

 SERVIÇO NACIONAL DE ARQUIVOS E BIBLIOTECAS	COPRA / CODES
FUNDO	Instituto de Pesquisa e Estudos Sociais (IPÊS)
Código de Referência	BR AN, RIO.QL.0.CDI.22
	46 páginas

SPECIAL FEATURE

THE COUNTRY THAT SAVED ITSELF

By CLARENCE W. HALL *Senior Editor, The Reader's Digest*



The inspiring story of how an aroused Brazilian people stopped the communists from taking over their nation. *Because it is a document of unusual significance, this feature has been especially bound so that it can be detached and mailed to other interested readers. For details, see back covers of this article.*



Last April 2 in Rio de Janeiro, more than a million marchers thronged the streets proclaiming their determination to remain free.

Seldom has a major nation come closer to the brink of disaster and yet recovered than did Brazil in its recent triumph over Red subversion. The communist drive for domination—marked by propaganda, infiltration, terror—was moving in high gear. Total surrender seemed imminent—and then the people said *No!*

This dramatic and illuminating account not only tells of a people's determined defense of their freedom, it provides a blueprint for action by concerned citizens in other nations threatened by communism.

THE COUNTRY THAT SAVED ITSELF

THE STAGE was all set, the timetable for the first phase of the Red takeover determined. On the calendars of communist leaders in Brazil—as on those of Moscow, Havana and Peking—the dates for the progressive grabs at power were ringed in red: first, chaos; then, civil war; then, total communist rule.

For years the Reds had been eyeing, with slavering hunger, this

great sprawling country, bigger than the continental United States and containing 77 million people, roughly half South America's population. Besides being enormously rich with untapped resources, Brazil is the key to the whole huge continent. Since it borders on ten countries—every South American country except Ecuador and Chile—its direct or indirect rule by communists would offer prime

opportunities to subvert one neighbor after another. The capture of this colossal potential could swing the balance of strength disastrously against the West. Compared to it, the communization of Cuba was a minor thing, a tiny bauble.

Now all was in readiness. Inflation was rife, and getting worse by the day; corruption was rampant; unrest was everywhere—perfect for communist purposes. The government of President João (Jango) Goulart was riddled with radicals, the congress loaded with Red stooges. Skillfully, for years, extreme leftists had sown the propaganda that revolution in Brazil was inevitable. Scores of scholarly tomes were written about the nation's spiraling descent toward economic and social chaos; most observers and scholars conceded that the coming explosion would be bloody, leftist-led, and with a strong Castro cast. Brazilians generally looked toward the future with the helpless, frozen fascination of people watching the approach of a whirling cyclone. A Brazilian byword was, "The ques-

tion is no longer *whether* revolution is coming, but *when*."

The country was indeed ripe for the picking. Ammunition by the ton had been smuggled in by the Reds; guerrilla teams had been well-rehearsed, lower echelons of the armed forces were infiltrated, detailed plans for the takeover were in order; "liquidation lists" of prominent anti-communists had been drawn up. Luiz Carlos Prestes, head of the technically outlawed but aggressively active Brazilian Communist Party, was publicly gloating, "We already have the power; we have now only to take over the government!"

Coup of the Embattled Amateurs

THEN SUDDENLY—and to Red plans devastatingly—something happened. In the nick of time, a counterrevolution beat them to the punch. Brazil's long-suffering middle class, rising in well-organized and unexpected strength, staged its own revolution—and saved Brazil.

Unique in the annals of South American political upheavals, the revolution was carried out not by extremists but by normally law-abiding, moderate groups. Although its climactic phase was accomplished by military action, the leadership behind the scenes was supplied and continues to be shared by civilians. The coup was swift (about 48 hours from start to

CLARENCE W. HALL, a Senior Editor of The Reader's Digest and former executive editor of *Christian Herald*, spent weeks in Brazil while the revolution was still fresh in memory. Together with Digest Roving Editor William L. White, he interviewed in detail participants in the events, top government officials and military men, citizens of all walks of life.

finish), relatively bloodless (fewer than a dozen people were killed), and popular beyond expectations.

A huge victory for Brazil itself, it was an even bigger one for the entire free world. For, as a high U.S. official in Brasília commented, "It marks a change of the tide wherein all the major victories have seemed to be Red, thoroughly debunking the communist claim that 'history is on our side.'"

Of its significance Lincoln Gordon, U.S. ambassador to Brazil, says, "Future historians may well record the Brazilian revolution as the single most decisive victory for freedom in the mid-20th century. This was a homegrown, do-it-yourself revolution, both in its conception and accomplishment. Not one U.S. dollar or brain cell was involved!"

How, precisely, did Brazilians bring it off? The inside story of this genuine people's revolution—planned and executed by embattled amateurs working against hardened communist revolutionaries—is a blueprint for every nation similarly threatened. It is invigorating proof that communism *can* be stopped cold, when people are sufficiently aroused and determined.

Drift Toward Chaos

THE STORY begins shortly after the resignation in August 1961 of the eccentric President Jânio Qua-

dros. His successor, the left-leaning Vice President João Goulart, just back from visits to Russia and Red China, had no sooner taken office than it became plain in what direction he was taking the country.

No communist himself, Jango might as well have been. Power-hungry, he thought he was making the comrades a tool of his ambitions; instead they used him. The doors to Red infiltration, for years half-ajar, were now flung wide open. Inflation, stimulated by floods of printing-press money released by the fiscally irresponsible President Juscelino Kubitschek years before, was now stepped up by Jango; the value of the cruzeiro plummeted by the day. Capital, sorely needed to develop the country, was fleeing abroad; foreign investments were rapidly drying up under heavy restrictions and constant threats of expropriation.

"The Time Is Now"

ALARMED at the drift toward chaos, a group of business and professional men in Rio de Janeiro met in late 1961 to say, "We businessmen can no longer leave the country's direction to the politicians alone." Calling other meetings in Rio and São Paulo, they declared, "The time to head off disaster is *now*, not when the Reds are in full control of our government!"

Out of such meetings was born

the Institute for Economic and Social Research (IPES), designed to discover what was happening. Other associations already in existence, such as CONCLAP (Superior Council of the Producing Classes), formed of employers and employees of industrial concerns both large and small; GAP (Group for Political Action); and *Centro Industrial* (Association for Commercial Enterprises), also engaged in activities of democratic resistance.

Such organizations spread rapidly throughout the nation. Though operating independently, these groups pooled their findings, coordinated their plans for action. They produced circular letters appraising the political situation, surveys of public opinion, and also hundreds of newspaper articles answering the boastings of the communists.

To find out how the Moscow-trained underground apparatus functioned in Brazil, IPES formed its own intelligence service, a task force of investigators (several within the government itself) to collect, classify and correlate information on the extent of Red infiltration in Brazil.

Laced With Reds

THE AGENTS soon discovered a Red Trojan horse of far more frightening dimensions than anyone had imagined. Many masked communists, "planted" in federal

departments and agencies years before, had by now wormed themselves into key posts. Most government ministries and agencies were laced with communists and fellow travelers serving Moscow's aims. Brazilian communist chief Prestes was boasting publicly, "Seventeen of ours are in Congress"—all elected on the tickets of other parties. In addition, dozens of fellow-traveling members of the chamber of deputies were making deals with the communists, supporting them on issues, consistently attacking "U.S. imperialism"—but never once criticizing Soviet Russia.

The communists in government agencies usually were not ministers but upper-level advisers, sometimes second-in-command, or drafters of reports on which top decisions were based. Some openly bragged, "We don't care who makes the speeches so long as we write them!" In the Ministry of Mines and Energy such a group was in complete control. Goulart's Director of Posts and Telegraphs Dagoberto Rodrigues, a strong communist sympathizer, released large amounts of Soviet and Cuban propaganda with the airy announcement: "I have examined this material and decided it is not subversive."

In the key labor unions, communist control was overwhelming. Repeatedly Goulart intervened in union elections to guarantee the

choice of communist candidates, especially in those industries which could quickly paralyze the country.

Education a Specialty

MOST NOTORIOUSLY infiltrated of the federal agencies was the Ministry of Education. One of Goulart's closest advisers was Darcy Ribeiro, who, as Minister of Education, had used reading primers to teach illiterate millions Marxist class hatred.

Coddled by the Ministry of Education was the UNE (National Students Union), whose 100,000 members make up the largest single-nation student organization in Latin America. Its executive board was completely dominated by Reds. For years an annual government subsidy of about \$100,000 was handed to UNE officials—no accounting required. Thus underwritten, they devoted full time to political agitation among students. Part of the subsidy was used to finance excursions to Red Cuba and visits to fraternal communist student groups in other Latin American countries.

Further fortified by hefty war funds from Moscow, UNE published inflammatory pamphlets and a virulently anti-U.S. Marxist weekly newspaper. Masquerading as anti-illiteracy campaigners, a UNE team was found distributing reading-aid materials that included "Che" Guevara's guerrilla-warfare

manual—printed in Portuguese by Chinese-Red-lining Brazilian communists. UNE leaders specialized in fomenting campus strikes and student mass meetings, street demonstrations and riots.

Engineers of Chaos

THE RED infiltration, investigators found, had grown larger and less concealed with every month of Goulart rule. Sufficient to ring warning bells were such early Goulart appointments as Evandro Lins e Silva, a crafty lawyer long a defender of communist causes, as attorney general; and Hermes Lima, a pro-Castro socialist, as prime minister. (Both were later appointed to the supreme court.) Among the most rabid pleaders of communist causes was Goulart's Minister of Justice, Abelardo Jurema. And press secretary to the president was Raul Ryff, a Communist Party member for more than 30 years.

Chief spokesman for the Goulart regime was Leonel Brizola, Goulart's brother-in-law, governor of Rio Grande do Sul and later deputy from the state of Guanabara. A U.S.-hating ultra-nationalist, Brizola was often described as "a man more recklessly radical than Red boss Prestes himself."

Communist "conflict technicians" were everywhere. Trained in Iron-Curtain schools of subversion, they were skilled in creating

chaos and then agitating for "reforms"; getting the government to make large promises it never could fulfill, then taking advantage of the resulting despair to shout "Revolution!" The number of such engineers of chaos was not large—not more than 800 at the hard core, with some 2000 supporters in government agencies. But, says Dr. Glycon de Paiva, a mining consultant and one of IPES' founders: "It's the classic communist tactic to give the impression that they are many. Actually, only a dedicated few are needed to accomplish the downfall of a country. Free peoples make the error of discounting any force not present in huge numbers. We learned that lesson the hard way."

Almost daily, more evidence of Red revolution in the making came to light. In Brazil's impoverished northeast, notorious for the flagrant injustices practiced by wealthy landowners against starving peasants,* Castro's "bearded ones" roved the countryside, openly stirring up revolt. Portuguese-language broadcasts from Red China were on the air nearly eight hours a day, calling on peasants to rise against landowners.

Typical of the investigators' effectiveness was their discovery in September 1963 of a large shipment of arms on its way to Brazil

from Eastern Europe. Alerted, the Brazilian army sent a force to meet the ship, confiscated tons of small arms, ammunition, machine guns, field-communication equipment and loads of Red propaganda printed in Portuguese.

The "Get-Rich-Quick" Set

THE PROBINGS of the investigators revealed more than subversion. Corruption—far in excess of that commonly accepted as part of political life in Latin America—extended from the presidential palace downward. Even while Goulart and his extreme leftist supporters were ascribing all Brazil's woes to "U.S. exploiters and bloodsuckers," members of his official family were dipping their hands into the government till with gay abandon. It was plain that all aid funds intended for impoverished areas, including Alliance for Progress disbursements, were being intercepted by reaching hands and quick fingers.

Evidence was also strong that no small part of these billions of cruzeiros, meant for the people, was somehow finding lodgment in Goulart's own pockets. With a declared income of 40 million cruzeiros in 1963, Goulart—according to documentation seized after his flight—spent 236 million on his plantations in Mato Grosso alone. While piously pressing for confiscation of large landowners' estates

*See "Brazil's Big Dust Bowl," The Reader's Digest, July '63.

and distribution of land to the peasants, Goulart, the land records showed, was almost daily adding to his own huge holdings. Only after Jango fled the country could Brazil get the true measure of his sincerity about land-sharing. Starting public life with an inherited ranch of only five square miles, Goulart, when he hurriedly departed, was Brazil's biggest landholder, possessing in his own name 2968 square miles.

Moreover, Goulart was sharing with any number of others the opportunities for get-rich-quick. Tips on forthcoming changes in government policy, as for example on exchange rates, made millions of cruzeiros for palace favorites. Policy developments of any kind were tied to payoffs and kickbacks.

Ryff, Goulart's communist press chief, was one of the big beneficiaries. As influence peddler, he collected a \$25,000 rakeoff on one coffee deal alone. Other examples abounded: Goulart's private secretary, it was found, was moonlighting (as a Goulart appointee) as "minister-counselor for economic affairs" in Brazil's Rome embassy—where he never did a day's work. The job apparently did not even require his presence, but it added \$15,000 a year to his \$8400 salary. One of Goulart's Labor Party deputies had put 1295 employes on his personal payroll—after arranging for kickbacks from

their paychecks. One state governor was making a fortune in smuggling; another, with a \$6,400,000 appropriation to build highways, simply pocketed the full amount.

Besides all such high-flown skulduggery that could be documented, countless millions of cruzeiros were vanishing without a trace, in the Goulart regime's bottomless pit of corruption.

Propaganda by Pamphlet

ARMED WITH the mountains of evidence gathered by their investigators, Brazil's middle-class leaders fell to work. The job: to shake awake their tolerant, warm-hearted fellow citizens, whose easy-going political attitudes were too often summed up in the phrase, "Yes, he's a communist, but a nice fellow!"

The anti-communists produced dossiers on Red leaders and their collaborators, both within and outside the government, and circulated these widely to resistance leaders and newspapers. They aimed their most persuasive fire at the country's growing salaried class, greatest sufferers from Brazil's galloping inflation.

Heads of business organizations and industrial plants called regular meetings of their employes, discussed the meaning of what was happening, put into their hands informative pamphlets. One low-priced book, written by André

Gama, owner of a small factory in Petrópolis, and titled *Our Ailment and Its Cure*, had a circulation of more than a million copies. Other literature explained in simple language how and why the democratic system works better than any other, detailed the tragedies of Hungary and Cuba, and warned "It's happening here!"

Distribution of anti-communist material was at first undercover, then open. Shopkeepers wrapped the revealing leaflets in packages, or dropped them into shopping bags. Elevator operators quietly handed them to passengers overheard complaining about conditions. Shoeshine boys slipped them into pockets while brushing customers. Taxi drivers left them on the seats of their cabs for casual pickup by fares. Barbers inserted them in magazines being perused by waiting clients. One printer in Rio secretly ran off 50,000 posters with cartoons depicting Castro lashing his people, and the caption, "Do you want to live under the whip of communism?" At night, squads of helpers posted them in public places.

Brazil's counterrevolutionaries paid for time on radio and television to air their revelations. When government pressure closed many radio and TV stations to all but the most radical propagandists, the anti-communist groups formed their own "Network of Democ-

racy" of more than 100 stations all over Brazil. From October 1963 until the revolution, stations of this network, organized by João Calmon of *Diários Associados*, a newspaper and TV chain, went on the air at the exact time that leftist Leonel Brizola was haranguing the public.

The investigators were successful in uncovering not only what had happened, but what was about to happen. Borrowing the Reds' own tactics, workers infiltrated the high councils of labor unions, pretending to be communists, but actually reporting on Red machinations. Again and again the Reds' plans were disrupted as opposition speakers and writers went to press and radio to reveal what was afoot. For example: On one occasion the Reds were quietly rounding up 5000 people for a bus trip to Brasília, the capital, for a "spontaneous pilgrimage" to influence congressional action. When anti-communists exposed the maneuver days in advance, the "pilgrimage" was called off.

A Fearless Press

Brazil's leading newspapers got into the fight early. Regularly reporting the resistance groups' findings, as well as keeping up a steady editorial drumfire of their own, were Rio's two most influential papers, *O Globo* and *Jornal do Brasil*; also São Paulo's *O Estado*

de São Paulo; and *Correio do Povo*, oldest and most respected independent paper in Rio Grande do Sul.

For their fearlessness, the newspapers paid a heavy price in government harassment. When João Calmon of *Diários Associados* printed an exposé revealing how phony was the government's interest in land reform, Leonel Brizola tried to silence him by instituting foreclosure procedures for payments due on debts owed to the government-controlled Bank of Brazil. To keep these newspapers and TV stations going, advertisers promptly paid up their 12-month contracts in advance, thus preventing foreclosure.

For printing a revealing account of what he saw during a 1963 visit to Russia, the owner of *Jornal do Brasil*, M. C. Nascimento Brito, saw his newspaper plant invaded by Goulart agents. But even after his plant was militarily occupied and newspaper publication halted, his account reached the people. It was printed in booklet form, and willing workers distributed it by the hundreds of thousands.

Feminine and Formidable

TO THE WOMEN of Brazil belongs a huge share of the credit for stopping the planned Red takeover. By the thousands, on a scale unmatched in Latin American history, housewives threw themselves

into the struggle and, more than any other force, they alerted the country. "Without the women," says one leader of the counterrevolution, "we could never have halted Brazil's plunge toward communism. While many of our men's groups had to work undercover, the women could work in the open—and how they worked!"

Sparkplug and driving force of the Rio de Janeiro women's uprising was a diminutive, 90-pound package of feminine energy: Dona Amélia Bastos, 59-year-old wife of a retired army doctor and a former primary schoolteacher. She listened one night in mid-1962 to her husband and other anti-Red leaders discussing the looming threat. "I suddenly decided," she says, "that politics had become too important to be left entirely to the men."

The next day—June 12—Dona Amélia invited to her home a group of neighbors and friends. Her dark eyes snapping, she demanded, "Who has more at stake in what's happening to our country than we women? Who is paying the soaring grocery bills caused by inflation? Who has to stand and watch as the savings put aside for our children's education shrivel to nothing? Whose future but our children's and grandchildren's will disappear if the government's policies lead to communist conquest of our country?"

That night the first chapter of

CAMDE (Campaign of Women for Democracy) was formed. And the very next day, with 30 embattled housewives, Dona Amélia went to Rio newspapers to lodge an objection to Goulart's appointment of his Red-tinged prime minister. At *O Globo* she was told, "The protest of 30 women won't mean much. But if you can come here with, say, 500 women . . ." Getting on the telephone, Dona Amélia and her fledgling group rounded up the 500. Two days later they all marched into the newspaper office, and the story made front-page headlines. The protest did not stop the appointment; it did establish the power of women to influence public opinion.

Chain-Letter Techniques

WHEN Dona Amélia's living room could no longer accommodate all the housewives eager to have a part in CAMDE, she switched meetings to church parish halls, helped form dozens of small cells in homes. Each woman attending was charged with organizing another meeting of ten of her friends; these friends in turn were charged with enlisting others. To finance their activities, CAMDE women scrimped on household budgets, solicited help from well-off friends. They set up public protest meetings; were on the phone hours each day; wrote letters (more than 30,000 in all) to

congressmen to "take a strong position for democracy." They put pressure on commercial firms to remove their ads from the left-wing newspaper *Ultima Hora*, themselves bought space in other newspapers to announce their meetings, appeared at public rallies to debate leftists and challenge rabble-rousers, distributed millions of circulars and booklets, prepared by the men's organizations, exposing the government's dalliance with Reds.

In addition, they got out literature of their own, aimed especially at women's concerns; more than 200,000 copies of one sheet describing what women could do in this crisis was distributed by CAMDE to members, each being asked to make five copies to send to potential members.

When the leftist head of Posts and Telegraphs banned any further handling of CAMDE's literature, Dona Amélia organized a force of women messengers to deliver the material by car, talked friendly Brazilian airline pilots into conveying it to distant destinations.

The housewives didn't limit themselves to their own middle class. They concentrated, for example, on the wives of members of the Red-ridden stevedores' union. "You work on your husbands!" such wives were told. Many did, and not a few converts to democracy were made, some stevedores'

wives later reporting, "We are no longer communists!"

The Murmur of Prayers

EVEN IN the *favelas*, slum sections of shacks ringing many Bra-



Dona Amélia Bastos
"Who has more at stake than we women?"

zilian cities, which were special points of Red propaganda attack, CAMDE units were formed. One, in a Rio *favela* called Rocinha, sprang into being when a washerwoman appealed to Dona Amélia for help. "This place," said the woman, "is crowded with communists. They say they want to teach us to read and write, and they bring us entertainment. But the only books they use are Cuban

primers, the only movies they show are of Cuban guerrillas." A CAMDE cell, centering in the washerwoman's home, was quickly formed at Rocinha. Literacy classes were organized, literature was supplied. And soon the women of Rocinha were able to debate the Reds on their own level, were saying to communist congressional candidates and National Student Union propagandists alike, "Go away. We know what you're after!" The Reds moved on.

The spread of women's organizations was spectacular. Some became branches of CAMDE; others, such as LIMDE (Women's Democratic League) in Belo Horizonte, had their own identity.

The women of Belo Horizonte, capital of Minas Gerais, perhaps the most firmly anti-communist state in Brazil, were courage personified. When the Red-led Federated Union of Latin American Workers announced a mass meeting to be held in their city, with two Red organizers from Russia as featured speakers, LIMDE leaders sent a curt message: "Please be advised that when the plane bringing these men arrives, hundreds of women will be lying across the airstrip!" They kept their word. The plane did not land at Belo Horizonte; it went on to Brasília instead.

The same women staged an equally effective demonstration

last February. A "Land Reform Congress" was to be held in Belo Horizonte, with Leonel Brizola himself the main speaker. When Brizola arrived at the hall, he found it packed—so full, in fact, that he could not make himself heard over the rattle of rosaries and the murmur of 3000 women praying for the deliverance of their country. Going outside, Brizola found the streets equally filled with praying women, as far as the eye could see. Brizola left Belo Horizonte with one of the fieriest speeches of his career still in his pocket, undelivered.

Within 12 months women's groups were actively at work in every major city from Belém in the north to Pôrto Alegre in the south.

A Warning From Kennedy

AT NO POINT, save at the very end, were any of the anti-communist forces—men's, women's or military groups—angling for the ouster of Goulart before his term was up in January 1966. Says Haroldo Cecil Poland, a member of IPES' board of directors, "After all, Goulart had been legally elected according to the constitution, and we Brazilians have a long tradition of *legalidade*. We were only trying to make him rid his government of policies and people who were taking the country down into chaos and civil war. Our committees called upon him as long

as he would see us. But he paid no heed, turning more and more to extremists, and finally refused to see us."

One of the signs of Goulart's disdain for friendly counsel came in December 1962, when U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy visited Brazil. His purpose: to advise, on behalf of his brother the President, that the United States could not forever pour AID funds into Brazil unless some move was made to halt the inflation spiral. Goulart acted with alacrity: just hours after Kennedy left, he angrily formed a committee to coordinate expansion of trade with the Soviet Union!

The Die Is Cast

BY EARLY MARCH this year, the whole sprawling country was a tinderbox ready to burst into flames. Then on March 13, Goulart himself, with Reds egging him on, recklessly struck the match. Before an audience of some 100,000 workers—rounded up by Red leaders and brought into Rio de Janeiro by bus and train at a cost to the government of over \$400,000—Goulart and Brizola irrevocably committed the government to radical change.

Many Brazilians, watching on TV, were shocked to hear Goulart denounce the government structure and social order as "outmoded" and demand basic changes

in the constitution. Among the changes: full legalization of the Communist Party. Goulart then announced two decrees, signing them on the spot with a flourish. One decree confiscated and handed over to Petrobrás, the government oil monopoly, the six oil refineries still in private hands. The other, more alarming, empowered the government to confiscate any large land tracts it adjudged inadequately used and hand these over to landless peasants—a clear replay of Castro's early "land reform" program.

The decrees were a bold and ominous move to bypass congress. Combined with the attacks on the constitution, they amounted to an audacious bid for establishment of government by decree, the essence of dictatorship.

Brizola, taking the podium, went even further. The president's brother-in-law demanded the outright abolition of congress and the substitution of "assemblies" of workers, peasants and army sergeants—a direct echo of Lenin's "soviets" of workers, peasants and soldiers in 1917. The implications were clear enough.

The March 13 rally may be regarded as the event that touched off the preventive revolution. Brazil's middle class now realized that Goulart radicals had passed the point of no return. The government was committed to a course

that could lead only to a civil war, followed by communist takeover.

March of the Women

FIRST TO TAKE action were the women of São Paulo. Listening on radio and TV to the March 13 rally, hundreds of housewives rushed to their telephones to begin organizing a demonstration that would make Goulart's seem tiny by comparison. Six days later, on March 19, the wide thoroughfares of downtown São Paulo were jammed with what the women called the "March of the Family With God Toward Freedom." Clutching prayerbooks and rosaries, a vast army more than 600,000 strong marched in solemn rhythm under anti-communist banners. And as they marched, newshawks on the sidelines sold newspapers containing a 1300-word proclamation the women had prepared:

This nation which God has given us, immense and marvelous as it is, is in extreme danger. We have allowed men of limitless ambition, without Christian faith or scruples, to bring our people misery, destroying our economy, disturbing our social peace, to create hate and despair. They have infiltrated our nation, our government administration, our armed forces and even our churches with servants of totalitarianism, foreign to

us and all-consuming. . . Mother of God, preserve us from the fate and suffering of the martyred women of Cuba, Poland, Hungary and other enslaved nations!

One bystander called the São Paulo women's march "the most moving demonstration in Brazilian history." Days later, similar marches were scheduled for several of the nation's major cities. Efforts by the government to discourage them, and threats by police to break them up, failed to halt the crusading women.

Guardians of Legality

BUT IF THE Red coup was to be thwarted, action stronger than public demonstrations was necessary. Middle-class leaders began conferring secretly with anti-communist generals of Brazil's army, long distrustful of Goulart and quietly carrying on their own resistance to his policies.

To understand the role played by the military in the revolution, one must understand the character and traditions of the Brazilian army—a breed unique in Latin America. Brazil, in contrast with other countries, has never been under a purely military dictatorship. Traditionally the army has regarded itself as defender of the constitution, guardian of *legalidade*. Its generals, again unlike those of some other Latin American coun-

tries, are drawn not from the wealthy aristocracy but from the middle and lower-middle classes. Most rise from the ranks. Thus they form no military caste, but come perhaps closer to representing a cross-section of Brazilian opinion and democratic ideals than any other segment of the population.

Historically committed to the primacy of civilian authority, the army has interfered in political situations only five times since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1889—and then only in crises where civilian power has crumpled or decayed. At those times the army took over only long enough to re-establish constitutional processes, then stepped out again. It has never shown any tendency to grab power for itself—not even when it would have been easy and perhaps advisable to do so. Thus, from the time the Republic was proclaimed in 1889 until today, only five of Brazil's 25 presidents have come from the military, and these were duly elected or appointed.

Largely anti-communist, the generals held Goulart and his entanglements with the extremists in distrust—matched by Goulart's distrust of them. Goulart was confident that their respect for the constitution would keep them from acting. Nevertheless, he played it safe by shifting military commands and manipulating promo-

tions so as to cut down the power of the more conservative officers.

One such officer, Humberto Castelo Branco, was in command of the army in Pernambuco State, in the country's torrid Northeast, where, said Brazilians, "the biggest crop is communism." When several landowners were murdered and families began fleeing into the towns to escape Red terrorism, Castelo Branco took action. Whereupon the governor, the notoriously radical Miguel Arrais, complained that the general was "neutralizing" left-wing influences in his state. Goulart promptly removed the troublemaker—by kicking him upstairs as chief of staff of the army. Other officers who spoke out against communism were similarly transferred to desk duty, while left-wingers were maneuvered into strategic command positions.

Mutiny in the Ranks

To FURTHER nullify any possibility of an anti-communist generals' revolt, the Reds—apparently with the connivance of Goulart—moved to break down discipline, if not to encourage outright mutiny, in the armed forces. A program of spirited agitation was launched among noncoms and enlisted men, urging them to form rank-and-file unions to demand a change in Brazilian law allowing them to run for public office—a

right which had been open to commissioned officers but not to enlisted personnel. To further undercut their leaders and weaken discipline, a Sailors and Marines Association was formed—moving the Marxist class war into the armed forces.

Events were building swiftly to a climax when Goulart on March 26 openly demonstrated his sympathy with the move to scuttle military discipline. On that day, some 1400 members of the Sailors and Marines Association mutinied in Rio de Janeiro. They holed themselves up in the headquarters of the communist-controlled Metallurgical Workers Union. Defying orders to return to their barracks, the mutinous sailors and marines gaily shouted "Viva Goulart!" from the windows and pledged loyalty to their commander, Cândido Aragão—a Goulart appointee known in leftist circles as the "People's Admiral."

Army troops surrounded the building and arrested the rebels—only to release them a few hours later on orders of the president himself. To the fury of the military establishment, Goulart merely "requested" the mutineers to go to their barracks, with assurances that they would not be punished but would in fact receive weekend passes!

The minister of the navy, Adm. Sílvio Mota, abruptly fired the

"People's Admiral," then resigned, in protest against the government's encouragement of mutiny. Goulart promptly restored the "People's Admiral," and announced that the new Navy Minister would be Paulo Mário Rodrigues, a left-winger known as Brazil's "Red Admiral," recalled from retirement in this emergency. The mutineers celebrated that afternoon with a victory snake dance through downtown Rio, bearing the "People's Admiral" on their shoulders.

The Start of an Avalanche

MEANWHILE, grimly watching developments from his office in Rio, the general who had been kicked upstairs, Castelo Branco, had searched his legalistic conscience, come to a hard conclusion and taken action. This army chief of staff was a man small in size—five feet three inches—but among fellow officers he enjoyed the kind of deep respect which Generals George Marshall and Douglas MacArthur commanded in the United States. He had graduated brilliantly from Brazil's Military Academy, then studied at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. During World War II he had been chief of operations of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy, as part of Gen. Mark Clark's Fifth Army.

Following Goulart's March 13

rally, Castelo Branco composed a stinging indictment. When a president proposed to nullify congress and overthrow the constitution, he argued, military action in defense of *legalidade* was not only justified but mandatory. This secret memorandum went out to trusted top officers. Since all mail of officers known to be anti-communist was monitored and their phones were tapped, circulation of the manifesto was a problem. Anti-communist Brazilian businessmen helped: they carried copies in their breast pockets, put the manifesto into the proper hands; retired officers also provided reliable men to carry messages between generals in their speeded-up exchange of views.

To Castelo Branco's secretly circulated manifesto, more than 1500 naval officers now added one of their own. Addressed to all the nation's citizens, it declared the time had come for Brazil to "defend itself." The army quickly proclaimed solidarity with the navy, the bulk of the press joined in, and in distant Brasília some members of congress took up the cry.

Was the whole nation rising? Goulart seemed badly shaken by the extent of the public reaction. Hurriedly conferring with his new Navy Minister, the "Red Admiral," Jango proceeded to reverse himself. There would be an in-

vestigation into that mutiny, he announced, and, meanwhile, "People's Admiral" Aragão was relieved of his command.

The reversal came too late. The avalanche had started.

Making a final desperate effort to salvage support in the armed forces, Goulart on the evening of March 30 sped to Rio's automobile association, where a large crowd of army sergeants had gathered to pay him tribute. But even while Goulart was enjoying the sergeants' plaudits and castigating the "gorillas"—a disparaging term for professional military men allegedly seeking power—the preventive revolution was under way.

The Rebel Columns March

THE FIRST call for the overthrow of Goulart came from Gov. Magalhães Pinto of the state of Minas Gerais. Demonstrations supporting his call promptly broke out in the streets, and on March 31 a division of the army based in Minas Gerais started south for nearby Rio de Janeiro. A few hours later came the announcement that Gen. Amaury Krueel, commander of Brazil's Second Army, based at São Paulo, was also throwing his forces into the fight for freedom, and sending a strong contingent north toward Rio. By this time news came that the Fourth Army, too, based at Pernambuco, was joining the rebellion.

Close to panic, Goulart emplaned for Brasília, where he told reporters, "I have come here to run the country and I am confident that the people are with me." He quickly discovered that congress was not. Moreover, soldiers from Brasília's local garrison were even then on their way to attack the presidential palace. After only three hours in Brasília, Goulart was back aboard his plane, heading south for his home state of Rio Grande do Sul, on the border of Uruguay. The Third Army, based at Porto Alegre, was uncommitted. On arrival there, however, Goulart learned that the civil governor had joined the uprising.

An unknown quantity was the First Army, based in Rio de Janeiro. Barricaded in his palace in Rio, Gov. Carlos Lacerda, long a bitter Goulart foe, wanted to proclaim his allegiance to the rebellion, but he couldn't. The federal government still controlled Rio's radio stations, and a general strike in support of Goulart had closed down the city. Lacerda's only forces were the state traffic police, his only armor the city's garbage trucks, parked bumper-to-bumper to block roads leading to the palace. So far as he knew, the First Army was still taking orders from Goulart, and to his dismay the governor learned that this army had sent a column toward São Paulo to intercept the advancing rebel

column. (What he could not know until later was that when the two forces met, the presumably pro-Goulart column promptly joined the rebels.)

At long last, on his only open telephone line, Governor Lacerda got a call through to a rebel station in distant Belo Horizonte, whose signal could be heard in Rio. That was when his own city finally heard him proclaim solidarity with the revolution. Even as he spoke, the report reached him that a detachment of the First Army's tanks was rolling down Rio's lovely tree-shaded boulevards, headed toward the governor's palace. Only when the tanks surrounded the palace did Lacerda learn they'd come not to butcher but to rescue him.

Victory!

BY MIDAFTERNOON ON Wednesday, April 1, it was all over, and Brazil's middle-class leaders were at the microphones, hailing the downfall of communism. From the windows of Rio, sheets and towels flapped to greet the victory, and the streets of Brazil's great cities filled with people—happy, dancing people, in a carnival mood.

From Rio Grande do Sul came news that Jango Goulart had fled to Uruguay. Also getting out fast were Brizola, the Cuban ambassador and top Red leaders, who

scurried for borders of adjoining countries, hurriedly hopped aboard planes for Cuba, or hid away in embassies friendly to Iron Curtain countries.

Incoming ships from Czechoslovakia, loaded with more arms for the Red revolutionaries, were reported turning back for Havana. And in Rio, dense clouds of smoke arose from incinerators in the Soviet embassy compound, where quantities of papers and documents were being hastily burned.

How could a divided nation of some 77 million swing politically so far so quickly, and with virtually no loss of life, in contrast to Castro's bull-ring butcheries in Cuba, or to the Spanish Civil War, where both sides fought so bloodily for years?

Much credit must go, of course, to the highly civilized officer corps of Brazil's army, which acted with dispatch and precision to nip the threat of Red takeover just before it reached the bloodletting stage. But, as the generals are quick to acknowledge, even more credit belongs to aroused civilians who, with the lesson of Cuba before them, for more than two years had been alerting the public—and who at the climactic moment gave the military the signal for action.

On the day after the revolution Brazil had a reminder of what had really made it possible. The women of CAMDE had planned a

"March of the Family With God Toward Freedom" in Rio de Janeiro for April 2. But now, with freedom won, why bother? The women of Rio, however, sprang to their telephones as their sisters in other cities had done before them. The march would take place as planned, but now as a "March of Thanksgiving to God." When a government official advised calling it off, fearing violence, Dona Amélia Bastos insisted, saying, "The march will demonstrate to the world that this is a true *people's* revolution—it will be a marching plebiscite for real democracy!"

And so it was: an ocean of humanity, more than a million strong, moved through a snow-storm of confetti drifting down from the skyscrapers that line Rio's boulevards; an army of peace with banners, firmly, in reverent spirit, telling all South America that Brazilians were resolved to stay free.

How Narrow the Escape?

WITHIN days after the revolution, Brazilians began to learn just how close they had come to losing that freedom. Swooping down upon nests of subversion hastily abandoned, military security units discovered tons of communist literature, guerrilla-warfare manuals, arsenals of weapons, carefully spelled-out plans for Red takeover,

schemes for liquidating key anti-communists.

In Goulart's own palace were incriminating files of correspondence with Red leaders, canceled checks for millions of cruzeiros Jango had donated to communist fronts, as well as checks drawn by the president against government funds for improvement of his own private farms.

The residence of Goulart's brother-in-law turned up vast evidence of the workings of the "National Liberation Front"—made up of Brizola's "Groups of Eleven" (known as G-11)—over which he presided as supreme commander. No mean force, the G-11 groups, organized to "save Brazil from the claws of international capitalism and its internal allies," were found to number more than 30,000 members.

One captured secret manual issued to G-11 regional commanders directed that members, called "companions" and pledged to "fight until death," were to be instructed in how to stage strikes, agitate and confuse; how to "destroy, plunder and burn public buildings as well as private enterprises"; how to capture telephone exchanges, radio and TV stations and weapon-selling stores; how to kidnap and hold as hostages public authorities, who in case of setback "should be immediately and summarily killed."

Another manual went into the techniques of "planned violence, leaving aside any sort of sentimentality" in eliminating anyone standing in the way. Special attention was given to dispatching high military officers: "Each officer under suspicion shall have a man responsible for his elimination at the right moment," and, in case the eliminator should fail in his duty, he himself was to "suffer the punishment of death immediately."

Cold Cash and Counterfeit

ALSO FOUND in the luxurious 20-room Pôrto Alegre home of Brizola—who in speeches liked to call himself "a poor man" and "defender of the oppressed"—were several hundred million cruzeiros, as well as documents putting other of his assets in the names of third parties, but specifying they were to be "returned to LB on demand."

In Pernambuco, headquarters for communist preparations, were found more than 10,000 uniforms and the same number of pairs of shoes, plus orders for 50,000 more, to be used for the *Exército Camponês* (Peasant Army) being recruited and trained by Miguel Arrais, the governor of the state. Included were many uniforms for revolutionary leaders, with one of special design tagged for Arrais himself.

In São Paulo, a large cache of

imitation bank notes and coins, stamped with the images of Lenin, Stalin and Prestes, was found along with postage stamps bearing the hammer and sickle. These were mainly for propaganda use. But also turned up were huge stacks of counterfeit currency, so well printed as to almost defy detection. Captured records of its disbursement showed other billions had been printed and sent to Red organizations, not only to finance subversion but to accelerate inflation, a prime goal of the chaos engineers.

In the headquarters of labor groups and of the National Student Union were found stacks of films and printed propaganda from Russia, Red China and Cuba; large wall-hung photos of Castro, Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung, and piles of smaller ones for distribution; huge stocks of Molotov bombs and material for their making.

Caught redhanded were nine Red Chinese agents: seven masquerading as members of a "trade mission," two as correspondents for the New China News Agency. In their possession were detailed plots for the assassination of prominent anti-communists; also records of bribes paid to congressmen and members of the Goulart entourage. Cash found on the nine, apparently for bribe use, amounted to more than a billion cruzeiros,

plus 53,000 U.S. dollars, plus 5000 pounds sterling, plus assorted other foreign currencies.

A New Lock on the Door

AGAINST SUCH subverters and corruptionists the military moved fast, jailing all suspects and—by an “Institutional Act” quickly promulgated to guide Brazil during the interim government—putting outside the political pale all persons regarded as immediate threats to the success of the revolution. Many were released after investigation; only those were held whose proved acts, not mere words, had contributed to Brazil’s near downfall.

Denied their political rights for ten years were 40 expelled members of congress, and 60 other prominent Brazilians—among them former presidents Goulart and Quadros. Only later, after Castelo Branco himself had carefully examined the mountain of evidence of corruption on the part of Juscelino Kubitschek was this ex-president also denied his political rights for a decade. To outside criticism that such measures were too harsh, the new government says, “When your house has been plundered, you don’t invite the thieves back for dinner. You at least put a new lock on the door.”

Visiting Paris later, and subjected to French reporters’ snide questions about the post-revolution

purge, Governor Lacerda made pointed reference to the French Revolution of 1789. “Brazil,” he noted wryly, “has not yet sent a single person to the guillotine.”

“An Honest Middle Course”

WELL within the 30-day period called for by the constitution, Brazil’s congress named Gen. Castelo Branco as president to serve the unexpired two years of Goulart’s term. In sharp contrast with the demagogic wheeler-dealers who preceded him, Castelo Branco is universally acknowledged to be honest, free of the hotheadedness that has marked many Latin American rulers, and deeply committed to democratic processes. He is a quietly but stubbornly courageous man.

The antithesis of the “man on horseback,” Castelo Branco heads a government that is far from being a military dictatorship. Political parties exist unhindered, as does the congress. The press is free, with no reins on dissent or criticism; even the left-wing *Ultima Hora* continues publication. The president’s official family is made up of the country’s outstanding experts in their fields: economists, career diplomats, engineers, agriculturists. All cabinet ministers, with the exception of the ministers of the three military branches, are civilians. All are men rightly described as “middle class”;

all are deeply dedicated to Castelo's announced reforms.

A strict middle-of-the-roader, Castelo Branco rejects the label "rightist revolution." He says flatly, "The extreme right is reactionary; the extreme left is subversive. Brazil must steer an honest middle course." When, shortly after the revolution, some wealthy industrialists and *latifundists* (large landowners) moved in to press what he considered self-serving claims, Castelo Branco said bluntly, "The answer to the evils of the extreme left does not lie in the birth of a reactionary right."

The president is under no illusions as to the enormity of the task before him, nor the shortness of the time he has to perform it: only a little over two years. Brazil's problems are deeply ingrained: its years of misrule and runaway inflation; its great areas of stark poverty; the exploitation of the masses — not from the outside, as charged by the Reds, but by Brazilians. Extensive political, economic, social reforms are sorely needed. The job is a staggering one. But, beholden to no party or pressure group, the doughty general is giving it the grand try.

Reforms Under Way

HE HAD NO SOONER taken office than he began dismantling the huge and corrupt bureaucracy, sliced the bloated budget by 30

percent for the first year, began feeding into the congressional hopper reforms that go to the heart of Brazil's troubles. Each bill is required to be acted upon by congress within a 30-day limit; otherwise, it automatically becomes law.

Political reforms already passed include a constitutional amendment requiring presidential elections to be by absolute majority — to discourage the proliferation of political parties, now 13 in number, and to offset the chance of some demagogue riding to power through the connivance of a few, against the will of the people.

Economic reforms include measures to halt inflation — by sharp reduction in government spending, by tying wage scales to productivity and the cost of living, by closing loopholes in corporate and income-tax laws. They also include an amendment of the Profit Remittances Law, long discriminatory to foreign investment; a ban on the nationalization or confiscation of private businesses; the elimination of subsidies for imported wheat, oil and newsprint; the cancellation of tax exemption for journalists and judges, writers and teachers.

Social reforms, aimed at lifting the lives of the impoverished masses, include a national low-cost housing program, designed eventually to banish the stenchful *favelas* that are the shame of Brazil's

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big cities; and an agrarian-reform program to correct the poverty and injustices suffered by the Northeast masses, who are virtual serfs on the big estates of feudal landowners.

The heart of President Castelo Branco's land-reform bill is the imposition of a graduated tax, which would be progressive with the size and unused portions of the holdings. The tax is designed to encourage land use and redistribution among those without land of their own. The land-reform program includes technical aid and grants to help small farmers get started, plus government-built farm-to-market roads.

No less difficult than the political, economic and social reforms is the moral cleanup to which the regime is committed. In this, the president himself has set the new example. One of his first acts after taking office was to voluntarily make public his private assets: a Rio de Janeiro apartment, a few thousand dollars in stocks, a 1961-model Aero Willys car, and a family cemetery plot worth about \$1000. His speeches to the nation and his messages to the congress resound with calls to political morality.

"The great thing Castelo Branco has done already," said a prominent Brazilian last July, "is to create a new image of decency and honesty in government."



WIDE WORLD

President Humberto Castelo Branco makes his inaugural address, April 15

The Long Road Back

WITH ALL its high-minded objectives, can the revolutionary government—in the two years it has left—successfully sell Brazilians of all classes on making the sacrifices that must be made to cure the nation's ills?

The obstacles are huge. Most of the wealthy landowner class stand strongly against higher taxation

SPECIAL FEATURE

and land reform. From the masses of peasants, on the other hand, will arise new leaders who will find social-betterment schemes too slow. Communists and other radicals, for all their present banishment, can be counted upon to regroup underground, determined to avoid their past mistakes. And the man in the street, long grown cynical of government promises from any quarter, must see real progress and substantial improvement if his continued support is to be won in the free elections now set for November 15, 1966.

The answer lies not only with Castelo Branco and his supporters. "It lies also," say Brazil's middle-class revolutionaries, "with every Brazilian's willingness to subordinate selfish interests to the good of the nation."

Says Castelo Branco: "Too long we've been led by demagogues into blaming all our woes on 'Yankee imperialism.' From now on, we are going to be judged not by our intentions, not by our promises, but by what we do!"

Standing behind the president are those who made the middle-class revolt a success in the first place. "It's one thing to make a revolution," say Dr. Glycon de Paiva, "but quite another to sustain it. The danger now is that we who initiated this revolt will re-

lax." To avoid that danger, groups like IPES are staying on the job — sponsoring courses to train democratic leaders, especially from the middle and lower classes, and developing ways to keep the public alert and enlightened. Expressing the new attitude of many of Brazil's business leaders, Paulo Ayres Filho, a pharmaceutical manufacturer, says, "We now know that we businessmen must think not only about profits but about the social problems of our country. We've got to prove that free enterprise can do the best job for *all* the people."

The women's groups, too, are not demobilizing. Says CAMDE's Dona Amélia Bastos, "We women of Brazil have discovered our power. We're now going to work to preserve the democracy we helped save." CAMDE women are turning their energies to education and social service. Also, they have proposed to the government a detailed plan to combat illiteracy by putting on a nationwide fund-raising campaign to get it started.

Given a broad enough spread of that spirit, Brazil can indeed come back from its deep plunge toward chaos, and make strides toward realization of its great potential. And in doing so, it can count upon the support of the whole free world.



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TRADUÇÃOQUANDO HOMENS DE EMPRESA VIRARAM
REVOLUCIONÁRIOS

("FORTUNE", Set. 64)

por Philip Siekman

Uma estória até agora inédita: como homens de negócio paulistas conspiraram para derrubar um governo brasileiro infestado de comunistas.

"Deus é brasileiro", diz um adágio popular no Brasil. Um olhar retrospectivo a acontecimentos recentes, e se é tentado a concluir que o Brasil foi, de fato, favorecido pela Divina Providência. No começo deste ano, só dois caminhos pareciam abertos ao país. Um levava a um estado totalitário dominado pelos comunistas, como a Cuba de Fidel Castro, o outro a uma guerra civil em grande escala, tão sangrenta como a que devastou a Espanha na década de Trinta. Qualquer dessas temíveis possibilidades teria impulsionado desastrosas ondas de choque através do resto da América Latina e confrontado os Estados Unidos com a mais grave de suas derrotas em política externa, desde a queda da China.

Em março último, a economia brasileira, acometida pela inflação e por greves políticas, estava à beira do colapso. O governo do presidente João Goulart estava incrustado de comunistas e simpatizantes, que alimentavam o caos e preparavam-se para capitalizá-lo em seu proveito. E os comunistas, desesperadamente intinidados, do regime armavam-se para a luta.

De repente, súbita e quase miraculosamente, tudo terminou. Numa revolta, que começou nas primeiras horas de 31 de março e terminou dois dias após, o Exército Brasileiro fez desfilar seus batalhões de soldados e tanques, Goulart fugiu para o exílio e seus partidários principais foram arrebanhados e presos. No dia em que o governo caiu, o bairro praleiro de Copacabana, no Rio, explodiu em celebrações comparáveis às folias carnavalescas. Paulo era outro pandemônio de alegria. Um homem de negócios local que só em outras três ocasiões viu a cidade reagir assim: quando a Alemanha acabou na Europa, em maio de 1945,

e em 1958 e 1962, quando o time brasileiro ganhou a Copa Mundial de futebol.

Agora, um governo civil capaz, cautelosamente supervisionado pelo Exército, tenta criar ordem e estabilidade a partir da bagunça que herdou. Gilberto Freyre, o conhecido sociólogo brasileiro, diz que o atual Ministério "talvez seja o mais competente da história da República". Mas o otimismo encorajado pelo talento e atitudes dos homens agora no poder tem de ser temperado pela magnitude dos problemas políticos, sociais e econômicos que os enfrentam.

Não obstante, algumas companhias estrangeiras (Willys-Overland, Phillips, ASEA), que há tanto esperavam por um governo brasileiro que honestamente se dispusesse a governar, animaram-se tanto que já estão fazendo vultosos acréscimos a seus investimentos brasileiros. A maioria dos inversores estadunidenses, acostumados a ver as promessas brasileiras evaporarem-se como cerração matutina, estão cautamente esperando para ver. Seu ceticismo se explica parcialmente pelo fato de que a história da revolução brasileira, com todos os seus aspectos animadores, não foi, até hoje, bem contada na imprensa dos Estados Unidos.

De maneira tipicamente sardônica, observou um brasileiro sobre o golpe de março: "Agora que tudo deu tão certinho, todo mundo quer ser o pai da criança". Os generais forneceram a demonstração de força que, no momento crítico, resolveu a parada. Mas, este não foi outro dos pronunciamentos militares latino-americanos. Significativamente, boa parte da inspiração e do planejamento foi fornecida por homens de negócios e profissionais liberais, despertados pelo derivar para a esquerda do país. Mas não só despertaram, como se organizaram para fazer algo a respeito. A maioria desses líderes eram do Estado de São Paulo, e o levante de 31 de março pode, com justiça, ser chamado "a revolta dos paulistas".

São Paulo é, dos 22 Estados do Brasil, o mais próspero e poderoso politicamente. Contém um dos portos mais importantes da América Latina, Santos, e a maior metrópole brasileira, a cidade de São Paulo (população: quatro milhões). Sua riqueza e poder foram outrora baseados no café, mas hoje abriga a maior concentração industrial da América Latina. Nos subúrbios industriais que se estendem pelas suaves co-

linas fora da capital, os paulistas fabricam a maior parte dos automóveis, plásticos, equipamento eletrônico, têxteis, produtos químicos e maquinaria do Brasil.

Ferrenhamente individualistas e orgulhosos de uma tradição de independência e trabalho árduo, os paulistas sempre olharam qualquer govêrno central com desconfiança-- mesmo quando o controlavam, nos primeiros dias da República. A certa altura, sua atitude para com as questões políticas radicava singelamente na idéia de que o que era bom para o mercado de café era bom para o Brasil. Mas, os homens de negócios e profissionais liberais que entraram em cena depois da 2a. Guerra Mundial estão muito mais preocupados que seus antecessores com as tensões sociais e injustiças individuais que lavram em uma sociedade em que talvez um terço dos 77 milhões de habitantes estão condenados, desde o berço, a uma vida de pobreza e ignorância. Eles crêem que o Brasil precisa de uma mudança radical--pelo funcionamento dos conceitos de govêrno limitado, emprêsa privada e liberdade individual.

Um dêsses paulistas é Paulo Ayres Filho, habil dirigente de uma indústria farmacêutica. Hoje com 45 anos, Ayres sucedeu seu pai, em 1956, como presidente do Instituto Pinheiros, uma firma de produtos éticos que tomou o nome do bairro de São Paulo em que está localizada. Sua família possui 25 por cento da companhia, que êle dirige de um pequeno escritório no recinto da fábrica.

Antídoto de um fabricante de remédios

Nos primeiros anos da passada década, Paulo Ayres foi ficando cada vez mais preocupado com a demagogia e o esquerdismo que infestavam a política brasileira. A essa altura, conheceu o trabalho da "Foundation for Economic Education", de Irvington-on-Hudson, Nova York. Sobretudo através de livretes e folhetos, a fundação estadunidense faz proselitismo pela causa do govêrno limitado e da livre emprêsa, como antídoto para o que chama de filosofia de "alguma coisa em troca de coisa alguma". Ayres leu grande número de publicações da fundação (p. ex., "Economics in One Lesson", de Henry Hazlitt), e começou a distribuir seus folhetos, bem como excertos traduzidos de outras obras, entre dezenas de amigos.

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Olhando retrospectivamente para aqueles primeiros anos de atividade, Paulo Ayres recorda: "Estávamos perdendo a batalha". Em 1955, Juscelino Kubitschek foi eleito Presidente do Brasil como candidato do Partido Social Democrático e com o apoio do Partido Trabalhista, que era dominado por esquerdistas. Kubitschek levou o Brasil a um frenesi de desenvolvimento e de gastos governamentais. Indústrias inteiras foram edificadas. São Paulo expandiu-se colossalmente e Brasília, a nova capital, apareceu como uma miragem de concreto no deserto. Milhões e milhões de cruzeiros foram despendidos, malbaratados e roubados. A crônica inflação brasileira inflamou-se. E, ao menos como Ayres e outros o viam: "Comunistas começaram a aparecer em associações estudantis, sindicatos operários e até em sociedades profissionais e patronais e em associações comerciais".

Ayres tende a usar a palavra comunista para descrever um amplo espectro de pensamento político, englobando não apenas elementos declaradamente do partido, mas também socialistas democráticos, estudantes e intelectuais que empregam a linguagem marxista como meio de protesto e, talvez os mais importantes, oportunistas sem escrúpulos. Durante os anos finais da década passada, tais influências estavam inquestionavelmente ganhando terreno. Os ataques aos Estados Unidos e ao capitalismo em geral cresceram em furor; os pedidos de nacionalização radical da indústria tornaram-se mais estridentes; e mais e mais políticos começaram a falar de luta de classes e a pregar a violência como caminho para o poder.

Poucos dias antes que o mandato de Kubitschek terminasse, em janeiro de 1961, Ayres recebeu um telefonema inter-urbano de um estranho que compartilhava de seus temores. Este era Gilberto Huber Jr., um jovem homem de negócios do Rio, que tinha edificado, no pós-guerra, um próspero negócio, "Listas Telefônicas Brasileiras", editoras das "paginas amarelas" das listas telefônicas do Brasil. Huber disse a Ayres que tinha sabido de sua campanha pessoal de educação e sugeriu que se encontrassem. Os dois passaram a encontrar-se regularmente, geralmente no Rio, onde Ayres começava um curto mandato como diretor do Banco do Brasil.

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O presidente do Banco era outro homem de negócios de São Paulo, João Baptista Figueiredo. Ele e um punhado de outros amigos de Ayres e Huber logo passariam a discutir como enfrentar a propaganda estatista e esquerdista que ganhava todo o Brasil. Em resultado disso, decidiu-se fundar o Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Sociais - resumidamente IPES. Alguns opinavam que o IPES deveria ser um movimento clandestino. Mas os fundadores finalmente acordaram que agiriam em público--publicando livretos e folhetos, patrocinando palestras, financiando viagens de estudantes aos Estados Unidos e ajudando a sustentar associações democráticas estudantis e operárias.

"A destruição de nossas esperanças"

Pouco antes que o IPES fôsse fundado, Jânio Quadros tomou posse como Presidente da República. Quadros exibia uma animadora determinação de agarrar pelo gasnete a inflação e a corrupção administrativa e de deter aquela tendência esquerdizante que tanto alarmava os homens de negócio de São Paulo, mas após sé sete meses de governo renunciou súbitamente e foi substituído pelo Vice-Presidente João Goulart.

Para Ayres, a ascensão de João Goulart significava "a destruição de tôdas as nossas esperanças". Protegido do antigo ditador Getúlio Vargas, Goulart tinha feito do Partido Trabalhista uma poderosa máquina política, fecundando judiciosamente amizades pelo apadrinhamento governamental e prometendo salários sempre mais altos aos operários. Sob suas benevolentes vistas, líderes trabalhistas de influência comunista passaram a controlar a maioria dos sindicatos trabalhistas da nação.

Atemorizado pelo pensamento de que Goulart pudesse fazer, agora que dispunha do poder presidencial, o IPES acelerou seus esforços para influenciar a opinião pública. Mas era uma tarefa árdua. Uma campanha, na comunidade de negócios, em busca de sócios e de fundos rendeu pouco. Conforme Ayres o recorda: "Alguns não contribuíam porque pensavam que estávamos errados; outros porque temiam estivéssemos certos e não se queriam comprometer". O apoio do IPES à reforma agrária não lhe ganhou amigos entre os latifundiários, os grandes proprie-

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tários de terra. Sua concepção de uma economia livre e aberta não foi bem recebida pelos industriais ineficientes, que já estavam perturbados com o número crescente de companhias estrangeiras que vinham introduzindo no Brasil técnicas avançadas e "marketing" agressivo. Ao todo, só cerca de 400 firmas, a maior parte do Rio e São Paulo, contribuíram para a organização; a entrada anual de dinheiro nunca excedeu 500.000 dólares.

Com fundos limitados e sem idéia real de como cumprir a tarefa que se tinha proposto, o IPES tentou fazer demais. "Tentamos salvar o país", diz Ayres. "E não nos colocamos na devida perspectiva. Mas as sementes que arremessamos ajudaram muitas iniciativas isoladas." A organização produziu uma corrente de folhetos e livretes que dava a quem quer que deles fizesse uso. (Suas publicações incluem "Inflação, Suas Causas e Consequências", "A Verdade Sobre a Revolução Industrial", uma série sobre "Economia Para Todos".) Ajudou a financiar um programa de treinamento em liderança democrática, para homens de negócio, estudantes e operários, o qual instruiu 2.600 pessoas. E encorajou associações femininas e organizações estudantis e outras com contribuição em fundos, literatura, espaço barato de escritório, equipamento de escritório gratuito e ajuda burocrática subvencionada.

Lá para o fim de 1962, a atitude de muitos membros do IPES começou a sofrer mudança. "A princípio", diz Ayres, "a idéia era toda de resistir, não de atacar. Todos queríamos que Jango terminasse seu mandato. Sabíamos que toda a gente, em outras partes do mundo, estaria contra nós, se o depuséssemos". Mas, à medida que o governo Goulart ficava cada vez mais temerário, tornou-se claro que a resistência intelectual não operaria com a devida rapidez. Enquanto o IPES continuava com seu trabalho propagandístico e educativo, sócios da organização começaram, individualmente, a procurar maneiras mais diretas de manifestar sua oposição.

Tôda a casta de organizações anticomunistas pularam na cena brasileira. Unas faziam comícios; outras pixavam paredes; uma tentou comprar políticos. Um industrial de São Paulo, pertencente ao IPES, decidiu que era tempo de adotar "os métodos dêles"; e organizou células de "vigilantes" para enfrentar provocadores esquerdistas, nos co-

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mícios anticomunistas, com "métodos intelectuais--como uma patada na cabeça". Posteriormente, os "vigilantes" armaram-se com armas leves, fundaram uma fábrica clandestina de granadas-de-mão e escolheram um local de onde efetuar operações de guerrilha na guerra civil que consideravam inevitável e iminente.

O que se ia tornar o movimento ativista importante contra Goulart começou com três sócios do IPES, todos advogados de São Paulo: Flávio Galvão, Luiz Werneck e João-Adelino Prado Neto. (Galvão é também redator de "O Estado de São Paulo", o jornal conservador da cidade.) Eles decidiram, nas palavras de Werneck, "que deveríamos fazer alguma coisa. Se isso significasse revolução, estávamos preparados. Tínhamos de transformar toda a situação."

Logo, estariam reunindo-se com número crescente de outros profissionais liberais e homens de negócio de São Paulo, pertencentes ou não às fileiras do IPES. Um dos recrutas mais proeminentes foi Júlio de Mesquita Filho, que se tornou chefe nominal do grupo. (A família Mesquita é dona de "O Estado de São Paulo".) Outro foi Adhemar de Barros, Governador do Estado de São Paulo. Sua adesão ao grupo de homens de negócio revolucionários foi especialmente importante porque ele dispunha de uma polícia estadual, bem adestrada e bem armada, com efetivos de cerca de 40.000 homens. Barros abriu linhas de comunicação para outros governadores simpaticizantes, notadamente para Carlos Lacerda, da Guanabara, o Estado que contém o Rio de Janeiro. Dispondo de um estoque aparentemente inesgotável de invectivas venenosas, Lacerda foi o inimigo público mais insultante de Goulart.

"Já não é possível suportar"

Na segunda metade do ano de 1963, o Brasil parecia perigosamente próximo de se desagregar. A inflação continuada não somente solapava a força produtiva do país, mas ainda deprimia os padrões de vida da maioria dos brasileiros ("per capita", o produto bruto nacional, de fato, declinou o ano passado). No pauperizado Nordeste, camponeses analfabetos estavam sendo organizados com dinheiro da China Vermelha e armas contrabandeadas de Cuba. No Sul, Leonel Brizola, deputado fanático e cunhado de Goulart, acelerava seus ataques contra o capital es-

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trangeiro e nacional.

A essa altura, simpatizantes abertos do comunismo e de Castro tinham-se apoderado de postos-chaves no governo e suas repartições. E uma cúpula trabalhista dominada por comunistas estava abertamente usando greves como arma política. Em outubro, umas trinta greves maiores estavam em curso ou anunciadas.

Informalmente, sócios do IPÊS vinham, há muito, cultivando amizades nos meios militares, convidando oficiais ostensivamente para visitarem fábricas em São Paulo; e, na mesa do café ou do jantar, contavam-lhes seus receios. Mas a reunião mais rica de consequências teve lugar no começo de 1963, quando Werneck, Galvão e outros travaram conhecimento com um jovem tenente-coronel, Rubens Resstel, então servindo no Quartel General do II Exército.

Paulista de nascença, Resstel combateu (e ganhou a Medalha de Prata dos Estados Unidos) com a Fôrça Expedicionária Brasileira, a qual fez a Segunda Guerra Mundial na Itália, como parte do V Exército dos Estados Unidos. Assim como o IPÊS tornou-se a célula-mater da resistência civil a Goulart, assim os veteranos da F.E.B. tornaram-se a fôrça motriz entre os militares. Desde a guerra, explica Resstel, "temos horror de qualquer regime como o que combatemos, seja fascista ou comunista". Encorajado pelo grupo Mesquita, Resstel e alguns dos oficiais seus correligionários começaram a circular pelo Brasil, sondando outros militares. Grande número de oficiais jovens concordaram que tinha chegado o tempo de agir; mas muitos não pensavam assim, nos postos mais altos.

O Exército desempenhou um papel maior na política brasileira desde que derrubou o Império, há 75 anos. Mas foi, no todo, um papel cauteloso--de protetor da Constituição e árbitro dos debates políticos que pareçam pôr em perigo a República. Como John J. Johnson observou ("The Military and Society in Latin America"), "... as fôrças armadas brasileiras, neste século, têm procurado conscientemente evitar ações que provocassem amarga resistência popular. Nem sempre tiveram êxito, mas seu prontuário é bom..."

Grande número de oficiais recusaram, a princípio, juntar-se à conspiração por crerem que Goulart não tinha ainda ultrapassado seus li

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mites constitucionais ou pensarem que êle representava a vontade do povo. Competia aos acontecimentos--e às próprias ações de Goulart-- mudar a opinião do Exército.

No começo de 1964, os militares jovens do grupo Mesquita começaram a reunir pedaços de evidências os quais indicavam que os comunistas que rodeavam Goulart estavam planejando seu próprio golpe--com ou sem ajuda de Goulart. Tinha havido uma cisão no movimento comunista brasileiro, entre a chamada ala russa, a qual aconselhava moderação e gradualismo, e a ala chinesa-cubana, identificada com Brizola, a qual pregava a violência. Este grupo parecia ter ganho maior influência no governo. Os paulistas temeram uma tentativa subitânea de criar um estado totalitário, com uma onda de violências e homicídios, guerrilhas, greves em indústrias-chaves e um levante de tropa.

Do ponto de vista de alguns civis, a escolha tinha-se tornado morrer em defesa de sua liberdade ou ser aprisionado e, posteriormente, fuzilado por terem sido incapazes de defendê-la. E começaram a armar-se. Só o grupo Mesquita haveria de gastar 10.000 dolares em armas, inclusive um punhado de metralhadoras. Grupos em distritos residenciais de São Paulo conseguiram armas, munição e víveres, e, cuidadosamente, projetaram planos de defesa para as quadras em que residiam.

Resstel e os outros oficiais calculavam que, com alguns elementos do Exército regular, as polícias estaduais e os civis, poderiam manter-se por 90 dias. Antes que êsse prazo se esgotasse, o grupo Mesquita esperava receber auxílio externo. Assim é que mandaram um emissário perguntar ao embaixador dos Estados Unidos, Lincoln Gordon, qual seria a posição de seu país, se irrompesse a guerra civil; aquêle informou que Gordon portara-se com cautela e diplomacia, mas deixara a impressão de que, se os paulistas pudessem manter-se por 48 horas, conseguiriam reconhecimento e ajuda da parte dos Estados Unidos.

As garotas de Ipanema

Sexta-feira, 13 de março, Goulart chefiou um comício na Praça da República, Rio, assistido por cêrca de 100.000 operários e cam-

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poneses trazidos de toda a parte do Brasil, em caminhões, ônibus e trens. Programada como uma grande demonstração em favor das reformas, o comício foi uma caixa de ressonância para a demagogia. Como parte do programa, Goulart anunciou a expropriação das cinco refinarias de petróleo privadas do Brasil e assinou um decreto de reforma agrária que declarou sujeitas a expropriação todas as propriedades rurais médias e grandes ao longo de obras federais--ferrovias, rodovias, reservatórios. O discurso mais ominoso foi feito por Brizola, o qual abertamente advertiu Goulart que continuasse avançando ou ficasse para trás. Ele exigiu que "o Presidente parasse com suas conciliações e formasse um governo popular e nacional", o qual ele definiu como um congresso de operários, camponeses, estudantes, sargentos e oficiais nacionalistas. Alguns ouvintes perguntaram-se se Goulart não se tinha tornado cativo do seu cunhado. Um paulista observou, mais tarde, que Goulart lhe recordara o aprendiz de feiticeiro que tinha posto a trabalhar a vassoura e o balde de água e estava em perigo de afogamento por não saber como pará-los.

No frenesi do comício, Goulart cometeu o que provou ser um erro crucial. Ele observou, descortêsmente, que "mulheres com contas na mão" não o fariam parar. Alguns de seus ouvintes se perguntaram o que teria provocado essa referência insultuosa ao rosário, as contas de rezar católicas. Mas um grupo grande de mulheres brasileiras sabiam exatamente o que estava incomodando Goulart. Eram elas.

As mulheres brasileiras, tradicionalmente, têm deixado a política para seus maridos. Mas, em meados de 1962, um pequeno grupo de donas de casa do Rio, pertencentes à camada superior da classe média, tinha organizado a "Campanha da Mulher Pela Democracia". Com sede emprestada pelos franciscanos de Ipanema, subúrbio do Rio, a CAMDE logo juntaria a ação à palavra, encorajaria as mulheres em outras partes do Brasil a se organizarem e começaria a pressionar políticos com telegramas, cartas e visitas por delegações. Numa visita a Brasília, em agosto de 1962, a CAMDE, e um grupo assemelhado de São Paulo, a União Cívica Feminina, entregou 17.000 cartas de protesto ao Congresso. Dentro em pouco, a organização estava sendo atacada, regularmente, por jornais esquerdistas como "guerrilheiras perfumadas" e "gangsters de saia". Após cada ataque, subia verticalmente o quadro social.

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A observação de Goulart foi provocada por um incidente em Belo Horizonte, em fevereiro. Um grupo de mulheres invadiu um auditório onde Brizola deveria falar. Enquanto elas esperavam, no meio da multidão de brizolistas, um padre lhes sugeriu que rezassem o rosário. Enquanto o faziam, algumas das mulheres subiram ao estrado. Quando um brizolista pulou sobre a mesa para protestar, uma mulher virou a mesa. Brizola chegou no meio da briga e bateu em retirada quando a multidão irrompeu do auditório, pilhou um verdureiro e alvejou-o com melões e abóboras. No dia do comício de 13 de março, a CAMDE, pelo telefone, recordou a suas amigas o sucedido em Belo Horizonte e lhes sugeriu que pusessem uma vela acesa em suas janelas como símbolo de desafio. Enquanto Goulart seguia para o comício, a luz de milhares de velas se refletia sobre seu carro.

A aleivosia das "contas" foi ouvida na televisão, em São Paulo, pela Irmã Ana de Lourdes, de uma ordem hospitalar católica. Nessa mesma noite, ela sugeriu, a um pequeno grupo de paulistas, que as mulheres da cidade organizassem uma demonstração religiosa, de protesto contra tal blasfêmia. No grupo estava Antônio Cunha Bueno, deputado comprometido na conjura paulista, o qual percebeu que o protesto da freira poderia virar em demonstração de massa contra o governo.

O que se tornou conhecido como "A Marcha da Família com Deus pela Liberdade" foi marcado para a seguinte quinta-feira, 19 de março. Ninguém estava bem seguro do que esperar. William Max Pearce, um americano que dirige a Willys-Overland do Brasil, recorda que sua esposa brasileira "veio dizer-me: 'Não sei o que vai acontecer e estou com medo de ir, mas, mesmo assim, quero ir. V. vem comigo?' De modo que eu disse: 'Vamos'. E me orgulhei pra burro de ter vindo." Quando Pearce e sua mulher deixaram seu automóvel a apenas algumas quadras do ponto de partida, verificaram que faziam parte da maior demonstração de massas da história brasileira. Quando os notáveis, à cabeça do desfile, alcançaram a Catedral de São Paulo, onde a marcha terminaria, pelo menos 500.000 pessoas estavam atrás deles.

David Beaty III, americano há muito radicado no Brasil, o qual hoje chefia o setor de São Paulo da Deltec, S.A., olhando os manifestantes que passavam sob seu escritório, percebeu que quase todos os seus amigos brasileiros estavam ali. Com Beaty estava um refugiado

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húngaro que, sombriamente, observou que as marchas não tinham ajudado muito em seu país. Isso levou Beaty a perguntar-se se estavam olhando "os perdedores ou os vencedores". Alguns dias depois, êle informou à sua matriz em Nova York que esperava que Goulart conseguisse o poder absoluto dentro de um ano. "Então", prosseguia, "nos encontraremos na mesma posição que em Cuba; ou Goulart se declarará líder comunista ou o aparelho comunista o expelirá e tomará o poder total."

Alimentos para a guerra

A marcha de São Paulo convenceu os oficiais de alta patente que havia, entre as massas, muita oposição a Goulart. Ao que parece, o General Humberto Castello Branco, Chefe do Estado Maior do Exército, ficou, particularmente, impressionado. Amigo de Júlio de Mesquita, este general de 63 anos tinha sido chefe de operações da Força Expedicionária Brasileira na Itália. Embora sabendo, há algum tempo, da conspiração paulista, êle não se dispusera a aderir a uma revolta contra o governo legal. Contudo, no dia seguinte à demonstração de São Paulo, êle enviou um memorando secreto aos comandos do Exército, o qual dizia em parte: "Os meios militares nacionais não são para defender programas do governo, muito menos a sua propaganda, mas para garantir os poderes constitucionais, o seu funcionamento e a aplicação da lei".

Os conspiradores sentiram uma mudança marcante na atitude de muitos outros oficiais do Exército; êstes, em número crescente, concordavam em aderir à revolta. Decidindo que os tempos estavam quase chegados, persuadiram Castello Branco a começar a esboçar um plano, ainda cru, de operações militares. Estoques extras de gasolina foram conseguidos e escondidos em recintos industriais por todo São Paulo. Um fornecimento, estadunidense, de "Alimentos Para a Paz" foi descoberto nas docas de Santos, levado em caminhão para a capital e armazenado.

A essa altura, a Marinha Brasileira foi abalada no dia por uma revolta de vários milhares de marinheiros. Em vez de punir os rebeldes, Goulart concordou em satisfazer suas exigências, manteve um comandante esquerdista que se recusara a prender os marinheiros e concedeu anistia a todos os envolvidos. De um dia para o outro, a disciplina foi destruída na Marinha. No Exército, os oficiais, atônitos,

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perceberam que o mesmo poderia acontecer em suas unidades, a qualquer momento. Se esperassem, ainda, para agir, talvez nunca mais pudessem agir.

Entrincheiramento em Três Rios

Na calada da noite de segunda-feira da Pascoela, enquanto Goulart arengava a uma multidão de sargentos das polícias militares no Rio, a revolta começou. Tropas sob o comando do General Olímpio Mourão Filho, comandante da IV Região Militar, parte do Exército, deixaram seus quartéis em Juiz de Fora, no Estado de Minas Gerais, e marcharam sobre o Rio. Os conspiradores tinham ansiado por que Mourão começasse primeiro, a fim de demonstrar ao resto do país que não só São Paulo estava revoltado. Mas data alguma fôra estabelecida. Mourão, oficial impaciente e "esquentado", havia simplesmente cansado de esperar.

Mourão contava com o apoio do Governador de Minas Gerais, José Magalhães Pinto. Enquanto Mourão despachava suas tropas, Magalhães Pinto mandava sua polícia militar guardar pontos estratégicos e confiscar estoques de petróleo e ônibus. Ao mesmo tempo, arrebanhava todos os suspeitos de agitação e comunismo, na capital, pelo Horizonte, e no resto do Estado. Pela tarde de terça-feira, Magalhães Pinto tinha sob firme contrôle o Estado e Mourão estava entrincheirado em Três Rios, uma cidadezinha a 120 km do Rio de Janeiro. Só então, Governador e General olharam em tórno para ver se alguém mais no país estava com eles. Durante bom número de horas de aflição, ninguém estêve. Após anos de conversas, os conspiradores, tanto como o govêrno, tinham sido tomados de surprêsa.

Correu o dia e não veio palavra do Q.G. do II Exército, em São Paulo. Apesar de sofrer enorme pressão de seus jovens oficiais e de civis paulistas, o Comandante do II Exército, General Amaury Kruel, hesitava. Kruel tinha sido, outrora, amigo muito chegado de Jango Goulart e os paulistas perguntavam-se se não teriam de destituí-lo, pela força, do seu comando. Mas, tarde da noite, Kruel telefonou a Goulart, no Rio, e instou que alijasse do seu govêrno os comunistas. Quando Goulart se recusou a, de qualquer modo, satisfazê-lo, Kruel resolveu ficar com os revolucionários. Nas primeiras horas da manhã de quarta-feira, seus tanques estavam sobre jamantas, suas tropas em caminhões e ônibus, a caminho do Rio.

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A resistência do governo foi débil. No Rio, o comando trabalhista comunista convocou uma greve geral, e caminhões da Petrobrás, o monopólio estatal do petróleo, rodaram pelas ruas, entregando armas a operários. Mas nada aconteceu; até a greve falhou. Enquanto uma unidade militar após outra aderiu à revolta, Goulart fugiu do Rio para Brasília. Noite alta de quarta-feira, partiu para o exílio, no Uruguai.

Antes de amanhecer a quinta-feira, Paschoal Ranieri Mazzili, presidente da Câmara dos Deputados, empossou-se como Presidente da República interino.

Na segunda-feira seguinte, o Tenente-Coronel Resstel reuniu-se com os líderes do Congresso. O comando revolucionário, disse êle, estava decidido a expurgar do Congresso todos os comunistas, esquerdistas, subversivos e velhacos. Quando os congressistas se recusaram a votar legislação nesse sentido, Resstel declarou: "Se é assim, então não há outro jeito." Três dias após, o comando revolucionário publicou um "ato institucional", o qual dava, temporariamente, ao governo o poder de demitir qualquer funcionário e de suspender por dez anos os direitos políticos de qualquer indivíduo acusado de corrupção ou comunismo. No sábado, 11 de abril, o General Castello Branco foi eleito Presidente da República pelo Congresso, para cumprir os restantes 21 meses do mandato de Goulart. Castello Branco pediu reforma do Exército e voltou-se para os problemas à mão.

O dispositivo de Goulart dissolveu-se inteiramente. Seus líderes mais notórios fugiram para o exílio. Outros foram prontamente detidos. Nos primeiros dias da revolta, milhares de suspeitos de subversão foram apressadamente jogados em prisões ou temporários navios-prisões. (A esta altura, a maioria já foi quietamente solta.) Privada de seus líderes fanáticos e do acesso aos tesouros estaduais e federais, a extrema esquerda brasileira sumiu. "Nós os eclipsamos", diz Resstel.

Anulada a ameaça comunista, o regime novo voltou sua atenção para a limpeza da corrupção. Sob Goulart, governadores, congressis-

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tas, funcionários federais e seus amigos tinham mamado à farta no tesouro público. As fôlhas de pagamento oficiais suportavam uma sobrecarga de amigos e parentes que nunca apareciam para trabalhar. As instituições financeiras federais se tinham tornado a despensa particular de certos funcionários públicos. O próprio Goulart não deixara por menos. Explorando diligentemente as oportunidades proporcionadas por seu cargo, amontoara vultosa fortuna e terras cobrindo perto de 4.800 km².

Nos 60 dias permitidos pelo Ato Institucional, o governo cancelou os direitos políticos de 378 pessoas, com fundamento em corrupção e desonestidade ou em ação pró-comunismo. Incluídos na lista foram três ex-Presidentes da República, um senador federal, cinco governadores, 51 deputados federais; a eles não será permitido candidatar-se durante dez anos. Talvez o nome mais conhecido na lista negra seja o do ex-Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek. Alguns observadores estrangeiros viram, neste caso, uma crua manobra política para eliminar o homem que teria sido um forte contendor para a presidência nas próximas eleições. Kubitschek seria bem capaz de trazer de volta consigo os próprios elementos do regime decaído que levaram o Brasil ao caos.

Moderando a bomba

Como a maioria de seus predecessores, o novo regime empossou-se com promessas de pôr em ordem a economia e introduzir amplas reformas. Para surpresa de muitos brasileiros, aparentemente pretende cumprir suas promessas. O talentoso ministério de Castello Branco inclui, como Ministro do Planejamento Econômico, Roberto Campos, o espirituoso e urbano economista que servira como embaixador nos Estados Unidos, ao tempo de Goulart, e que se demitira quando cansou de ser "o intérprete de uma política inexistente".

O novo ministério apresentou um plano de reforma agrária; um plano de reforma fiscal que, efetivamente, dará ao Brasil seu primeiro banco central; e legislação que revisa as leis eleitorais e estende o mandato de Castello Branco até março de 1967, para dar-lhe tempo de instituir tais mudanças. Antes, contudo, que Campos e o resto do ministério possam entregar-se plenamente às reformas de base, têm que fazer algo para deter a inflação. No ano passado, o dinheiro em circulação aumentou mais de 60%; e o valor do cruzeiro, caiu mais ou menos, ao

meio. Este ano, imediatamente antes da revolta, o Brasil se estava inflacionando a uma taxa anual de 120%.

A principal "bomba" inflacionária é um enorme "deficit" federal. Se Coultart tivesse permanecido no poder, o "deficit" teria, provavelmente, subido a 1,5 trilhões de cruzeiros este ano (mais ou menos, 1,3 bilhões de dólares, às taxas de câmbio atuais). Campos e o novo Ministro da Fazenda, Otávio Bulhões, já podaram parte deste, abrindo mão dos subsídios de importação do petróleo e do trigo, os quais provavelmente teriam custado ao governo 200 milhões de dólares em 1964. Eles, ainda, rascunharam um projeto de reforma fiscal, que reforçará a receita, e estão elaborando meios de reduzir os prejuízos multimilionários sofridos pela ferrovia estatal.

O ministério, contudo, hesita em cortar fundo na fôlha de pagamento federal. Isso, conforme Bulhões o diz, "causaria uma inconveniente reação social." Pergunta êle: "Como podemos resolver problemas financeiros sem levar em consideração as condições humanas?" Campos e Bulhões, contudo, estão convencidos de que, dessa ou daquela forma, reduzirão o "deficit" de um têtço ou mais, êste ano, e reduzirão a inflação a uma taxa de 2 a 3% ao mês, no começo do próximo ano. A meta é repor nos trilhos a economia (e liberar o cruzeiro) antes que 1965 termine.

Mas a inflação não será detida sem alguns traumas sérios. No passado, muita empresa brasileira dependia da "compra preventiva"-- comprar mercadorias e fazer estoque à frente dos aumentos de preço-- e de uma fuga do dinheiro para as mercadorias. Grande número de brasileiros, p.ex., compravam automóveis como meio conveniente de proteger seu capital da desvalorização (Alguns homens de negócio possuíam dezenas de Volkswagens.) A medida que desapareça a necessidade desse tipo de compra, os carros "entesourados" serão postos no mercado e os fabricantes exaurirão seus inflados estoques de peças e matérias primas. Muitas empresas sentirão dificuldade de vender substancialmente, por algum tempo. De fato, já em junho, os estacionamento de carros prontos em tórno das fábricas de automóveis estavam abarrotados e a Volkswagen estacionava carros até nas pistas de acesso à sua fábrica nas imediações de São Paulo. A essa altura, as vendas de automóveis

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caíam, no mínimo, de um terço; e as de utensílios domésticos, produtos têxteis e maquinaria, uns 25%.

"Poderíamos, realmente, marchar"

Para que o Brasil não morra na mesa de operação enquanto os homens novos tentam curar seus males, precisará de grandes transfusões de ajuda estrangeira. A ajuda estadunidense ao Brasil caiu para 2 milhões de dólares nos dois meses precedentes à revolta. Logo depois, os Estados Unidos apareceram com 93 milhões em sobras de produtos agrícolas conforme a "Public Law" 480 e 50 milhões mais em empréstimos em dólar e doações para mais de 35 projetos de desenvolvimento. Ao mesmo tempo, os Estados Unidos, Japão e certo número de países europeus começaram a negociar acordos para reescalonar a enorme dívida estrangeira--3 bilhões de dólares-- do Brasil. Além disso, mais ajuda européia e norte-americana será, provavelmente, concedida ao Brasil este ano, para ajudar a garantir o "deficit" orçamentário e financiar importações.

Evitada a bancarrota, o novo governo tem de propiciar nova expansão da economia--sem recorrer, uma vez mais, à inflação. Com a população do Brasil crescendo em mais de 3% ao ano, o problema do desemprego e do subemprego tornar-se-á ainda mais agudo, a não ser que haja constante expansão industrial e vasta melhoria agrícola. Mas isso, também, exigirá ajuda estrangeira, especialmente na forma de investimento privado.

Não vai ser fácil atrair, de novo, para o Brasil os inversores estrangeiros. Só o capital norte-americano já tem uma "parada" de 1 bilhão de dólares no país. Muitas subsidiárias estadunidenses prosperaram ao extremo no decênio passado. Mas, nos últimos anos, foram duramente atingidas pela inflação e ficaram seriamente atemorizadas com os venenosos ataques contra o capitalismo e as empresas estrangeiras. Desde 1962, quando o governo promulgou uma lei de remessa de lucros que, efetivamente, proibiu as subsidiárias de remeterem dinheiro às suas matrizes, praticamente nenhum investimento privado foi colocado no Brasil.

O governo Castello Branco fez revisão da lei de remessa, para abrir a porta a um fluxo normal de dinheiro das subsidiárias para

as matrizes. E aos estrangeiros vêm sendo dadas profusas garantias de que serão equitativamente tratados no Brasil. Número reduzido de companhias responderam, aumentando seus investimentos. Mas a maioria está "esperando para ver", mesmo quando os gerentes locais estejam transbordando de entusiasmo. Diz um, norte-americano: "Com um governo apenas sofrível, poderíamos realmente marchar neste país."

A distância pode emprestar objetividade aos inversores, mas também obstruir-lhes a visão. Só o mais precipitado dos prognosticadores garantiria que o Brasil não recaia em um governo corrupto e uma economia insana. Mas com uma população grande, uma enorme massa de terra e uma abundância de matérias primas, o Brasil resta, potencialmente, como uma das mais poderosas nações do mundo. No próximo ano, os diretores de uma companhia dos Estados Unidos estarão numa posição difícil para explicar por que investiram no Brasil, em 1964. Daqui a dez anos, talvez achem ainda mais difícil explicar por que não o fizeram.

Bom motivo de otimismo é o fato de a maioria dos homens de negócio de São Paulo estarem apoiando sólidamente o governo--o que é novidade no Brasil. As pessoas que ajudaram a deflagrar a revolução sabem que sua tarefa não terminou. Os efeitos de anos de propaganda esquerdista levarão muito para serem erradicados. Mas os paulistas crêem que o Brasil está, finalmente, dirigido no rumo certo. Diz Paulo Ayres: "Nossa revolução está em processo."