

Bush's Day in Brazil

The Washington Post
03/ 9/2007

SAO PAULO, Brazil -- Here's a look ahead at **President Bush's** schedule today as he opens the first full day of his **Latin America tour**.

He plans to start the day by touring a Petrobras Transporte fuel depot, a massive facility that provides enough fuel for 600,000 cars. Some of the tanks at the facility contain fuel that is 22 percent ethanol, which is the point of the visit since Bush wants to expand ethanol production as an alternative for Middle East oil. Brazil and the United States together produce the vast majority of the world's ethanol.

The depot tour will likely be the main visual image of the president for today. During the visit, Bush will deliver a joint statement with Brazilian President **Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva** about an agreement intended to promote more ethanol production in Central America and the Caribbean.

The two leaders, who by most accounts have forged a good relationship despite the fact that Bush is a conservative and Lula a leftist, then plan to have lunch before meeting reporters from both countries for what in White House lingo is known as a "Joint Press Availability."

A Joint Press Availability is essentially an abridged version of a news conference and the usual forum whenever Bush meets with a major foreign leader. This will likely be a "two-and-two," meaning that each leader will call on two reporters from his own nation's press corps to ask questions. Those four questions will be the only ones they take today.

Usually, but not always, the two American reporters called on during a Joint Press Availability are from the main wire services, the Associated Press and Reuters. Count on at least one of them to ask about the Democrats' latest plan for Iraq or the report on FBI misuse of national security letters or some other controversy from back home. It will probably fall to the Brazilian reporters to ask about

ethanol and Venezuelan President **Hugo Chavez**. Guess which will probably be bigger news in Washington?

Afterward, Bush will tour the Meninos do Morumbi community center and hold a roundtable as part of his effort to show that he cares about "social justice" in Latin America. He then will head to the airport to fly on to Montevideo, Uruguay, his second stop.

The main action of the day that's not on the White House script will take place in the evening (Uruguay time is three hours ahead of Washington) when Chavez sponsors an anti-Bush rally of tens of thousands in Buenos Aires across the Rio de la Plata river from Uruguay. But Montevideo is more than 100 miles away from Buenos Aires, so there's not much chance Bush will hear the chanting.