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### THE LONG MARCH OF THE URUGUAYAN LEFT. IDEOLOGICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC CHANGE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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*Abstract. The victory of Tabaré Vázquez and the Broad Front (FA) in the first round of the Uruguayan presidential elections of 2004 raises a number of important questions. What kind of Left government will the FA prove to be? How will its policies compare to those traditionally advocated by the Uruguayan Left and to those being pursued by other Left of Centre governments in the region? To address these questions, this paper reviews the changes and continuities in the Uruguayan Left's ideological and programmatic profile over the last three decades, at each point contrasting these changes to those occurring on the Left elsewhere in the region. It, first of all, sets out the characteristics of the original frentista project prior to the military coup, rooted in a long history of leftist activity in that country. Secondly, it describes the effects of the experience of military rule on the Left, noting that in contrast to Left parties in other parts of Latin America and with the exception of the issues of democracy and human rights, the experience of dictatorship had a relatively limited impact on the FA's political program. Thirdly, it argues that like the Left elsewhere in the region, the collapse of the Soviet Union led the Uruguayan Left to abandon orthodox Marxism and consolidated a broadly social democratic ideological approach. Finally, it concludes that while the FA has been forced by the dual pressures of electoral competition and economic change into moderating its program and accommodating itself to the basic structure of capitalism, the Uruguayan Left retains a much more traditional social democratic approach compared to that advocated in particular by the Left in Chile. The paper concludes by suggesting a number of possible explanations for that difference.*

*Keywords: Uruguay- Political History- Socialism - Social Democracy- the Left- the Broad Front.*

*Resumen. "La larga marcha de la Izquierda uruguaya. Cambio ideológico y programático en una perspectiva comparativa". La victoria de Tabaré Vázquez y el Frente Amplio (FA) en la primera ronda de las elecciones presidenciales uruguayas en 2004 plantea un número de importantes preguntas. ¿Qué clase de gobierno de izquierda resultará ser el del FA? ¿Cómo se compararán sus políticas con las tradicionalmente propugnadas por la Izquierda uruguaya y con las adoptadas por otros gobiernos de Centro Izquierda en la región? Para abocarse a estas preguntas este trabajo analiza los cambios y continuidades en el perfil ideológico y programático de la Izquierda uruguaya en las últimas tres décadas, contrastando cada vez estos cambios con los que han ocurrido en la Izquierda en otros países de la*

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