

11-28-1989

Uruguay: National Party Candidate Wins Presidential Election

John Neagle

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur>

Recommended Citation

Neagle, John. "Uruguay: National Party Candidate Wins Presidential Election." (1989). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/3772>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiSur by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

Uruguay: National Party Candidate Wins Presidential Election

by John Neagle

Category/Department: General

Published: Tuesday, November 28, 1989

On the evening of Nov. 26, five hours after the polls closed, Colorado Party candidate Jorge Batlle conceded defeat to National Party (Blanco) candidate Luis Alberto Lacalle. Equipos Consultores, a respected independent polling agency, projected the National Party (Blancos) received 38% of the total vote, compared to 31% for the Colorados, and 22% for the Broad Front (Frente Amplio) coalition. Uruguayans also voted for vice president, 30 senators, 99 deputies, and governments of 19 provinces. Both the National and Colorado parties are center-right. Lacalle and Batlle, two of 12 candidates, focused their campaigns on welfare state cuts, calls for government efficiency and privatization of state companies, and the like. Retired general Liber Seregni was presidential candidate for the Broad Front, a coalition of communists, socialists and independents. New Space (Nuevo Espacio), a coalition of Social Democrats and Christian Democrats, received at least 152,245 votes of a total 2,070,000, or 7%. Presidential candidate was Social Democrat Hugo Batalla. New Space was established early this year when members broke from the Broad Front. In the 1984 elections, Christian and Social Democrats were part of the Broad Front. The new president will take office March 1 and serve through 1995. Broad Front candidate Tabare Vazquez, a cancer specialist, was elected mayor of Montevideo. The post is an important one: Montevideo has a population of 1.4 million and two-thirds of Uruguay's gross national product is concentrated in the capital metropolitan region. The Broad Front received 34% of the vote, with the National and Colorado Parties obtaining about 27% each. Its plurality permits the Broad Front to fill a majority, 16, of the 31 seats on the City Council. Lacalle's victory marked the third time this century that the Blancos have taken the presidency. The Colorados lost in the elections of 1958 and 1962. In 1984, the Colorados received 41.2% of the vote, and the Blancos, 35%. AFP (11/26/89) cited analysts who said that a major feature of these elections is the decline of the two-party system which has seen Uruguay dominated by the Colorados and Blancos since independence was proclaimed in 1825. Britain fostered the creation of Uruguay as a buffer state between Argentina and Brazil. The parties were named for the color of their flags as they fought for land and power during 50 years after independence. Luis E. Gonzalez of Equipos Consultores was cited by the New York Times (11/28/89) as saying that the Broad Front's strongest following was not among first-time voters but among voters aged 30 to 39. He said those were the Uruguayans whose early adult experiences had been affected by living under a military dictatorship. Gonzalez also said he believed the strength of the Broad Front showed that "Uruguayans are not willing to give many more opportunities to the traditional system of political parties." (Basic data from AFP, 11/26/89, 11/27/89; DPA, Notimex, AP, 11/27/89; New York Times, 11/28/89)

-- End --