

## Ciao, São Paulo. For Marta, Next Stop Is Paris.

Contributed by Guy Burton  
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In São Paulo, Brazil, the wooden guy's in front... no, not John Kerry. As we enter the polling weekend, I'll do one final entry before the post-election mop-up operation.

Mayor of a World City, pretty significant, huh? 10 million people (18 million, if you include the hinterland) all dependent on services from education and health to public works and rubbish disposal. But wait...

"A Serra election in São Paulo would pave the way for [Geraldo] Alckmin to contend for the presidential nomination for the Social Democracy Party in 2006, said lower house deputy Julio Redecker."

So that's what it's all about, eh? Presidential elections in two years time. The city doesn't even get a look in. For shame PSDB, for shame. But the petistas can still count on the unions, right?

"A (José) Serra victory may raise concerns that the Workers' Party is losing strength less than two years after Lula, a former union leader, swept to office with about 60 percent of the vote, said Roberto Soares, a director for the São Paulo Metallurgic Workers' Union.

Suplicy, 59, who placed second to Serra in the first round vote, created 12 new taxes and began road improvement projects that exacerbated traffic snarls in the city of 12 million people.

"Lula will end up suffering the damage from Suplicy's lousy administration - it's a rather strong symbolic defeat for the Workers' Party," Soares said in an interview."

The way the Associated Press' syndicated article on the Guardian site talks about it, you'd think the São Paulo mayoralty was some kind of runner-up prize for Serra for having lost against Lula in the presidential elections two years ago.

It comes full-circle with the conclusion that even if Lula loses São Paulo this weekend, he'll still romp home in 2006 as the problem is Marta herself, not the PT itself.

Before Marta throws in the towel and packs her bags for the rumoured diplomatic posting in Paris, though there's one tiny glimmer of hope in this this Washington Times article article, but not much.

I know if I was Lula, I wouldn't want an ex-mayor with that level of profile in my party floating around with nothing to do.

Bonne chance, Marta.

For more information and analysis of the São Paulo and other local Brazilian results, visit the election blog being run by Guy Burton and Andrew Stevens at [www.saopaulo2004.blogspot.com](http://www.saopaulo2004.blogspot.com).