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Brazil: Rightist Candidate's Lead Narrows In Presidential Runoff Polls

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According to a Gallup Institute poll released Dec. 10, 42% of respondents said they planned to vote for Workers Party candidate Luis Inacio da Silva in the Dec. 17 presidential runoff election. Rightist candidate Fernando Collor de Mello received 48.2% of the total. Gallup said 4.9% of respondents had not yet chosen a candidate. Gallup surveyed 4,341 eligible voters in 231 cities and towns from Dec. 5-8, the first poll since a televised presidential debate Dec. 3. According to Gallup, da Silva was pulling ahead in Brazil's sprawling urban areas, especially in state capitals. The poll said that Collor de Mello had a substantial advantage over da Silva in the northern, west central and northeastern states. The two candidates were tied in the south and southeast where more than 50% of Brazilians reside. Polls conducted Nov. 28 and Dec. 1 gave Collor de Mello leads of 13.7% and 11.9% respectively over da Silva. On Dec. 6, Leonel Brizola of the Democratic Workers Party gave da Silva his support. Brizola came in third after da Silva in the Nov. 15 voting. On Thursday, Dec. 7, Sen. Mario Covas, of the Brazilian Social Democratic Party, who came in fourth also announced he would support da Silva. (Basic data from AFP, 12/07/89, 12/10/89)

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