

## Politicking on Independence Day in Brazil

Contributed by Guy Burton  
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7 September is Brazilian National Day, the occasion when Dom Pedro declared his independence from his father and Portugal. In São Paulo, Brazil, mayor Marta Suplicy (PT) and the PSDB state governor, Geraldo Alckmin, are going to have to stand side by side for a march at the Sambódromo. Seven thousand marchers are expected to take part and entrance will be free.

by Guy Burton

Marta is definitely on a roll with the religious vote. A day after receiving the support of 20,000 evangelical leaders, on Monday she was praised by the Catholics.

But even if the Church expressed their enthusiasm, they curbed it as well. Following a meeting of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) last week it was made clear that religious leaders couldn't actively endorse one candidate over another.

Paulo Maluf (PP) is more than happy with his showing in the recent Vox Populi poll. It puts him on 21% of the vote, compared to José Serra's (PSDB) 25%—within catching distance of making the second round:

"We [he and Serra] are tied for second place," Maluf said, failing to notice the four-point gap between them and the 3.1% margin of error. In further comments he also mentioned that if elected he wouldn't try to renegotiate the city's debt.

I suspect the reason for this statement is to distinguish him from Marta, who got a deal from the federal government to pay its debt back at the end of the month rather than at the beginning. He probably wants to show he's his own man and doesn't need favours from contacts in Brasilia.

His campaign visits on Monday included a visit to the Museum of Japanese Immigration and a cosmetics shop. Sorry? Can you run that by me again?

A cosmetics shop? Now there's only so much you can do with a guy like Maluf.

Mutton dressed as lamb springs to mind...

A Folha de S. Paulo report claims that the 377,000 candidates for election this year could spend US\$ 5.4 billion (16.3 billion reais). At least that is the amount which would be spent by the candidates if they spend the entire limit they have registered themselves for doing between now and October.

And surprisingly, Sao Paulo candidates haven't registered the most amounts. Between them they will spend US\$ 16.7 million (50 million reais) if they all reach the upper limits of their proposed budgets.

This would work out at US\$ 5 million (15 million reais) for Marta, Serra and Erundina with Maluf only spending US\$ 1.67 (5 million reais).

Maluf's party colleague, Nilson Baiano, who is candidate for mayor in the Espírito Santo state capital, Vitória, has registered himself to spend US\$ 1 billion (3 billion reais) while a PDT candidate in the same city has potentially the most expensive city council election budget – US\$ 83 million (250 million reais).

Kidz and skoolz

On the TV spots Marta is now publicising her visits around the city. After space was given to her visit to São Paulo's eastern boroughs, Monday's ad looked at her activities in the south.

She used the time to publicise her administration's work, including the construction of five bus terminals and public works in sections of 36 favelas.

She also plugged the education CEUs again and promised to build nine more if elected. A development program was also muted, which would boost jobs—an important issue, given the loss of nearly 20,000 in the Pinheiros region during the 1990s.

Meanwhile Serra was out saying he was down wiv the kidz, showing max respect to the yoof of Sampa (as locals call their city—I should also mention that he wasn't rapping; that's me being facetious). No, instead Serra was less bling, bling and more pol, pol: "The mayor has to lead a movement in support of the young."

After the Vox Populi poll Maluf's back to making promises about roads and speaking in his idiosyncratic fashion: "The western and northern

boroughs are a ten [an illusion to marks out of ten perhaps?] and with me they'll be an 11" (11 being his and his party's election number).

For much more about the coming São Paulo election visit  
Guy Burton and Andrew Steven's blog at <http://www.saopaulo2004.blogspot.com>