



**October 28, 1963**  
**Letter from Johann Lorenz Schmidt to Walter Ulbricht on  
Brazil**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Johann Lorenz Schmidt reports on meetings with General Secretary of the Brazilian Communist Party, Luis Carlos Prestes, during which they discussed the strong Chinese influence in Cuba.

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

- English Translation

Prof. Dr. JOHANN LORENZ SCHMIDT

Berlin-Adlershof, 28.10.1963  
Volkswohlstrasse 81

To:

Comrade Walter Ulbricht [Personal!]  
First Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED

Berlin C 2  
Werderscher Markt

Dear Comrade Ulbricht!

I recently returned from a research and lecture trip to Brazil and I would like to report on two developments that are, in my opinion, of particular importance.

1. I had many interviews with Comrade Luis Carlos Prestes, the first secretary of our Brazilian brother-party, as well as with another other member of the Brazilian party leadership. These conversations, as well as other interviews, revealed that the Brazilian party, which had been dominated by a dogmatic and sectarian attitude since 1958, has by and large overcome this. Albeit, there are still sectarian remnants demonstrated by the [actions of the] Brazilian Party, for example, during the election of the most important Brazilian state, Sao Paulo, the Party did not support the bourgeoisie-progressive candidate Janio Quadros, which became one of the main reasons that the markedly fascist politician Ademar do Barros was elected. (The candidate, who the Brazilian party had denied their support for, was the former President Quadros, who, during his short time in office, reopened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and adopted a resolution to open diplomatic relations with the other socialist countries.) As a result of the victory of the ultra-reactionary do Barros, the two most important states of the Brazilian federation, Sao Paulo and Guanabara, came under the control of fascist governors.

2. Comrade Prestes recounted his visit to Cuba and his conversations with Fidel Castro to me very extensively. He said to me, among other things, that the Chinese influence in Cuba is extremely strong and is even increasing. (I also note that another leading Brazilian comrade said to me that "the Cubans show their stomachs to the Soviet Union, but they give their hearts to China.") The Cuban daily newspapers write very much in the spirit of the dogmatic and ultra-left views of the Chinese party. The advice that Fidel Castro gives to Comrades from other Latin American countries is very much in the spirit of the Chinese ultra-radical line.

Comrade Prestes notes the ultra-radical Cuban economic policy as especially dangerous. He mentioned, among other items, that even workshops employing only three men were nationalized, a measure that the Cuban state cannot possibly handle administratively.

Comrade Prestes also said to me, that above all other items, has discussed this question very openly and critically. Fidel Castro, however, has not answered him in any way on this question. Comrade Prestes also noted, as a major deficiency, that the new Unity Party barely functions organizationally.

While the direct Chinese influence in Brazil is very minimal and limited to a small group that was ejected from the Party, the indirect Chinese influence through Cuba is somewhat stronger. Different Brazilian comrades told me that the peasant leader Juliao bought up farms in different states with Cuban support, where he allows the training of guerrilla troops (partially from students, partially from peasants). The standing peasant revolution in Pernambuco under the leadership of Juliao has recently shown terroristic traits. However, the influence of Julio on the Brazilian peasantry has decreased in the last year.

I felt it was my duty, dear Comrade Ulbricht, to inform you regarding these developments.

With socialist greetings!

Yours

[signed]

(Prof. Dr. Johann Lorenz Schmidt)