

Brazilian Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century

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Underlying the history of Brazilian foreign relations has been an effort to use foreign policy to achieve recognition of national greatness. The methods, indeed the intermediate goals, have changed with time and circumstance, but the ultimate objective of *grandeza nacional*, or national grandeur, has endured. Throughout the imperial period (1822-1889), the European monarchies looked upon the Brazilian empire as a tropical oddity, while the American republics regarded it with either suspicion or indifference. In the twentieth century suspicion became paramount among its neighbors, while the powers tended to treat Brazil as an economic or political pawn that could be dealt with according to their needs. Brazilians sought to mitigate the suspicion and worked to have the powers take Brazil seriously and admit it to their ranks. The concern with national prestige is a keystone of Brazilian policy, its other characteristics clustering about it.

Continuities in the Colonial Administration and the First Republic

Brazil's colonial heritage included, in rough outline, the present national territory. There was little need to demarcate the nearly 10,000 miles of frontier until this century when population began to spread into the continent's interior. Still, the successful conclusion of negotiations, arbitrations, and military maneuverings employed to draw exact boundaries without major conflict was a remarkable achievement that stands as testament to the brilliance of Foreign Minister José Maria da Silva Paranhos, the Baron of Rio Branco, who set the tone and direction of twentieth century Brazilian policy.

Linked to the policy of secure frontiers was that of seeking to prevent

Brazil's neighbors, especially in the Rio de la Plata, from forming a coalition against it. This required maintaining the status quo in the equations of power among its neighbors. For the most part this has meant keeping Argentina in check and preventing it from achieving its dream of reconstructing the Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata. It has also led to intimate involvement in the internal politics and economies of Paraguay, Bolivia, and Uruguay and to an informal but consistent alliance with Chile. This policy of division, of keeping its neighbors disunited, reaches back into the last century. Involvements in the civil war in Argentina (1852) and in the war against Paraguay (1865-1870) were in support of it. Ambassador Heitor Lyra's 1951 observation that Argentina is "the nerve point of our foreign policy" holds true to the present.¹ Recent efforts toward neighborly cooperation in the Amazon and with the Andean countries and in energy development in the Rio de la Plata are only a seeming departure from the rule, developed in the course of negotiations over the frontiers, that Brazil should never sit down with more than one neighbor at a time, in the belief that the Spanish-speakers would join forces against the Brazilians. This rule encouraged Brazilians to seek an alliance with the United States to offset potential isolation among the Spanish-speakers. In the Amazonian and Andean situations Brazil has carefully developed bilateral understandings before moving to the stage of multilateral agreement. Its approach to Pan-Americanism was conditioned by the belief that hemispheric unity, with its accompanying legal mechanisms for preventing and containing armed conflict, would lessen the possibility of anti-Brazilian coalitions.

Diplomatic efforts in support of economic development are another element of continuity in Brazilian foreign policy. The nature and perception of development have changed since Brazilian diplomats worked to fend off British suppression of the slave trade in the first half of the last century, or, later on, to assist Paulista planters to obtain European immigrant workers. In the twentieth century they sought to defend coffee and cacao markets, developed complicated subterfuges in the 1930s to maintain trade with antagonistic powers, and supported industrialization from the 1940s onward. Of course, in socioeconomic terms the segments of society influencing and benefiting from this diplomacy changed composition over the decades as the economy slowly shifted from a total colonial-style export orientation to an increasing internal-market orientation, but in broad terms that seems less significant than the tendency to provide diplomatic support for the economy.

Still, examination of the socioeconomic and regional backgrounds of Brazilian diplomats over the decades shows that they were consistently drawn from the dominant elites of each era and that they represented the

interests and attitudes of those elites. Under the empire, fifteen out of forty-two foreign ministers came from Bahia, while with the republic and the shift in the focus of power from the Northeast to the Center-South, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro became common sources of foreign ministers and diplomats. There may have been psychosocial as well as economic and political reasons for the regional elites' interest in diplomacy. Bahia, Minas Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro were heavily Africanized, and yet their elites tended to reject the reality around them and to function instead in an imaginary white, Latin society. As José Honório Rodrigues has suggested, the foreign ministry and diplomatic service was an ideal environment in which to create a false reality, where French could replace Portuguese, where judicial procedures and international topics could shut out the illiterate, dark-skinned world about the elites. Even the office furniture of the Itamaraty was deliberately imported from England.¹ The expression *para inglês ver* (for the English to see), the creation of a European facade to cover the reality of Brazil, flowed from a mind-set in which the whitening of Brazil was a basic desire.²

Their shame at the darkness around them made the elites feel inferior to Europeans, so the diplomats tried to convince their European colleagues that Brazil was a new country with a society in formation. Yet, strangely enough, until the 1930s European travelers would comment that they felt more comfortable there than in Argentina or the United States exactly because the society appeared older, more rooted, more hierarchical. The idea of newness has been joined since the 1950s with notions of internal expansion and economic development to project an image of dynamism that seems to put aside any sense of inferiority.

Because foreign policy has been the creature of a restricted segment of society, it has tended to preserve its underlying characteristics. There is a consistent tradition of legalism, of juridical solutions, in part due to the law school training of many diplomats and in part due to Brazil's military weakness that prevented recourse to arms. Also there is the tradition of nonpartisanship; foreign policy was not normally a political football. This latter was less the result of a conscious policy than of the historical circumstance of rule by restricted elites, whose interests were more complementary than competitive, and the consequent lack of competitive, representative government.

The Rio Branco era (1902-1912) was more than a period in which the frontier lines were fixed. The breadth of the baron's vision set the tone for the following decades. Clearly the boundaries were essential for determining exactly where Brazil began and ended, but even more important than the series of successful negotiations and arbitrations

themselves was that they served to alert the powers that Brazil was drawing lines over which they were not to intrude—this during the heyday of imperialism when Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean had been forced under European or U.S. flags. The baron urged reform of the Brazilian army and navy because he understood that without military preparedness territorial claims could not be sustained. To this end, he and General Hermes da Fonseca (president, 1910-1914) sent young, reform-minded officers to train with the Imperial German Army. And to enhance Brazil's prestige, the baron convinced Rome of the wisdom of conferring the first Latin American cardinalate (1905) on the archbishop of Rio de Janeiro.

In the economic sphere Brazil was in an awkward position. The principal customer for its coffee was the United States, but Great Britain held its 1898 "Funding Loan" note (between 1883 and 1914 Brazil had borrowed over \$120 million, of which it still owed over \$100 million in 1925). British banks financed international commercial exchange, and down to 1930 British investors accounted for 53 percent of total foreign investment in Brazil. Rio Branco and his successors sought to set temporal and physical limits to dependency by diffusing it among the powers. Encouraging closer economic and political ties with the United States provided a hedge against the British, and eventually, in the first Vargas period (1930-1945), would allow a shift from the London to the New York financial orbit. The military ties with Germany involved purchases of expensive field equipment that encouraged trade relations. In that era of infrastructure building, the purchase of foreign-made machines and equipment was seen as a necessary stage of internal economic development. Rio Branco saw this diffused dependency as temporary; once developed, Brazil would achieve full independence.

Participation in the Pan-American movement and the Hague conferences had the objective of increasing Brazilian prestige to lessen the possibility of Imperialist attacks and of creating an image of independent action that would inspire national confidence. By standing with the United States in its Caribbean adventures and by arguing for acceptance of arbitration in the settlement of disputes, Brazil at once sought to protect itself from similar U.S. abuse, to convince its neighbors that the United States was allied with Brazil, and that Brazil would not threaten them militarily.

Rio Branco's lengthy chancellorship provided the basis for what would be henceforth nodded to as the Itamaraty tradition, but not all administrations understood it; some confused its tactical elements—dependence on foreign loans and investment, Pan-Americanism, and alliance with the United States—with its strategic sub-

stance—the pursuit of independence and national greatness.

World War I found Brazil in a quandary. Its officer corps had been partially reinvigorated and Germanized; its troops used German drills to train with their Mauser rifles, while at Vila Militar outside Rio the very kitchens were German in style and equipment. Yet economics, the U.S. decision for war, and German submarine attacks on Brazilian merchant-ships pushed Brazil into the conflict on the side of the Allies in 1917. Though Brazil mobilized, it lacked the ability to place units on line in Europe quickly, so its war was limited to naval demonstrations, the supply of some medical personnel, and the exploits of a few officers who served with the French forces.

The peace, however, provided opportunities. At Versailles, Woodrow Wilson embraced the newly elected Brazilian president, Epitácio Pessoa (1919-1922), exchanged correspondence with him, and sent him home on a U.S. warship. For a short while it seemed as if Brazil and the United States would form a New World team in the League of Nations. Unhappily, Wilson failed to convince the Senate and so Pessoa led Brazil into the League alone. There Brazil was consistently elected to one of the Council's nonpermanent seats and its diplomats played active roles in League business, enhancing Itamaraty's image. In Geneva the Brazilians' legalistic mentality served them well, but ability alone was not sufficient to overcome European resistance to Brazilian pretensions to permanent Council membership. In 1926, when Germany joined the League and received a permanent seat, Brazil withdrew, partly in protest, partly from wounded national pride.

In the Western Hemisphere, the Pan-American conferences provided their own form of frustration. At the end of 1922 the Arthur Bernardes (1922-1926) administration, wishing to cut its military expenditures in order to balance the budget, had invited Argentina and Chile to discuss mutual arms reduction prior to the upcoming Inter-American conference in Santiago. Argentina had declined, claiming a lack of time to prepare, while Chile had accepted. The Argentines felt squeezed and their press launched a propaganda campaign painting Brazil as a militaristic country with hegemonic designs on the continent. Argentina had remained neutral during the recent war, betting on a German victory. Its military officers had looked on with irritation and suspicion while Brazil had established obligatory military service, reorganized its army, constructed new training areas and barracks, purchased modern weapons, and contracted to obtain a French military mission. The Bernardes administration saw its good intentions placing Brazil in the uncomfortable position of having to defend its military program, not only to Argentina and Chile, but before all the American republics. The Brazilian army's report

on the conference observed that "the Brazilian delegation encountered a deliberately prepared hostile milieu in Santiago" thanks to "Argentine propaganda." The report accused the Argentine government of using "Brazilian armaments" as a device to squeeze arms funding out of its congress and to weaken the position Brazil had developed in the League of Nations.⁴

Though Brazil wished to be regarded as "the most powerful state in South America," the U.S. military attaché reported that "a war of aggression would not meet with popular favor, nor is the Brazilian army prepared to take the field against an organized force."⁵ Even so, seeing the French and Americans advising the Brazilians in the reorganization and modernization of their army and navy had to have an unsettling effect on the Argentines. Tension between Argentina and Brazil and continuous maneuvering for superior positions of influence in the buffer states of Paraguay and Uruguay were, and are, characteristic of their relations. For this reason a third of the Brazilian army has been traditionally stationed in Rio Grande do Sul.

These experiences did not encourage Brazilian faith in a rigid Pan-Americanism. In the League of Nations Brazil opposed creation of regional arbitration and security pacts, arguing somewhat deceptively that an unshakable peace reigned in the Americas. Rather, it favored worldwide pacts because expanded Western Hemisphere ties to other continents only increased the possibility of future intercontinental conflicts that regional agreements would be powerless to stem.⁶

The World War I era and the 1920s also saw an expansion of Brazil's ties abroad. The United States had raised its Rio de Janeiro legation to embassy status in 1905, while Great Britain and Italy were the first European states to do likewise, in 1918. By 1926 Brazil had relations with thirty-four countries and was receiving a stream of distinguished visitors, such as Prince Humberto of Italy and General John Pershing of the United States. Brazilian coastal cities were standard ports of call for the British, German, U.S., and Argentine fleets, while European and U.S. universities, museums, and zoos sent expeditions to study its geology, flora, and fauna.

Also by the mid-1920s, Brazil was caught in a struggle to develop a reasonable balance between its customs receipts and government expenditures; more attention was being focused on the national debt, most of which was owed to British banks. Not surprisingly, since the United States was taking half of Brazil's exports by 1926, there was a gradual shift to financial ties with U.S. banks as part of the process of moving out from under debt obligations to British and French institutions. Between 1921 and 1927 U.S. banks came to hold nearly 35 percent of

the foreign debt. The process speeded up in the next decade and was completed during World War II. Interestingly, the Bernardes administration, while not supporting complete import substitution based on customs barriers, did favor protecting existing industries. And it urged cutting down on imports to halt the outflow of convertible currency, to maintain debt service, and, especially, to reduce the frequency of foreign loans. Moreover, Bernardes saw the importance of developing the internal market, pointing in his 1925 report to the increasing volume of interstate coastal trade. With pride, he declared that "in equal conditions of climate, natural resources, and population density, no other people could have created, in a century of independent life, a more prosperous nation than ours."

However, the so-called *tenente* rebellions of the 1920s marred Brazil's image. In Bernardes' words it was "difficult . . . to maintain the country's good name . . . [while] the insurrections against legally constituted authority" diminished "the nation's international image" and caused "the most incredible and malevolent rumors to the detriment of national credit."

The Vargas Period

The first half of the 1930s would do little to alter the image of instability, but by decade's end the powers were wooing Brazil as the republic played a pivotal role in the pre-World War II jockeying for position. From 1930 to 1954, Getúlio Dornelles Vargas dominated the political stage and shaped or influenced Brazilian foreign relations. His task was even greater than that of his predecessors because he had to deal not only with internal problems, such as the 1932 São Paulo rebellion, but also with a destabilized world economy in which all nations were seeking ways to protect themselves. The deepening depression emphasized Brazil's vulnerability due to its dependence on coffee exports.

Vargas was confronted with conflicting pressures from Britain, the United States, and Germany. The English Rothschilds sent a representative, Sir Otto Niemeyer, to protect their interests, advising the government on how to obtain sufficient funds to maintain debt service. From his office in the Treasury Ministry, Niemeyer urged the purchase and destruction of surplus coffee to support its price on the world market. Washington, always opposed to foreign governments maintaining price supports, protested against this and measures aimed at encouraging Brazilian-flag shipping. As Brazil's gold supply dwindled, Vargas found himself facing a United States seeking a reciprocal trade agreement that would, in classic Open Door fashion, reduce Brazilian tariffs on a wide

range of U.S. products in exchange for continuation of free entry into the United States of the principal Brazilian products, coffee and rubber. It was a form of blackmail disguised as liberal free trade. Brazil was to make concessions to keep what it already had, but at a double cost: First, via most-favored-nation agreements other coffee-producing nations would move into the U.S. market, cutting Brazil's share; and second, Brazilian industry would have to compete with U.S. products. Further, such an agreement would give the Americans an edge over the Europeans.

The Europeans (Germany, Italy, Sweden) came forward with trade deals of their own. The German mechanisms revealed considerable imagination. Germany proposed an exchange agreement based upon a non-convertible (compensation) mark system that allowed the two to sell to each other without recourse to gold or internationally accepted currency. Vargas signed both the U.S. and German agreements and, until the war ended the game, skillfully played the two powers against each other.

To conduct the increasingly complex diplomacy of the era and to bring some revolutionary breezes into the Itamaraty, the Vargas government reformed the foreign ministry. It fused the diplomatic and consular corps and made requisite a regular rotation from posts abroad to ones in the ministry. It also established entrance examinations and a rigorous training program for those seeking a diplomatic career. The reforms ended what Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha regarded as the ministry's isolation on an "island of fantasies and traditions" and drew new talent to the diplomatic service.⁹

Though Brazilian diplomats dreamed of a continent untainted by hegemony and joined in an "economic confederation,"¹⁰ the reality of the 1930s was war in the Chaco and unease in the Amazon. The former involved Bolivia and Paraguay in a struggle for supposedly oil-rich lands, while the latter resulted from Peruvian cession of Leticia to Colombia and tension between Peru and Ecuador. During the Chaco war Brazil feared possible Argentine-Paraguayan collusion because of their close military ties. Since then it has been an objective of Brazilian policy to minimize Argentine military influence in the neighboring countries.

General staff officers believed that Amazonia would have "a role of great importance in the future" and would be an area where varied international interests would converge. Because of its vastness and thick jungle cover, aviation would be the key to military control. And so the "military interests of Brazil counsel the maintenance of *de facto* monopoly of the aerial life of Amazonia, especially since the internationalization of river routes noticeably restricts our sovereignty."¹¹

Regarding relations beyond South America, a 1934 general staff situa-

tion study suggested that Brazil might be pulled into another world war as an ally, or that the "various expansionist currents" could make it a cause for, or a theater of, such a war. The study specified the Japanese, Germans, Americans, and Italians as "serious threats." The Japanese threat was the "most dangerous, because it is the most systematic and methodical, most clearly absorbing and best directed." Germany was an old threat that intensified with the current racist spirit and scientific-military philosophy. The U.S. threat was above all economic, and although it did not directly threaten political independence, it "tended to make us vassals." U.S. expansion, the report argued, was largely by means of commerce and the export of capital and clashed in Brazil with the Japanese, who exported labor to expand. "The clash of these two currents could result in an action against our independence or, at least, against our integrity." The Italian was the least dangerous, though the accumulation of Italians in certain regions could "indirectly threaten to break the national unity of the people" and influence public opinion in case of a European war. The preventative measures that Brazil adopted when war broke out in Europe in 1939 closely followed those suggested six years earlier: control of immigration to lessen regional accumulation of any one nationality; neutralizing foreign assistance to immigrants; obligatory use of Portuguese; and "intense nationalization" of immigrant children.

Army thinking probably reflected accurately Brazilians' underlying distrust of the United States. As the only people of Portuguese origin in the hemisphere, the Brazilians should, the staff analysis argued, count solely on themselves in the event of a world war. Though there were, they admitted, certain similarities between Brazil's situation and that of the United States that had served as the basis for a "more or less intimate approximation" that gave Brazil U.S. support in international questions, it had not been "without grave inconveniences." "Economically we are their dependents." Indeed, the economic arrangements were precarious because coffee was not a necessity and could be dropped in case of war. Moreover, recalling U.S. interventions in the Caribbean and Central America, the general staff cautioned that "we must consider that the United States itself could constitute a threat for us . . . in view of the evolution of its post-war international policies." The conclusion was that Brazil had to prepare itself militarily.¹¹

From this type of analysis developed the foreign policy of drawing support from Germany and the United States simultaneously. The matter has been studied elsewhere¹² so only a summary is necessary here. Military officers and civilian capitalists joined efforts to shield the German agreement because it allowed the former to buy arms without drain-

ing away gold and currency reserves and the latter to increase and diversify export markets for foodstuffs and raw materials. Of course, it did not contribute to the accumulation of reserves, which U.S. bondholders and businessmen wishing to remit profits were quick to note. But because the U.S. Congress was then severely limiting arms sales, military support for the compensation trade could not be weakened. Vargas's close friend, Oswaldo Aranha, had the task, as ambassador to Washington, of keeping the Americans mollified.

With the outbreak of war the German trade faded but Vargas continued to play his Berlin card to secure concessions from the United States. Throughout, his style was one that would become a feature of postwar neutralist diplomacy—playing the powers against each other to obtain maximum advantage. The result was a U.S. drive to secure an alliance with Brazil, which provided U.S. financing for the Volta Redonda steel-mill complex, market guarantees for Brazilian products, an improved transportation infrastructure, and U.S. arms, planes, and ships. As a result Brazil became the only Latin American republic to commit troops in Europe. It would come out of the war the strongest military power of South America, with an economic infrastructure on which would be built the rapid development of the postwar era.

By early 1943 Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha had drawn up Brazil's wartime objectives. The list can be read as the underlying policy objectives of the following thirty years. He had advised Vargas that Brazil should seek

1. A better position in world politics;
2. A better position in the politics of the neighboring countries via consolidation of its preeminence in South America;
3. A more confident and intimate solidarity with the United States;
4. An increasing ascendancy over Portugal and its possessions;
5. The establishment of maritime power;
6. The establishment of air power;
7. The foundation of a war industry;
8. The establishment of light industries—agricultural, extractive, and mineral—complementary to those of North America and necessary for world reconstruction;
9. The extension of railways and highways for economic and strategic reasons;
10. The exploitation of essential fuels.¹⁴

Brazil's active participation in the war heightened Brazilian nationalism. When the expeditionaries took Monte Castello, a key point in

the German line, the press was in ecstasy, predicting that Brazil would be invited to join the big five in the Supreme Allied Council, thus advancing to great power status.¹⁵ Although that notion soon proved an illusion, Brazil was able to use the war to advance its position in South America. Brazil gave Paraguay free-port privileges in Santos, a move that began the gradual rerouting of Paraguayan commerce through Brazil away from the Rio de la Plata, and declared "nonexistent" the debt that Paraguay owed Brazil from the War of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870). The Brazilians opened a branch of the Bank of Brazil in Asunción and sought to improve ties via scholarships, training programs for Paraguayan officers, the donation of a radio station, the signing of a trade and navigation treaty, and discussion of extending the São Paulo railway to Paraguay. In similar fashion the Vargas government worked to strengthen links with Bolivia, where Brazilians were building the rail line from Corumbá, on the border, to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, which would give Bolivia access to the Atlantic via Santos.

Relations with Argentina had deteriorated steadily as internal crises brought Juan D. Perón to power in Buenos Aires. During 1944, as Argentina increased the size of its army amidst parades and newspaper references to territorial expansion, Brazilian agents reported that several thousand Axis officers and technicians were helping to mobilize war industries and train the armed forces. An Itamaraty analyst noted the rehabilitation of Juan Manuel de Rosas (1829-1852) and warned that revival of his dream of resurrecting the colonial Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata would be a nightmare for Brazil.¹⁶ Though it never came to a fight, the Vargas government used the Argentine threat to secure additional U.S. military aid to build up its forces and base facilities along the southern frontier.

The Second Republic

In the immediate postwar period Brazilian diplomats focused on making their mark in the United Nations. Though Brazil did not secure the permanent seat on the Security Council for which the Vargas administration had worked and for which the press had cheered, in 1946 Brazil was elected by an impressive margin to a two-year term as a nonpermanent member. In 1947 the General Assembly elected Oswaldo Aranha president of its second session; thus his name and that of Brazil were associated with the UN's recognition of the state of Israel.

That same year the American republics' foreign ministers met in Rio de Janeiro and Petrópolis to draw up the Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, or Rio Pact, condemning aggression and calling for immediate intervention

on the part of the UN Security Council in cases of invasion. The pact validated Brazil's opposition to war as an instrument of foreign policy and provided arbitration mechanisms, while insuring security via commitments of international response to aggression. It altered Brazil's military relationship with the United States by giving it a more multilateral aspect.

Brazilian relations with the United States during the Eurico Dutra administration (1946-1950) were intimate, but with an edge of caution. Harry Truman and Dutra exchanged visits, giving the latter the opportunity to be the first Brazilian president to address the U.S. Congress. And building on the work of wartime studies of economic potential, the two governments set up a mixed commission to study and make recommendations for economic development projects. U.S. economic specialists saw "Brazil as a pilot area to test modern methods of industrial development."¹¹

Ties with the United States were tightened in the military area as well. Army, air force, and naval officers entered U.S. training programs in large numbers and the armed forces were reequipped with surplus U.S. equipment. However, some activities pointed toward a more independent future. The army sought, where possible, to acquire locally produced weapons and equipment "to liberate itself from foreign dependency."¹² Graduates of the Escola Técnica do Exército were beginning to make their presence felt in arms production, in the steel industry, in hydroelectric projects, and in petroleum research. The establishment of the Centro Técnico de Aeronáutica in São José dos Campos laid the basis for Brazil's current aeronautics industry. Perhaps most important was the 1949 creation of the Escola Superior de Guerra, a "national institute of higher studies" where military officers and civilian leaders would study "the development of national economic potential, the coordination of our foreign policy with the necessities of security and . . . the combined employment of the armed forces."¹³ The era also saw the establishment of the Instituto Rio Branco for the training of diplomats, underscoring the continued improvement and professionalization of the diplomatic service.

Economic relations became increasingly complex in the postwar world. The Dutra administration paid off half Brazil's foreign debt but found itself compelled to print more money to keep the internal economy functioning. As a result, inflation continued unabated. Between 1945 and 1950 currency in circulation increased by 84 percent. Moreover, the war had left Brazil with accounts of nonconvertible funds in a variety of countries, which it expended via a series of bilateral agreements in 1947. It also developed barter arrangements that had India swapping jute for

Brazilian rice and Norway exchanging codfish for coffee. Brazil began to experience the dilemma of depreciation on a large scale. It had to depreciate its currency relative to the dollar to make its exports cheaper in the world market, thereby increasing sales and production. But to maintain expansion implied costly outlays for transportation facilities, improved technology in agriculture and industry, and education and training of the labor force. Continuous internal expansion would require continuous export increases to pay for it.¹⁰

The 1950 elections swept Getúlio Vargas back into the Catete Palace. In his first year in office there were the continuities of close ties with the United States and active participation in the United Nations, where Brazil was reelected to the Security Council with fifty-seven out of fifty-nine votes, and in the Organization of American States. By March 1951, when it opened missions in Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, Brazil had resident diplomats in every Latin American country.

Observers have underrated the impact of Vargas's second presidency on foreign policy, assuming that Jânio Quadros and João Goulart effected the major departures of the postwar era with their "independent foreign policy." Vargas certainly maintained, and even strengthened, military and economic ties with the United States, attempting to capitalize on a relationship that had paid dividends in the war years, but he knew well the dangers of tacking too closely to Washington's course. In 1951 he emphasized the necessity of "the new policy of international economic cooperation, whose objective is to give to the underdeveloped countries means of intensive expansion, with which to correct their deficiencies and to compensate the natural disadvantages responsible for their retardation." If something were not done to correct the imbalance between the rich and poor countries of the Western world, "sooner or later," he warned, the unity of the West would break and "social revolution would come." The era when the highly industrialized countries could exploit the backward ones was over. The democratic world would not survive, he declared, if it did not overcome the exaggerated inequality among the areas that comprised it.

Brazil, he said, viewed its own "intensive economic development" as an "undelayable imperative."¹¹ To this end, in 1952, he proposed that Congress create a national economic development bank as part of "a general plan of investments for the economic and social progress of the country."¹² And he was clear in asserting that although Brazil was ready to cooperate economically with others in the hemisphere, its conduct would be conditioned by the reciprocity of "our allies" in helping Brazil's economy.¹³ He was signaling that the developmentalism that marked the Estado Novo (1937-1945) would be continued and would be an element

of Brazilian foreign policy. Moreover, he expected the United States to help.

But even more strikingly, he announced that, given the changes in the world, "Brazilian interests are not only close to [Brazil's] frontiers, but in every corner of the world." Especially, he called attention to Africa as "a new force surging forward on the international scene. . . . All colonialism," he said, "should be considered an undesirable leftover on today's international scene." In 1950, to emphasize its position on colonialism, Brazil recognized the independence of Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, and the government of the emperor of Vietnam. And to support the stepping up of Brazil's international efforts Vargas asked the Congress to increase the Itamaraty's budget allocation.¹⁴ A 1951 law tightened regular rotation from assignments abroad to ones in the foreign ministry to insure that it would be staffed with people who had fresh field experience.¹⁵

The themes stressed in his first annual message to Congress were sharpened in succeeding years as Vargas urged Brazilians to realize that Brazil had become a world power and that national greatness demanded a foreign policy compatible with "our destiny as a great power." Further he pointedly linked foreign relations to "the economic development of Brazil."¹⁶

Policy positions that would be highlighted during succeeding administrations were already being assumed by early 1952. Note the topics that Brazilian diplomats at the Sixth General Assembly emphasized: "the colonial question, the financing of economic development by international entities, the agrarian question, social progress, the preservation of peace and disarmament." Vargas pointed to the vulnerability of the Brazilian economy in confronting the international crisis which the Cold War and the Korean conflict had produced and called on the United States to strengthen the economy via investments in transportation, energy, and foods.¹⁷ The government followed closely the situation in the Mediterranean, the Near East, and Africa and looked with sympathy on nationalist movements in Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Ghana, and Nigeria. In the UN it took the initiative in seeking a solution regarding Morocco and Tunisia.¹⁸ And arguing that the UN should establish a special fund to subsidize economic development with low-interest loans, Brazil also advocated the idea that nonautonomous territories should be developed and prepared for independence. In 1952 Brazil voted in the UN against racial discrimination in South Africa, and in 1953 it supported Puerto Rican autonomy.¹⁹

The period also saw an improvement in relations with Argentina, although Vargas's aides maintained that contacts with Perón did not go

beyond those that protocol demanded.¹⁰ In 1954 Brazil sponsored the first world congress on coffee and participated in conferences of sugar and cotton producers seeking to stabilize market conditions and fix prices. It also completed the São Paulo-Santa Cruz de la Sierra rail line, begun during World War II, which would gradually bring eastern Bolivia into Brazil's economic orbit.

Meanwhile, U.S. policy had begun to run counter to Brazil's. The Eisenhower administration's position on development aid was that it must come from the private sector, ending the Mixed Brazil-United States Commission for Economic Development set up under Truman. This repudiation of aid, coupled with demands for easier access for U.S. investment money, was an irritation into the 1960s. Even so, U.S. investments more than doubled between 1950 and 1958,¹¹ as President Juscelino Kubitschek (1956-1961) continued Vargas's developmental tradition.

But the Americans wanted more access than the Brazilian government could give. Eisenhower urged Kubitschek to ignore Petrobrás, which he seemed to regard as communist-inspired; John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles urged closer ties between the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Brazilian secret services. Ironically, from the perspective of 1980, Ford and General Motors refused to set up plants in Brazil, arguing that there was not a sufficient market for automobiles. U.S. business had little enthusiasm for Kubitschek's notion of fifty years' progress in five; so he turned to Europe, where the Germans especially were ready to increase their presence in Brazil. Between 1951 and 1961 West Germany invested 17.6 percent of its total foreign investments in the country.¹²

It should be noted that Kubitschek all but ignored the African struggle for independence and embraced the cause of Portuguese colonialism. José Honório Rodrigues charged that his government limited itself to simple *de jure* recognition of independent status. It is curious that an administration so committed to development failed to grasp "the unity of the struggle against underdevelopment."¹³

The change in U.S. policy coincided with, and contributed to, the rising tide of nationalism in Brazil. The Brazilians could not understand how the United States could rebuild its former enemies while ignoring its ally's desire for development assistance. Earlier, in 1951, their resentment had bubbled up when Washington requested troops for the Korean conflict. Vargas had told an aide: "We fought in the past war and were entirely forgotten and cut out in the division of the spoils."¹⁴ The Brazilians never tired of reciting their contributions to the Allies in World War II and noting bitterly how fast Americans had forgotten. The various binational developmental study groups that Washington mounted to satisfy

U.S. economic needs had raised Brazilian expectations for continued economic cooperation and assistance. The Republican administration's refusal to make good on what appeared to be U.S. commitments seemed to Brazilians to be aimed at retarding their nation's emergence as a world power.

Brazilian and U.S. perspectives were rather different. A State Department intelligence report worried that Brazilian nationalism tended to be directed against the United States and "in its extreme form poses a threat to Brazilian-U.S. relations."³³ In Kubitschek's view the United States not only did not aid Brazil but upset its negotiations with the International Monetary Fund.³⁴ Relations with the IMF were difficult enough. Kubitschek accused it of trying to force a national capitulation that would deliver industry into foreign hands. Kubitschek's 1958 Operation Pan America created new friction as Dulles and Eisenhower did their best to ignore this Brazilian call for U.S. aid to Latin American development. Still, after Vice-President Richard Nixon's disastrous tour of South America in 1958 and Fidel Castro's victory in Cuba, Washington had to do something. So Ike flew down to Rio and the IMF loosened up.

But Brazil stood on the edge of a disaster of its own in 1960. Jânio Quadros (1961), who had so captured the popular mood in the elections, could not match Kubitschek's imaginative leadership. While taking millions in aid and loans from the nervous Kennedy administration, Quadros opposed efforts to isolate Cuba, sought friendly relations with the communist countries, attempted a leadership role in Latin America, and expressed solidarity with the struggle to end colonialism, especially in Africa. Each of these moves was based on traditional Brazilian diplomatic principles, such as self-determination, nonintervention, and commerce with all, but in the heated international atmosphere Quadros's flamboyant style made them appear more radical than they were. His sudden August 1961 resignation pushed Brazil down the slope toward military rule.

João Goulart (1961-1963) continued the policies of his predecessor. Though he completed arrangements for an exchange of ambassadors with the Soviet Union, he took pains to explain to the U.S. Congress in 1962 that Brazil identified "with the democratic principles which unite the peoples of the West." Brazil's foreign policy sought to find solutions to the country's development problems. Brazil was open to foreign capital and technical assistance, he declared, but "the eradication of the difficulties which we are now undergoing depends upon *our work, our energy, and our sacrifice*" (italics added). He saw the Alliance for Progress as the fulfillment of expectations Latin America had nurtured since World War II and was hopeful that it would have the impact on the

region that the Marshall Plan had had on Europe. "It is my deep conviction," he asserted, "that good and well-defined relations between Brazil and the United States are both desirable and necessary."¹

The policies of the Goulart administration, like those of the Quadros government, were based upon the following: (1) preservation of peace through coexistence and progressive, general disarmament; (2) strengthening the principle of nonintervention and self-determination; (3) broadening of Brazil's markets via tariff reductions in Latin America and intensification of commercial relations with all countries, including socialist ones; (4) emancipation of nonautonomous territories, regardless of the legal forms used to subject them.²

The Military Republic

The political mobilization of the population so alarmed the Brazilian elite, and Goulart's apparent tolerance of indiscipline in the armed forces so unsettled the military leadership, that the latter intervened, deposed the president, and checked the society's drift toward radicalization. The revolution of 1964 ushered in what Riordan Roett has termed the "military republic." The sixteen years since have seen five generals-president sitting in the Planalto Palace.

Humberto de A. Castello Branco (1964-1967) reversed many of his predecessors' policies. He broke relations with Cuba, obtained Brazil's first standby agreement with the IMF in three years and its first World Bank loan in six, sent troops to participate in the U.S.-sponsored Dominican Intervention, and made such broad concessions to foreign firms that the Brazilian left accused him of being an *entreguista* (one who sells out his nation). The record of those years is only beginning to be made available to historians, making observations tentative, but some can be attempted. The interpretation of Brazilian policy in the 1960s is clouded by partisan rhetoric. Quadros and Goulart used foreign policy to improve their credentials with the left. However, their bailing of the United States must be balanced with the image of Goulart traveling to Washington to secure loans and to convince officials that "anti-Americanism has never caught on here and never will."³ Considering that the United States had blatantly intervened in internal affairs via the "islands of administrative sanity" policy providing aid monies to friendly state governments, Goulart was either extremely patient or helpless to stop the affront to Brazilian sovereignty.⁴

Castello Branco was sure of military and political support after the coup and could pull aside the veil that Goulart kept over American relations. What was not clear at the time was the degree to which he was pur-

suing an independent course. In July 1964, he told the graduating class at the Instituto Rio Branco that sovereign states had to have an independent foreign policy, which for Brazil meant that it "had to have its own thought and its own action . . . [which] will not be subordinated to any interest beyond that of Brazil's own."⁴¹

In several areas Castello set Brazil on courses that at the time appeared retrogressive but, as they came to be played out, allowed Brazil considerable room to maneuver. The decision to send troops to the Dominican Republic is pointed to as the ultimate proof of Castello's embrace of U.S. policy. Yet the experience was a negative one, at least for senior army officers who resented the Americans' attempt to make a puppet of General Hugo Panasco Alvim, while placing him in command of the Inter-American Peace Force. In his first encounter with Lt. Gen. Bruce Palmer, he made it quite clear to the American, who had addressed him in English, that he had better get an interpreter or learn Portuguese because that was to be the language at headquarters. Negative military feelings and popular distaste contributed to Castello's refusal to send troops to Vietnam when Lyndon Johnson requested them in December 1965. In the Organization of American States (OAS) Castello pushed for the "renunciation of any unilateral action" and the creation of a formula that in each instance would allow the call-up of an inter-American force with specific objectives and oversight powers limited to the period of intervention. This may have been a ploy to extend Brazilian influence, but it would also serve to prevent the United States from again acting alone and would warn Cuba that its sponsored guerrilla movements would be opposed by all.⁴²

Castello reversed the Quadros-Goulart anticolonial stance in the UN in deference to Portugal, urging instead the formation of an Afro-Luso-Brazilian community. To that end Brazil signed a commercial treaty with Portugal that opened the ports of Portuguese Africa, allowing Brazil, as Portuguese rule collapsed in the next decade, to expand its commercial and investment activities there. Nearer home he favored an Argentine-Brazilian common market, a topic discussed at the ministerial level, and the formation of multinational enterprises such as a steel mill at Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul, that would involve Brazilian, Argentine, Bolivian, Paraguayan, and Uruguayan participation. The controversy with Paraguay over the boundary at the Sete Quedas on the Paraná River was resolved with the June 1966 Act of the Cataracts that formed the basis of agreement for the vast Itaipu hydroelectric project. And Castello placed Brazil on the path to the Tlatelolco nuclear nonproliferation treaty, while urging the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

In short, Castello Branco's brief administration cannot be dismissed as simply regressive; rather, it was an active period whose policy initiatives are still coming to fruition. Further, it must be remembered that two aides on whom he had great intellectual impact, Ernesto Geisel and João Baptista Figueiredo, would govern Brazil between 1974 and 1984, and that all three would have as adviser Golbery do Couto e Silva, Brazil's leading geopolitician.

Castello's immediate successors, Arthur da Costa e Silva (1967-1969) and Emílio Garrastazu Médici (1969-1974), were mildly antagonistic to Castello and more enthusiastic than he was about maintaining military control of the system. Costa e Silva responded to increased civilian opposition with repression. Army intellectuals at the Escola Comando e Estado Maior do Exército and the Escola Superior de Guerra began to think that the roots of agitation were not only in foreign-inspired "subversion" but also in the society's socioeconomic inequalities. The original idea of a short, surgical purge of "chaos, communism, and corruption" gave way to a program of national development and integration.

Under Costa e Silva, links with the United States were loosened as both sides backed off in irritation. U.S. officials, embarrassed by the tales of arbitrary arrest and torture, cut back on projects of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and held up loans. The Brazilians asserted themselves by refusing to sign the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, renouncing advocacy of an inter-American peace force, demanding entry into the United States of Brazilian instant coffee, and joining other Latin American countries in demands for U.S. trade concessions.⁴

Censorship hid the growing coldness between the two governments from the Brazilian people. The left failed to exploit U.S. disenchantment with the revolution and contributed to the cycle of violence and repression. In 1968 a U.S. army captain studying at the Universidade de São Paulo was gunned down in front of his home and in 1969 Ambassador C. Burke Elbrick was kidnapped. Rather than demonstrating U.S.-Brazilian solidarity in the face of such guerrilla tactics, his ransoming caused further irritation in military circles.

Garrastazu Médici in effect expanded Brazil internally by launching the trans-Amazon highway project to open the sparsely settled region and externally by claiming a 200-mile maritime zone. He led his countrymen in rejoicing in Brazil's victory in the 1969 World Cup soccer matches—encounters that some Brazilian army officers saw as a substitute for war. The number of cannon a country had would no longer determine its prestige, they argued, while teasingly inquiring how many World Cups the United States had won. Médici's government

opened relations with East Germany, moved toward recognition of China, and intensified trade with the Soviet Union. Though President Richard Nixon acknowledged Brazilian preeminence in Latin America during Médici's 1971 visit to Washington, the old closeness had faded.

Ernesto Geisel's (1974-1980) administration, building upon earlier initiatives, exchanged ambassadors with Peking, formed a nuclear alliance with West Germany, shifted Brazil's support to the Arabs in the Middle East, recognized the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) in Angola, and broke the military alliance with the United States. This last move in 1977 emphasized the degree to which Brazil's military, especially the army, had freed itself from arms dependence on the United States. Indeed, Brazil was becoming an arms exporter. The 1976 Kissinger-Silveira consultive agreement had been an attempt on Brazil's part to have a relationship, as Foreign Minister Antônio Francisco Azeredo da Silveira noted, "without any sense of dependency." But he also warned that "very cordial relations are not enough . . . if American participation in Brazilian development does not accelerate in the future, Brazil will seek other options."⁴ Geisel pointedly avoided visiting Washington, while finding the time to make state visits to West Germany, France, Great Britain, Japan, and Mexico. It was President Jimmy Carter who in 1978 flew to Brazil in an unsuccessful attempt to soothe Brazilian irritation with Washington's human rights pronouncements and U.S. interference in the atomic agreement with the Germans. The U.S. president had to suffer the embarrassment of hearing Foreign Minister Silveira observe that Carter had not been invited, while the Brazilians enjoyed Carter's references to Brazil as a major power.

As the 1980s opened, Geisel's hand-picked successor João Baptista de Figueiredo, who had served with Castello, Médici, and Geisel, moved to strengthen trade ties with Africa, the Arab countries, and Brazil's neighbors. In what may turn out to be the single most important event in Brazilian diplomacy since World War II, he visited Argentina with a large delegation in May 1980. By itself this would have been an important event—only two other presidents had made such a visit, Manuel Campos Sales in 1900 and Getúlio Vargas in 1935—but the result may be an economic union between the two former rivals. This is startling when one considers that as recently as July 1977 military forces on both sides of the frontier went on alert in readiness for possible attack. Now the two countries have agreed to lower tariffs and to hold bimonthly meetings to discuss economic integration. Presidents Figueiredo and Jorge Rafael Videla and their top aides exchanged private telephone numbers and promised to call often. More significantly, they pledged themselves to nuclear cooperation.⁵ Already the Brazilian military has stopped

development of its medium-range Piranha self-propelled missile as a gesture.⁴⁴

Certainly if Brazil and Argentina combine their economic might it will affect the power balance of South America and create a South Atlantic power center of the first order. However, old antagonisms may be slow to die in some sectors. And the question that the Buenos Aires magazine *Cabildo* raised will only be answered in time: Does all this imply integration with Brazil or into Brazil? The implications for Paraguay and Uruguay are especially great.⁴⁵

On balance, Brazilian diplomacy has served as a protective device and as a support for Brazilian development throughout the century. Rio Branco's dreams now seem less grandiose as they have taken more solid form. Pragmatically, Brazilians have sought foreign aid, advice, and even protection when necessary. But their diplomacy has tended to maintain a deliberate flexibility in the face of the circumstances of the moment, always with an eye to the future, to the establishment of new relationships based upon new international realities.⁴⁶ When looked at over nearly a century, their diplomacy has been more consistent than not and one can only expect that with its firm institutionalization, it will continue to serve as a means of expanding Brazilian influence.

Notes

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3. *Ibid.* José Honório calls this mental trait *caiação*, literally "whitewashing." For a full discussion see Thomas Skidmore, *Black Into White* (New York, 1974).
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7. *Ibid.*, p. 535.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 426.
9. Jayme de Barros, *A Política Exterior do Brasil, 1930-1940* (Rio de Janeiro, 1941), pp. 33-37. The important Itamaraty historical archive and library were organized in this era.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
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16. Luiz Augusto de Rego Monteiro, "Relatório sobre os problemas sociais do Argentina, do Chile, e do Urugual," 12 February 1944, OAA, CPDOC, FGV-Rio de Janeiro.
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22. G. Vargas, "Mensagem ao Congresso Nacional, Rio, 7 February 1952," in G. Vargas, *O Governo Trabalhista do Brasil*, Vol. 3 (1951-1953) (Rio de Janeiro, 1969), p. 100.
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24. *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 84, 85.
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30. Lourival Fontes & Glauco Carneiro, *A Face Final de Vargas (Os Bilhetes de Getúlio)* (Rio de Janeiro, 1966), pp. 69-72.
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42. See *ibid.*, p. 451.

43. For a summary account see Peter D. Bell, "Brazilian-American Relations," in Riordan Roett (ed.), *Brazil in the Sixties* (Nashville, Tenn., 1972), pp. 77-102.

44. *Veja* (São Paulo), 25 February 1976, p. 18.

45. In 1975 Argentine General Juan Guglielmelli had proposed in *Estratégia* that negotiations with Brazil seek an atomic accord and the "possible fabrication of explosive devices." *Veja* (São Paulo), 14 May 1975, p. 21.

46. *Veja* (São Paulo), 28 May 1980, p. 28.

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