

the city of São Paulo and then as governor of the state, Quadros won big in the 1960 presidential election, running with UDN endorsement. (Once again Goulart of the PTB won the vice presidency under Brazil's split-ticket electoral rules, reflecting a continuing polarization between the left and the right.) Quadros' campaign featured a broom as the symbol of his fight against corruption. That talk buoyed the Liberal Constitutionalists, who believed that at last power was near.

Quadros began by embracing a tough stabilization program. After seven months of idiosyncratic rule, however, Quadros suddenly resigned in August 1961. His reasons have never been entirely explained—apparently he expected the Congress to reject his resignation and offer him increased powers. He was wrong; the Congress promptly accepted his resignation. Quadros, one of the most charismatic politicians of modern Brazil, faded into retirement. (He returned to public office as mayor of São Paulo from 1985 to 1988.)

Quadros' self-engineered demise was demoralizing for the anti-Vargas factions and other Brazilians who believed that his moralistic promises and his administrative success in São Paulo boded well for the new federal government. Worst of all from the UDN viewpoint, Quadros' departure meant that power would now pass to João Goulart, the elected vice president, the epitome of populism and anathema to the conservative military.

The military was in no mood to agree to Goulart's succession to the presidency. But the "legalists" among the officers argued in favor of observing the constitution. A compromise was reached. The Congress created a parliamentary system in which Goulart was president but with a cabinet accountable to the Congress. It was an unworkable hybrid, designed solely to reduce Goulart's power. The new president assumed his diminished powers in September 1961 and promptly started a campaign to get the parliamentary innovation repealed. January 1963 brought success when a plebiscite restored the full presidential system. By then Goulart had precious little time left from the 1961–66 presidential term.

Goulart's presidency proved ill-fated from the beginning, compounded by a divided Congress and at times his own political indecision. By 1963 inflation and the balance-of-payments deficit had grown even more difficult. Goulart chose his own stabilization team, headed by the brilliant intellectual-politician Santiago Dantas and the noted economist Celso Furtado. Dantas worked out a detailed plan, duly negotiated with the U.S. government and the International Monetary Fund. It called for the usual: reduction of government deficit, tough controls on wages, and painful reductions in credit. It was the same medicine that had been served up in the stabilization efforts of 1953–54, 1955–56, 1958–59, and 1961.

For Goulart, stabilization presented special problems. A tough wage policy, which always meant falling real wages, would strike at the social group to which Goulart was most committed, namely, urban workers. Furthermore, meeting the harsh terms of foreign lenders would invite attack from the nationalists, another area of his prime support. Even if he could bring off stabilization, his term would probably end before Brazil could resume rapid growth.

Notwithstanding the gloomy prospects, Goulart endorsed the Dantas-Furtado plan. But he did not stay with it for long. In a few months Dantas quietly

resigned, Furtado had already left Brasília, and any further serious stabilization effort was thereafter out of the question.

Stabilization was not Goulart's only worry. Since 1961 the Brazilian political scene had been heating up on both left and right. The military, as always, was a key factor. Some of the officers who had fought Goulart's accession to power were still fighting. They had begun an ongoing conspiracy to overthrow Goulart. Many of the ideas and personnel of the conspiracy could be traced to the 1954 military cabal against Vargas. Goulart, Vargas' political successor, was now the target of conservative ire. What steadily increased the strength of the conspirators was the increasingly radical tone of the political combatants.

The left of the political spectrum had become very crowded. A rising sense of confidence had gripped the radical nationalists, who included Catholic literacy teachers, labor union militants, Trotskyist student organizers, and artistic idealists, all spreading a revolutionary message through popular culture. By early 1964 the radical left had gained official blessing, sometimes even government financing and logistical support.

Conservatives were incensed over nationalist inroads among two groups. One was the military. Brazilian enlisted men had traditionally not been allowed to vote. The radicals began to advocate unionization of enlisted men. This scandalized the officers, who were hardly about to allow for collective bargaining. Even politically centrist officers could understand that threat.

The other new area of mobilization was the countryside. In 1963 rural unionization was legalized, and competing groups, including several on the left, vied to win sponsorship of local syndicates. Yet the rural sector was an unpromising arena for the Brazilian left. There was always excess labor, and landowners traditionally ruled with an iron hand. Nonetheless, this rural unionization campaign, combined with a few land invasions, provoked landowners to take decisive action. They put pressure on the pro-landowner politicians, who were numerous in a federal Congress which overrepresented rural districts.

Goulart's opponents did not have the votes to impeach him. The old PSD-PTB alliance still operated. It might not back a stabilization program, but it was also not ready to serve the anti-Goulart conspirators. The plotters saw only one way out: a military coup. The president's military advisers had warned him about the conspiracy. Now even centrist officers were leaning toward a coup. The principal factor pushing them was the radical move to the left already under way, either by the president or by those who controlled him.

The U.S. government was taking a strong interest in Brazil's emerging political confrontation. Both the U.S. ambassador, Lincoln Gordon, and the U.S. military attaché, General Vernon Walters, were in close touch with the conspirators, military and civilian. The United States had a contingency plan known as Operation Brother Sam to support the anti-Goulart rebels with fuel and weapons, if needed; as it happened, they were not. On March 31, speculation ended as a military revolt, surfacing first in Minas Gerais, spread across the country. Unwilling to organize armed resistance to the coup d'état, João Goulart fled to his ranch on the border with Uruguay.

On April 1, the leader of the Congress, in Goulart's absence, declared the presidency vacant. Although his action lacked any legal foundation, the Congress acceded. Into the power vacuum moved the military conspirators and their civilian allies. Brazilian leaders once again opted for the authoritarian path to development. On April 4, João Goulart sought exile in Uruguay.

In retrospect, the breakdown of Brazilian democracy bore a close connection to the interplay of social-class relations. The populist policies of Getúlio Vargas had created institutions for organizing urban workers. This posed a significant but ultimately acceptable challenge to the upper and middle classes, the latter represented largely by the military. But in 1964, Goulart presented, or appeared to present, a much more fundamental threat. By mobilizing peasants as well as workers, and by using radical rhetoric, he seemed to be creating the conditions for a *classwide* worker-peasant alliance against the socioeconomic establishment. Both the suddenness and the simultaneity of these movements startled and alarmed elites. The radicalization of Brazil's lower classes was simply not permissible, especially considering the example of Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba and the broader context of the global Cold War. The military exercised its longstanding veto power and went on to create a bureaucratic-authoritarian regime.

Military Rule

The conspirators of 1964 were surprised at the speed with which the Goulart government collapsed. Goulart's zigzagging and the divisiveness within the left had undercut any possibility for effective mass support. The rebels encountered little or no resistance as their troops seized command of the government.

From 1964 to 1985, Brazil was governed by a succession of authoritarian governments, each headed by a four-star general. Within the context of this "bureaucratic-authoritarian" regime, all governing coalitions included military officers, technocratic administrators, and old-line politicians. They retained some vestiges of formal democracy, such as congressional elections, but every time the oppositional forces seemed to threaten their hold on the state, they changed the rules of the game to stay in power.

The most important group was the military. Army officers have had a long history of intervention in Brazilian politics since the empire was brought down. In 1930 the military ended the First Republic by delivering power to Vargas, whom they kept in power by the coup of 1937, only to depose him in 1945. It was a military manifesto that led to Vargas' suicide in 1954, and it was a "preventive" coup in 1955 that ensured Kubitschek's succession to the presidency. Finally, the military led the fight against Goulart's succession to the presidency in 1961 and then conspired to bring him down in 1964. Army officers had become vital actors in Brazilian politics.

After 1945 conflicting political currents buffeted the army officer corps. The 1950s brought a polarization between nationalist and anticommunist positions. The anticommunists identified with the United States in the deepening Cold War and saw the nationalist left as a stalking-horse for pro-Castroites or communists.

Officer opinion turned decisively against the populists, of whom Goulart was a principal example. The Goulart government's inability to get control of the economy (Brazil was in near default to foreign creditors in March 1964), the mobilization of the lower sectors, and the direct threat to military hierarchy all pushed centrist military officers toward supporting a coup. By early 1964 the conspiracy was headed by General Humberto Castelo Branco, the army chief of staff who had supported Goulart's succession to the presidency in 1961.

Once the military deposed Goulart, a new question faced the conspirators: the form and direction of the new government. One of the generals' first moves was to issue an extra-constitutional Institutional Act (the first of many with that title). It gave the Brazilian executive extraordinary and exclusive powers to adopt constitutional amendments, propose expenditure bills to Congress, and suppress the political rights of any citizen for ten years. With new authoritarian powers in place, different currents within the military debated the course of the new government. The hard-liners argued that Brazilian democracy had been corrupted by self-seeking and subversive politicians. The country needed a long recuperation, which would require such measures as purging legislators, suppressing direct elections, and firing civil servants. The hard-liners' economic views were less easy to discern. The moderate military composed another group. They believed a relatively brief interval of administrative and economic reorganization could return Brazil to the electoral democracy recently endangered by irresponsible politicians.

A purged Congress quickly chose Castelo Branco (1964–67) as the new president. The immediate need was to bring inflation under control and to improve the balance of payments. Roberto Campos, a well-known economist-diplomat, was made planning minister and became the dominant figure in economic policymaking. The government reduced inflation and established surpluses in the foreign accounts. Campos' team also attempted to reorganize and update Brazil's principal economic institutions. The government overhauled the banking system (a proper central bank was finally created), institutionalized a stock market and a government securities market for the first time, revised labor regulations to make easier the discharge of employees, and simplified export regulations. Campos had long argued that capitalism had not failed in Brazil because it hadn't yet been tried. This was his chance. The short-term results were disappointing, but Castelo Branco and Campos did not despair; they saw their efforts as indispensable for sound growth in the future.

The U.S. government gave its unconditional support to the new military regime. In part this stemmed from a tradition of close relations between the two countries that started at the beginning of the twentieth century. This "unwritten alliance," as it was called by some, was based on close military, economic, and political connections. Washington policymakers quickly recognized the new republic in 1889. During World War I, Brazil joined the United States in declaring war on Germany. Brazil sent troops to fight alongside the Allies in Italy during World War II. When the Cold War started, most Brazilian presidents sided with the United States. Starting in 1962, U.S. ambassador Lincoln Gordon kept in

close touch with the conspirators who overthrew the Goulart government. Thus, it was no surprise that President Lyndon B. Johnson immediately supported the new military regime. The United States authorized loans and other financial aid packages, which had been withheld from the Goulart administration, to help the fledgling economy. It stepped up the Alliance for Progress program that brought technicians, Peace Corps volunteers, and other resources into the country. The U.S. government increased training of military and police officers. Brazil was the recipient of Washington's second-largest foreign aid program in the world. Anticommunist sentiment and the long-standing unwritten alliance closely bound the U.S. government to the authoritarian regime.

On the political front, Castelo Branco confronted many challenges. In October 1965 gubernatorial elections, the government's handpicked candidates in the important states of Minas Gerais and Guanabara (greater Rio de Janeiro) lost to moderate opposition candidates. In response, Castelo Branco issued Institutional Act No. 2 that abolished the old political parties and established a pro-government party (ARENA) and a new weakened opposition party (Brazilian Democratic Movement, MDB). The decree also made the elections of president, vice president, and all governors indirect.

Castelo Branco faced other problems as well. A hoped-for economic upturn did not occur in 1965–66, so he was persuaded to extend his presidential term a year in the hope that the economy would improve. In fact, the country's economic problems could not be resolved even in his two and a half years in office. By this time it was becoming apparent that the military did not intend to leave power so quickly. In fact, the supposedly moderate Castelo Branco institutionalized the authoritarian regime through a National Security Law, expanded powers to censor the press and established the indirect election of the mayors of major cities. He also oversaw the writing of a new constitution that codified the authoritarian measures of the military regime.

The second military government of President Artur da Costa e Silva (1967–69) brought an even uglier turn. Soon after coming to office, the president stated that he hoped to preside over a process of liberalization, but events proved otherwise. Until 1967 the authoritarian government had shown considerable tolerance for the opposition, at least in comparison to Spanish American military governments of the 1960s and 1970s. But tolerance invited mobilization. In 1967 and 1968, the opposition, headed by students, mounted a series of protests, climaxing in mass demonstrations in Rio de Janeiro that were sparked by the killing of a young student by the police. Protests quickly took on national dimensions.

The hard-line military, now opposing any compromise between democracy and a "tough" government, argued for a crackdown. In mid-1968 a series of industrial strikes took place first in Minas Gerais and then in the industrial heartland of São Paulo. The Costa e Silva government hesitated, then reacted by strongly repressing the strikers. A pattern was set: an authoritarian government resorting to dictatorial measures to carry out its version of rapid economic development. It was a growth strategy based on repression of labor unions, avid recruiting of foreign investment, and high rewards for economic managers.

The military also decided to disband all student activist organizations, including those operating underground. In October the army surrounded a clandestine convention of the National Union of Students and arrested more than 700 activists and leaders. Protests in the halls of Congress against the escalating wave of repression against students and other oppositionists, as well as reports of torture, led to a showdown between President Costa e Silva and the legislative branch. When a majority of federal legislators refused to lift the congressional immunity of two of its members who had criticized the military, the government issued Institutional Act No. 5. On December 13, 1968, the ruling generals shut down Congress, suspended habeas corpus, extended the powers of the military to censor the press, and curtailed democratic rights. This marked the beginning of the most repressive years of military rule, when torture became widespread as a means to extract information from opponents of the regime and to strike fear among those who dared challenge the dictatorship.

In 1969, Brazil was hit with new levels of political violence. The militant student-based opposition had produced a guerrilla network, mainly in the cities. In September 1969 President Costa e Silva suffered a debilitating stroke. At the same time, two guerrilla organizations kidnapped the U.S. ambassador, whom they subsequently freed, in return for the government's releasing from prison fifteen political prisoners and the publishing of a revolutionary manifesto in all the media. For the next four years, Brazil experienced guerrilla warfare. A small cadre of revolutionary activists kidnapped foreign diplomats, holding them hostage to ransom other revolutionaries in prison, and attempted to set up rural guerrilla activities.

General Emílio Médici (1969–73), who succeeded Costa e Silva, oversaw a sharp growth in the economy, the systematic repression of the radical opposition, and an upsurge in nationalism. After 1967 the Brazilian economy returned to a growth path, duplicating the record of the 1950s. From 1968 to 1974 the growth rate averaged 10 percent, and exports more than quadrupled. As though to mark the end of an era, manufactured goods replaced coffee as the country's leading export product. Outside observers talked of the "Brazilian miracle." Pride in the country also engendered support for the military regime. The nation broke out in exuberant celebrations when Brazil won the world soccer championship for the third time in 1970. The government initiated road construction in the Amazon and other major public works projects. Optimism and a booming economy strengthened Médici's rule.

From Liberalization to Redemocratization

By 1974 the guerrilla movements were vanquished. They had exhausted their human resources to achieve meager results. In fact, they had reinforced the repressive apparatus and made credible the hard-liners' argument that any political opening meant civil war.

When General Ernesto Geisel (1974–79) assumed the presidency, he repeated earlier promises for a return to democracy and the rule of law. A major obstacle was the security apparatus, which had gained great influence within the

government. Their unsavory methods, including torture, had not only facilitated the liquidation of the revolutionary opposition, but also had given them a powerful veto over liberalization.

Geisel's commitment to redemocratization came from his close personal link to the legalist tradition of Castelo Branco. Geisel saw this process not as a response to pressure but as the working out of a democratic commitment inherent in the military intervention of 1964.

The fundamental problem for Geisel, as for all the preceding military governments, was the inability to win a free popular election. This would not have mattered if the military had not consistently stated that their reason for coming to power had been the restoration of democracy. Trapped within this democratic discourse, they ended up carrying out an endless series of improvisations and political manipulations to make the voting results fit their preferences. The depth of the problem was shown in October 1974 when the new government, in contrast to its predecessor, allowed relatively free congressional elections. The result was a landslide for the opposition. The lesson was clear: if given a choice, the public, especially in the urban industrialized centers, would vote against the government.

The Geisel regime faced serious economic problems as well. Brazil had few oil reserves, and the sharp hike in international petroleum prices in 1974 forced the government to pay significantly higher prices for imports, which fueled inflation. By 1980 inflation was more than 100 percent, the foreign debt mounted, and industrial production sagged. Furthermore, industrial labor had bestirred itself in São Paulo, staging a series of strikes in 1978, 1979, and 1980, led by the charismatic union leader Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva, against government wage policies. The church, in the person of Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, supported the strikers and helped dramatize the disproportionate share of the sacrifice they had borne during the "miracle."

The Brazilian military also faced tensions in its historic alliance with the United States during the administration of Jimmy Carter (1977–81). Brazil refused to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, which caused a rift between the two countries. Relations became worse when Brazil turned from the United States to Germany for technology to build nuclear reactors. The issue of human rights also provoked differences between Brasília and Washington. An international campaign had successfully called attention to the regime's use of torture and had badly damaged its image abroad. President Carter's 1978 visit to Brazil emphasized that U.S. policymakers would not offer unconditional support to a regime that tortured its citizens. Although a break between the two countries did not take place, the "unwritten alliance" that had been forged at the beginning of the twentieth century weakened.

Before leaving office in 1979, Geisel lifted the ban on all exiled oppositional figures, allowing them to return to Brazil. His successor, General Joao Figueiredo (1979–85), signed an amnesty bill that freed most political prisoners and dropped the charges against many political dissidents. It also granted amnesty to those government officials involved in the torture of detainees. In an attempt to divide a mounting unified opposition to the dictatorship, the government abolished the

two political parties and allowed new ones to be formed. It was a divide-and-conquer strategy. The government backed the rightwing PDS (Democratic Social Party). A majority of the opposition formed the PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party). Among the new parties set up was the Workers' Party or Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), led by Lula, the leader of the 1978–80 strike wave.

In 1982 Planning Minister Delfim Neto and his fellow policymakers hoped to engineer an economic recovery, an issue all the more pressing since it was to be an election year. These hopes were soon dashed by the world recession, which depressed the value of Brazilian exports. At the same time, high interest rates kept the cost of servicing the foreign debt at a crippling level. By the end of 1982, Brazil gained the dubious honor of having the largest foreign debt in the world (\$87 billion) and, like Argentina and Mexico, had to suspend payments on principal. To get the essential "bridging loans" to meet immediate obligations, Brazil agreed to an IMF-architected economic plan that involved a brutal reduction of imports in order to earn a trade surplus.

In the midst of a severe economic crisis, for the first time since 1965, Brazil directly elected all its state governors in November 1982. The opposition Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement won a smashing victory in the most economically developed states, winning the governorships of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Minas Gerais. The Workers' Party made only a modest showing in its first electoral effort. The new government party, the PDS, lost control of the Chamber of Deputies, but retained control of the electoral college, which would choose the new president in 1985 through indirect balloting.

In 1983 and 1984 massive mobilizations throughout the country demanded that the Congress pass a law restoring direct presidential elections. Millions took to the streets demanding *diretas já* ("direct elections now"). They failed to win a congressional majority to change the law, and so the indirect presidential selection process took place in a very Brazilian way. The main opposition party (PMDB) candidate was Tancredo Neves, a skillful, old-style politician from Minas Gerais. He shrewdly began his campaign for the presidency by reassuring the military of his moderation. Meanwhile, Paulo Maluf, the government party (PDS) candidate, alienated his party by his heavy-handed campaign. Enough PDS electoral college delegates defected to elect Tancredo.

Tancredo did not live to fulfill the great hopes the public had in him. On the eve of his inauguration, he underwent emergency intestinal surgery from which he never recovered. Former senator José Sarney, the vice president elect, became president. Ironically, Brazil's first civilian president in twenty-one years was a previous ARENA and then PDS leader and former pillar of the military regime.

The best that could be said of the Sarney presidency was that the military remained on the sidelines, and the president was committed to redemocratization. The new government implemented a stabilization program (the Cruzado Plan) that imposed a wage-price freeze and drastically reduced Brazil's inflation rate from its 1985 high of 227 percent. The initial success of the program enabled Sarney's backers to coast to a huge victory in the November 1986 elections. But