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Florida International University
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Master's Thesis Defense

Abstract

The Progressive Catholic Church in Brazil, 1964-1972: The Official American View

by

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This thesis explores the American views of the Brazilian Catholic Church in the 1964-1972 period. This is a historical research based on cables of the Foreign Service posts in Brazil. The sources are used to construct a historical narrative of the political conflicts that the Brazilian Church underwent during the first years of the Dictatorship that ruled Brazil between 1964 and 1985. The thesis also uses the cables to construct an interpretation of the American view of the Church. The view is contrasted with the political context of the Brazilian Church and the dominant ideology of the American nation. The position of the United States in regards to the Brazilian Church and its confrontation with the dictatorship is an important element to the understanding of the political conflicts that involved the Brazilian state and the Church during those years. This thesis maintains that, though some collaborative and friendly approaches, the American view of the Brazilian Church was ruled by the ideology of National Security. On the basis of this, the progressive elements of the Church were seen as highly threatening to the American interests in Brazil.

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