



## Corruption: Brazil Sheltering Wanted Marxist Terrorist

American and Colombian officials suspected that a decision by the Brazilian government granting political asylum to a prominent Marxist terrorist was made under pressure from former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, whose Workers' Party (PT) has frequently been accused of receiving millions of dollars from the drug-trafficking terror group known as the FARC.



The suspicions surrounding the case were highlighted in an explosive U.S. diplomatic cable from 2006 that was recently released by the whistle-blowing organization WikiLeaks. But despite the enormity of the revelations in the document, entitled "[Brazil Grants Asylum to FARC Terrorist](#)," there has been virtually no press coverage of the scandal so far.

The saga described in the cable began when Francisco Antonio Cadena, the so-called "Ambassador to Brazil" for the communist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), was arrested by Brazilian authorities in 2005. He was apparently living there with his family at the time.

Known as "Oliverio Medina" in Brazil, the high-ranking terrorist was taken into custody based on a request from Interpol pursuant to a Colombian warrant. He was wanted for a broad range of crimes including murder for terrorist purposes, extortion, kidnapping, and terrorism.

When Cadena was finally arrested, the FARC's "International Commission" immediately sprang into action. It issued a [statement](#) the next day calling for the release of "Oliverio Medina, who is a member of our International Commission."

According to the U.S. cable, citing a Colombian embassy official, Cadena also had many high-level friends within the Brazilian government. "[D]uring the many years Cadena spent in Brazil prior to his arrest last year, he had cultivated close ties with President Lula's Labor Party (PT) and had met with leaders of the PT in a house just outside of Brasilia (called the Red Heart Mansion) owned by a PT member of Congress," noted the cable, signed by the highest-ranking American official in Brasilia at the time, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim Philip Chicola.

The Colombian embassy official cited in the report also "echoed press and other public accounts that PT leaders had met with Cadena in prison," according to the U.S. embassy document. "While pointing out that claims of FARC donations to PT campaigns had never been proven, he insisted there was ample proof of Cadena's ties with PT leaders."

The decision to grant political asylum to the internationally known terrorist was made in total secrecy by the Brazilian National Committee on Refugees in mid-2006. And by approving the request, according to the cable, the government of Brazil was actually violating its own rules — individuals involved in



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terrorism and drug trafficking are supposed to be extradited, not granted asylum.

“The decision by the Brazilian committee is audacious but not necessarily surprising, as is the near silence surrounding it,” the cable noted. “The granting of asylum to a known terrorist flies in the face of Brazilian claims to oppose international terrorism. Particularly troubling are the allegations of the Presidency subverting the judicial process and pressuring the refugee committee to take a decision contrary to its own guidelines, allegations we find credible.”

According to “unofficial” information provided to the Colombian embassy in Brazil, the decision to grant asylum was made after Cadena promised to sever ties with the FARC. But American and Colombian officials weren’t buying it.

“We, like the Colombians, will be trying to find out what the official rationale for the asylum decision was and how that can be reconciled with the [Government of Brazil]’s supposed opposition to international terrorism,” the cable noted, requesting instructions from Washington about how to proceed. “Embassy believes that high level political pressure resulted in this decision.”

The Brazilian government essentially refused to provide any information about what was going on, according to the cable. The refugee committee told the U.S. embassy that all documents and records related to the asylum decision were confidential. The Colombian government, meanwhile, was quietly informed about the denial of its extradition request — with no explanation — via the Brazilian embassy.

“Of course, the [Brazilian government]’s silence on the issue is not surprising,” the American cable commented. “Granting refugee status to a man accused of terrorism against a friendly, democratically elected government of a neighboring country is hardly the thing President Lula or his associates would be eager to defend publicly, especially since it would inevitably result during this election period in a new airing of the claims of FARC support for [Workers’ Party] 2002 campaigns, possibly including Lula’s.”

The brief and muffled brouhaha sparked by the Brazilian government’s decision quickly faded away. In 2007, the Brazilian Supreme Court upheld the government’s decision. And the fate of Cadena, presumed to be residing somewhere in Brazil under a new alias, remains unknown to the public.

But after years of silence on the matter, earlier this month former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe blasted Lula over the scandal in a series of [messages posted on Twitter](#). “Lula: many Colombians repudiate your permissiveness with the narco-terrorists from the FARC,” he tweeted on August 5 after the former Brazilian President had stopped in Bogota.

“Lula incapable of declaring the narco-[trafficking group] FARC terrorists,” he charged in another. “Lula was incapable of extraditing Cura Camilo, terrorist taking refuge in Brazil.”

As *The New American* has [reported](#) on numerous occasions, former Brazilian leader Lula is a co-founder — along with communist tyrant Fidel Castro, and the Sandinistas — of a shadowy group of socialists and communists known as the Foro de São Paulo (São Paulo Forum). The FARC was also involved in founding and funding the movement.

The umbrella organization brings together leftist political parties, dictators, drug traffickers, terrorists, non-governmental organizations, and others for the admitted purpose of subverting capitalism in the region. And with help from China and Russia, as well as drug and oil money, its members now control most Latin American governments.

The current President of Brazil, [Dilma Rousseff](#) (pictured above), is also part of Lula’s Workers’ Party.



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Prior to taking over the presidency, she served as Lula's chief of staff. And she's also an admitted "ex"-communist terrorist, though most Brazilians overlook her past because the Marxist terror campaign was aimed at the former military dictatorship.

Based on [leaked documents](#) from Brazil's intelligence agency, the Workers' Party has been publicly accused on countless occasions in the press of collaborating with the FARC. According to an explosive 2005 article based on those intelligence reports that was published in one of the biggest Brazilian magazines, the party received \$5 million in 2002 to help win elections.

In a [2010 interview with \*The New American\*](#), acclaimed Brazilian author and philosopher Olavo de Carvalho — who has played a key role in exposing the [communist resurgence in the region](#) — explained that Brazil was actually "the headquarters of Latin American revolution." And the U.S. State Department knows it, he said, adding that "it is actually camouflaging the real danger so that it may grow sheltered from the sight of any intruder."

Professor Carvalho also summarized the relationship between leftist political organizations and criminal syndicates. "Legal parties cover up the activities of criminal groups, and these provide undercover financial resources to legal parties," he explained.

Analysts [said](#) the new revelations from WikiLeaks offer yet more evidence that the relationship between the FARC and top political figures runs very deep, and that the Foro de São Paulo and its members are powerful and dangerous. Indeed, violating the nation's own laws and risking international condemnation to shelter a notorious terrorist is no small matter. But whether anything will change remains to be seen.

*Photo: Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff speaks to members of Brazil's Committee of Management and Development at the Planalto palace in Brasilia, Brazil, May 11, 2011.: AP Images*



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