is another Brazil possible? Alternative scenarios for civil society-PT relations

This concluding section takes up the question of the future of relations between the PT and civil society, especially in the remainder of the (first) Lula administration. Although it is always risky to make predictions, the following three scenarios cover what seem to be the most likely outcomes at this point. The first is that the Lula administration will manage to deliver enough of its promises to retain the support of most core constituencies, although some additional sectors will almost certainly move into opposition. The other possibilities assume that the PT national government never does reach this point, and its historic constituencies are alienated across the board. Given this supposition, the second possible scenario is one of fierce opposition to the government from CSOs, leading to a social explosion that brings down the government or at least denies it a second term. The third possibility, which depends on CSOs withdrawing in disappointment, could actually include a second term for Lula as president, with support from non-traditional PT constituencies.

Fifteen months into the Lula administration, scenario one still seems to be fully possible and perhaps even the most likely outcome. Its broad contours are those outlined not just by the traditional civil society base of the PT, but by Lula and the PT administration itself. The PT has a 23-year history of both rhetoric and action

in favor of economic growth and redistribution to the poor that continues to be a credible indicator of its own preferences as a party and administration. The party is now under heavy pressure from its need to administer a capitalist economy in ways that respond both to its traditional constituency and to the demands of preserving a good business climate. National pro-market actors may be "no longer afraid of the PT" (quoted in Baiocchi 2003a:2), but they remain ready to strongly push to protect their interests and to invoke the skittishness of their international counterparts where it helps them. Global pro-market actors will also weigh in, with predictable demands for macroeconomic stability and steady debt repayments. Pressure from civil society invokes the counter-threat of social explosion (scenario two) in ways that probably will enable the Lula administration to argue for a balance between the two sets of demands. Even an organization like the Inter-American Development Bank is worried about what it calls reform fatigue and has announced that "[t]he era of ambitious economic reforms is over (Inter-American Development Bank Research Department 2004:1)."

This first scenario would result from and in an economic policy of the kind referred to by social movements as "light neoliberalism," and its exact shape really would be determined by which side can muster its forces more strongly. A second shaping factor is macroeconomic growth: if the Brazilian economy begins to grow economically and the administration has additional resources to distribute, the likelihood of this scenario grows. Since quantitative growth is so crucial to this outcome, seen as most-preferred by many political constituencies in Brazil, proponents of qualitative growth will almost certainly see their priorities further sidelined if they cannot reframe them as contributing to quantitative growth as well. Another group of likely losers in this scenario is public sector workers, long a backbone of the PT but for just as long a frequent loser in the PT's state and municipal administrations (Baiocchi 2003b).

In the second scenario, CSOs move into a position of active opposition to the PT government. The most likely reason for such a move would be the PT's failure to deliver on its substantive promises to CSOs. The Cardoso administration's social policy is likely to form something of a minimal benchmark for this kind of opposition: if social spending and concrete achievements like land distribution remain around or below previous levels into the second half of the Lula administration, many of its constituents will turn against it. The other possible cause would be a dramatic breakdown in democratic procedure, such as a corruption scandal that reaches to the top of the administration or violent repression of protests. In one probable version of the scenario, CSOs would take to the streets demanding either the impeachment of

Lula or his early resignation from the presidency.

The history of the mobilizations of the PT and its related civil society allies against previous governments lends weight to this expectation. This alliance's leadership in past mobilizations against the military government, in the direitas já! (direct elections now!) campaign, and for the impeachment of corrupt president Fernando Collor de Mello is well known. Such experiences are frequently invoked as a sign of the PT coalition's commitment to democratic institutions (Baiocchi 2003a:3; Nylen 2003:39). What is less well-known is that a PT-civil society coalition also tried to organize campaigns to end the Sarney government early in 1987 and 1988 and demanded that Cardoso leave office early in 1996 and that he be impeached in 1999. These campaigns have been largely forgotten as they never managed to mobilize broad support, with a maximum of some 30,000 protesters against Sarney (Hochstetler 2004). The demands for Sarney and Cardoso to leave cited objectionable economic policy as their primary rationale, although that is not an impeachable offense in Brazil, with allegations of corruption as a second rationale. Even as president, Lula has encouraged this kind of critique. When Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada was forced to resign early as president of Bolivia in 2003, Lula affirmed that the population has "the right to do what they did in Bolivia" when a president fails to keep his campaign promises (*JB Online* 24 October 2003). A scenario two outcome could involve the Brazilian population exercising this right, under the leadership of former PT civil society allies.

The Brazilian National Bishops Council (*Confer□ncia Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil*, or CNBB) is currently the most vocal on this possibility. Don Geraldo Majella Agnelo warned in February 2004 that only the easy-going Brazilian personality had prevented a social explosion so far and predicted one would come eventually if policies did not change (*Estado de So Paulo* 26 February 2004).

The third possible scenario begins by acknowledging that the CSOs that have traditionally been the stalwarts of PT membership and the party organization have never been the sole electoral support for the PT. In 1989, for example, Lula gained 17.2% of the first round vote for president but 47% in the second round; in 2002, his first round support (not all of it from PT traditionalists) was 46.4% and his winning share was 61.3% of the votes in the second round. As this paper has already mentioned several times, people have many reasons to vote for the PT, only some of which involve its substantive commitments. A rather surprising poll in September of Lula's first year as president illustrates that not everyone is as alarmed as the PT base organizations by its apparent ideological turn in office. In this poll, a plurality of 38% of respondents said that they would place President Lula ideologically on the

right or center right, 12% saw him as a centrist, and 31% said he was left-wing or left of center. In the same poll, 45% indicated approval of Lula as president and another 42% saw him as middling (*Latin American Weekly Review* WR-03-34, 2 September 2003:2-3). In other words, while there is a broad perception that Lula in office has moved rightward, the traditional PT constituency views that move much more negatively than does the rest of the Brazilian electorate. Many things could happen in the next months that would change those evaluations, and Lula's approval has already declined significantly in 2004. But depending on events, Lula might well be re-elected in 2006, with a different electoral base – possibly despite even running against a candidate from a new party of the left.

The months of April and May, 2004, are likely to be crucial for determining the possibility of scenario one. The MST and allied rural movements have already launched a new wave of occupations. A broad array of movements has a schedule of pressure mobilizations that runs through April and May. The pressures of the PT's core constituencies is likely to be met with strong counter-mobilizations as well. At some time in the next months, the Diniz corruption case will either be finally contained or will expand and bring down others. The PT is clearly trying to reassure its base that resources will be forthcoming, with concrete sums recently promised for land reform and a sweeter wage offer made to federal unions. While these months will directly determine whether the PT base continues using its protests to pressure and enable the Lula administration or shifts to opposition to it, developments in them will also shape the responses of the broader population and possible electoral base of the PT. The rhetoric of protest is the key indicator to watch for the PT base, while the municipal elections at the end of the year will be the best measure of the latter.

Bibliography

Baiocchi, Gianpaolo. 2003a. Radicals in Power. In *Radicals in Power: The Workers' Party (PT) and Experiments in Urban Democracy in Brazil*, edited by G. Baiocchi. London and New York: Zed Books.

Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, ed. 2003b. *Radicals in Power: The Workers' Party (PT) and Experiments in Urban Democracy in Brazil*. London and New York: Zed Books.

Bartolini, Stefano and Peter Mair. 2001. Challenges to Contemporary Political Parties. In *Political Parties and Democracy*, edited by L. Diamond and R. Gunther. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Cohen, Jean L. and Andrew Arato. 1992. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Coordinação dos Movimentos Sociais. 2004. Carta de São Paulo por um 2004 de Organização, Mobilização e Mudança. Online at http://www.ivanvalente.com.br/CANAIS/noticias/2004/02_NOT/CMS_Coordenacao_Nacional_de_Movimentos_Sociais.htm, accessed 27 March 2004.

Coordinação dos Movimentos Sociais. 2003. Mobilização pelo Desenvolvimento Nacional com Soberania e Valorização do Trabalho. Online at http://www.alainet.org/active/show_text.php3?key=4560, posted 11 September 2003, accessed 27 March 2004.

Da Silva, Luiz Inácio Lula. 2004. Discurso do Presidente da República, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, na Cerimônia de Lançamento do Programa de Incentivo Às Fontes Alternativas de Energia Elétrica (Proinfa) e de Assinatura de Acordo de Cooperação Técnica entre os Ministérios de Minas e Energia e Meio Ambiente, no Palácio do Planalto, Brasília, 30/03/04. Online at http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/portugues/politica_externa/discursos/, accessed 8 April 2004.

Dagnino, Evelina. 1994. Os Movimentos Sociais e a Emergência de uma Nova Noção da Cidadania. In *Anos 90: Política e Sociedade no Brasil*, edited by E. Dagnino. São Paulo: Brasiliense.

Friedman, Elisabeth Jay and Kathryn Hochstetler. 2002. Assessing the 'Third Transition' in Latin American Democratization: Civil Society in Brazil and Argentina. *Comparative Politics* 35,1:21-42.

Fuchs, Dieter and Han-Dieter Klingemann. 1995. Citizens and the State: A Relationship Transformed. In *Citizens and the State*, H.D. Klingemann and D. Fuchs, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fundaçõo Perseu Abramo, ed. 1997. *Desafios do Governo Local: O Modo Petista de Governar*. São Paulo: Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo.

Glass, Verena. 2004. Movimentos Sociais Preparam Megacampanha contra Desemprego. *Agência Cara Maior*, 3/3/04. Published online on http://www.cidadania.or.br (RITS), accessed 7 March 2004.

Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2004. Rethinking Presidentialism: Mass Protest and Presidential Fall. Article manuscript.

Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2002. After the Boomerang: Environmental Movements and Politics in the La Plata River Basin. *Global Environmental Politics* 2,4:35-57.

Hochstetler, Kathryn and Elisabeth Jay Friedman. 2004. Representation Beyond Political Parties. Article manuscript.

Hunter, Wendy. 2003. Brazil's New Direction. *Journal of Democracy* 14,2:151-162.

Inter-American Development Bank Research Department. 2004. *IDEA: Ideas for*

Development in the Americas, Vol. 3, January-April 2004. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank Research Department.

Keck, Margaret E. 1992. *The Workers' Party and Democratization in Brazil*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kitschelt, Herbert. 2003. Landscapes of Political Interest Intermediation: Social Movements, Interest Groups, and Parties in the Early Twenty-first Century. In *Social Movements and Democracy*, edited by P. Ibarra. New York and Basingstroke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan.

Lawson, Kay and Peter H. Merkl, eds. 1988. *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organizations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Linz, Juan J.1994. Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy: Does it Make a Difference? In J.J. Linz and A. Valenzuela, eds, *The Failure of Presidential Democracy*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Macaulay, Fiona and Guy Burton. 2003. PT Never Again? Failure (and Success) in the PT's State Government in Espíritu Santo and the Federal District. In *Radicals in Power: The Workers' Party (PT) and Experiments in Urban Democracy in Brazil*, edited by G. Baiocchi. London and New York: Zed Books.

Matta, Roberto da. 1978. *Carnavais, Malandros e Heróis: Para uma Sociologia do Dilema Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores.

McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. 1997. Toward an Integrated Perspective on Social Movements and Revolution. In *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and* Structure, edited by M,I. Lichbach and A.S. Zuckerman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nylen, William. 2003. *Participatory Democracy versus Elitist Democracy: Lessons from Brazil*. New York and Houndmills, UK: Palgrave.

Nylen, William. 2000. The Making of a Loyal Opposition: The Workers' Party (PT) and the Consolidation of Democracy in Brazil. In *Democratic Brazil: Actors, Institutions, and Processes*, P.R. Kingstone and T.J. Power, eds. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Samuels, David. Forthcoming. From Socialism to Social Democracy: The Evolution of the Workers' Party in Brazil. *Comparative Political Studies*.

Seligman, Adam B. 1992. *The Idea of Civil Society*. New York: The Free Press.

Stedile, João Pedro. 2003. Globalization and Social Movements: A Brazilian Perspective. Toronto: CERLAC Colloquia Paper, January 2004 (York University).

Thomas, Clive S. 2001. Toward a Systematic Understanding of Party-Group Relations

in Liberal Democracies. In *Political Parties and Interest Groups*, edited by C.S. Thomas. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.