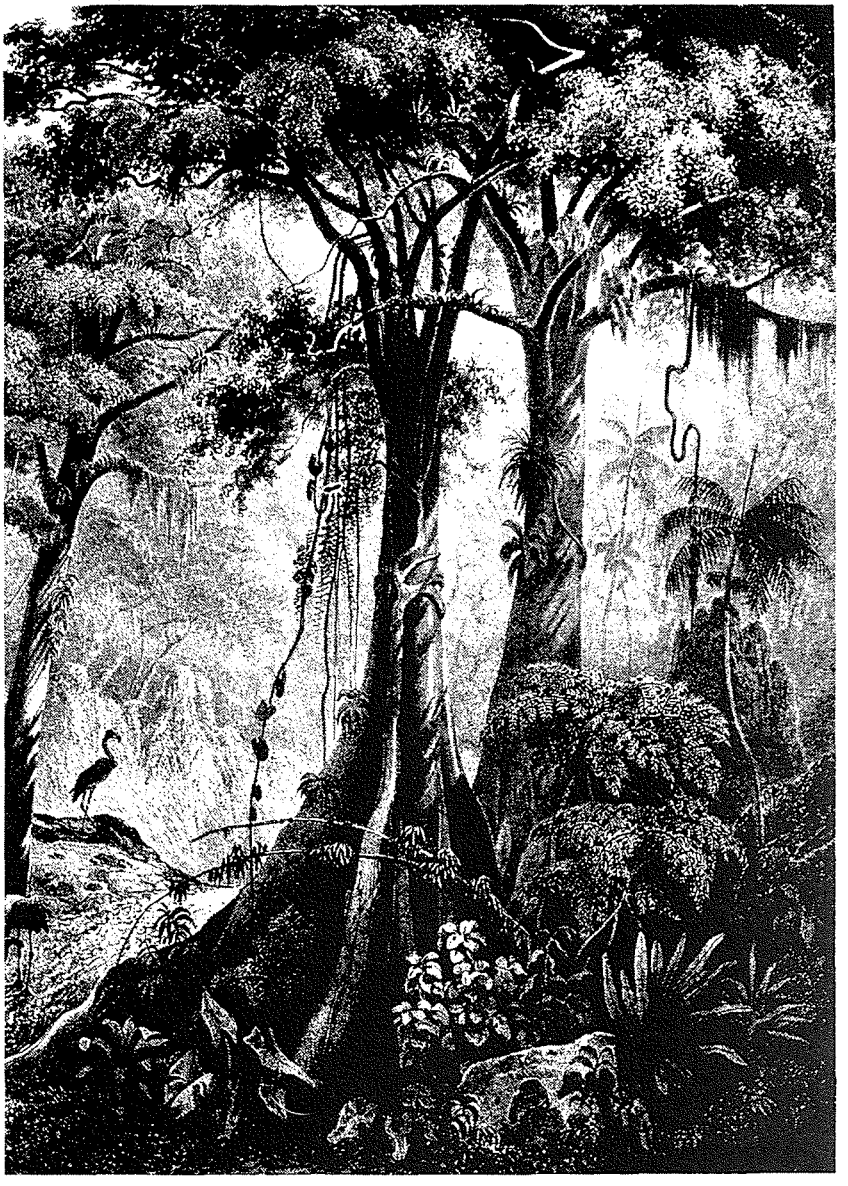

Brazilian novelist Euclides da Cunha once called the country's interior "the very core of our nationality." Much of it has never been explored. Brazil plans to send two homemade "remote sensing" satellites into orbit by the early 1990s to help map the Amazon Basin. On the ground, an ambitious effort to exploit the Amazon's riches has been under way for a decade.

Brazil

"The first thought that arises in the mind of those who are possessed, as in this age we all more or less are, by the passion for the development of natural resources, is a feeling of regret that a West European race, powerful by its numbers and its skill . . . has not, to use the familiar phrase, 'got the thing in hand.'" That was how Lord Bryce appraised the Brazilians in 1912, and it is probably what he would say if he visited their country today. On the one hand, Brazil boasts the world's 10th largest economy and manufactures everything from computers and jet aircraft to tanks and rockets. On the other, at least one-third of Brazil's people live in poverty, and at least a third cannot read or write. Thanks partly to high OPEC oil prices, the country is deeply in debt. It faces a period of turmoil as its politicians make the delicate transition from military rule back to democracy. "In five years Brazil will be a great power," the last democratically elected President, Jânio Quadros, predicted in 1961. The Brazilians are still waiting and hoping. Here Riordan Roett surveys the current scene in Brazil and reviews the events of the past two decades. Brian Kelly and Mark London focus on the vast Amazon frontier and what it may mean for the nation's future.

STAYING THE COURSE

by Riordan Roett

During the 1950s, a few years before the suspension of democratic government by Brazil's military, the citizens of São Paulo on one occasion went to the polls and, after considering the choices, elected a hippopotamus, a write-in candidate, to the city council.

The hippo, a popular attraction at the city zoo, was never sworn in. But the episode illustrates the streak of good-humored cynicism that has helped Brazilians endure a century of political ups and downs. Over the past 95 years, the country has seen a monarchy, a republic, a dictatorship, a republic again, and, since 1964, a military regime that in recent years has advertised itself as a protectorate bent on restoring democracy.

What is remarkable is that Brazil's current military govern-

ment, now pursuing the policy of *abertura*, or "opening" to democracy, first advanced by General (and President) Ernesto Geisel in 1977, seems to be making good on that commitment, albeit not without occasional backsliding. Brazil is hoping to show, as Nigeria has already demonstrated, that it is possible to dismantle a military government without violence. Succeeding Geisel as President in 1979, João Figueiredo, then the head of the National Information Service (SNI), reaffirmed the regime's commitment "to make this country a democracy."

Casting Ballots

Last November 15, in a major advance toward democratic rule, more than 50 million Brazilians flocked to the polls to elect 22 state governors, 25 Senators (one-third of the federal Senate), all 479 members of the Chamber of Deputies, 947 state assemblymen, 3,857 mayors, and some 60,000 municipal councilmen. It was the first free election in Brazil in 17 years, and Brazilians approached it with a mixture of seriousness and high spirits. Every flat, vertical space in the country, it seemed, was plastered with campaign posters. The field of candidates offered something for everyone: blacks, feminists, Indians, sports stars, adherents of *macumba*, the Brazilian version of voodoo.

Throughout the fall campaign, many of the leaders of Brazil's four opposition parties remained skeptical. Some denounced *abertura* as a "farce," reminding voters that the Presidency, the most powerful office in Brazil, would not be decided by direct vote a few years hence.* (The term of the incumbent expires in 1986.) Nevertheless, opposition candidates gained a strong foothold. They were aided by public sentiment aroused over recession, persistent underemployment, nearly triple digit inflation, chronic trade deficits, and an $84 billion foreign debt. The four parties opposed to the government's Social Democratic Party captured 10 governorships and 244 seats

*The current plan is for Figueiredo's successor to be chosen by an electoral college consisting of all members of Congress plus six representatives from each state legislature. This arrangement gives voters in sparsely populated rural states, where the government party tends to be strong, a disproportionate voice in the selection of the next President.

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Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Brazil occupies almost one-half of South America's land mass. With 125 million people, it is the sixth most populous nation on Earth.

in the Chamber of Deputies. "Brazil will not be the same from now on," observed Leonel Brizola, a maverick socialist and the brother-in-law of former President João ("Jango") Goulart. Brizola, a controversial figure in Brazilian politics before the 1964 coup sent him into exile, was elected governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro.

How the Brazilian military will deal with such opponents as Brizola and Franco Montoro, his less radical counterpart in São Paulo, remains to be seen. And yet, while it is too early to say precisely how the November elections have altered the na-

ture of Brazilian politics, altered it they have. The mere fact that free elections took place is itself grounds for optimism. If the process of "opening" is allowed to continue, the consequences could extend far beyond Brazil's own borders.

A democratic Brazil would undoubtedly cheer up the governments of three neighboring democracies—Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru. It would offer other Latin military regimes (notably in Argentina and Chile) an example of how to withdraw from power—without bloody reprisals and without dividing the armed forces into competing factions. And a democratic Brazil, its authoritarian excesses a thing of the past, would be poised to play a more active role in world affairs—as indeed it has already begun to do, notably at the "North-South" summit at Cancún, Mexico, in 1981.

Coffee with Milk

The size and importance of Brazil notwithstanding, North Americans have generally either ignored or misunderstood the country. President Reagan, on a state visit there in November 1982, referred to it as Bolivia, a slip-of-the-tongue that prompted a local advertising agency to run the next day a newspaper advertisement headlined: "The people of Bolivia welcome the President of Canada." Lumping it in with other South American states, Americans sometimes forget that Brazil was colonized by the Portuguese, whose language it retains.

While the American empire of the Spaniards fragmented into individual nation-states during the 1820s, often after bitter wars of independence, Brazil remained unified and achieved independence without violence. As republican presidents supplanted viceroys throughout the Americas, Brazil became an empire, ruled by the son of the Portuguese king, and it remained a monarchy until the peaceful ouster of the emperor by the armed forces in 1889.

By the end of the 19th century, many of the Spanish American republics—Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, for example—had made considerable strides toward creating democratic, middle-class societies. By contrast, again, the Brazilian republic was a lopsided affair with an economy dominated by coffee. Rich planters were so heavily concentrated in São Paulo that that state, both politically and economically, was like an engine pulling 20 empty boxcars. Joined by the cattle barons of neighboring Minas Gerais, the São Paulo coffee aristocracy succeeded in shaping a weak (and rather venal) republican government in Rio; the leadership echoed the indifference of the *café com leite*

(coffee with milk) alliance to the need for industrialization and to the social welfare of most of Brazil's population. The right to vote was restricted by literacy and property requirements high enough to exclude the average small farmer. "The aristocracy of rank is now almost gone," wrote Britain's James Bryce in 1912, "but the aristocracy of wealth remains and is in control of public affairs. In most parts of the country, it stands far above the labouring population, with little of a middle class between."

The overthrow of the Old Republic in 1930—once again by the army, allied with supporters of populist governor Getúlio Vargas—was as bloodless as the fall of the empire had been. During the 15 years that Vargas (who became President) ruled Brazil, the modernization of the country was begun.

Vargas was no social reformer; he was an economic nationalist who pointed Brazil down a path that, in many ways, it has continued to follow. The Brazilian economy had alway been heavily dependent on a single export—initially brazilwood (from which the nation took its name), then sugar, then coffee, then rubber. During the 1930s, although Brazil remained very much an agricultural country, Vargas promoted diversification. Rich iron ore deposits were tapped, a steel industry was created, textiles assumed new importance. In all, despite the worldwide depression, Brazil's industrial product grew by 40 percent between 1933 and 1938.

'Doomed to Greatness'

Progress slowed after Vargas imposed an outright dictatorship (the Estado Novo) in 1937 and after the onset of World War II. After the war, during which Brazilian troops fought (in Italy) alongside the Allies, the Estado Novo was toppled by the military in another bloodless coup. Popular agitation for democratic government simply could no longer be ignored.

The Republic established in 1946 constituted the first modern political system in Brazil's history, with competing parties and relatively free elections. Thanks partly to U.S. investment, industrialization began in earnest, and the emergence of a new urban working class made social welfare a matter of government concern for the first time. The plight of the backward Northeast received national attention, while the frontier spirit embodied in the construction of Brasília, the new capital deep in the interior, excited international interest. All signs pointed to Brazil's "coming of age" at last.

Unfortunately, Brazil's democratic government was more fragile than many outsiders imagined. During a short period of

Carrying Coffee, *an early 19th-century rendering by Jean Baptiste Debret.*

overheated growth—Brazil's flamboyant President, Juscelino Kubitschek (1955–1960), called it "fifty years of progress in five"—steel production doubled, hydroelectric power tripled, and new highways brought the promising Amazon frontier within reach. But if Brazil was "doomed to greatness," as Kubitschek believed, it was also doomed to massive budget deficits and an inflation rate that approached 30 percent a year. Corruption was widespread.

Jânio Quadros was elected President in 1960 on a promise to clean things up (his campaign symbol was a broom). He got nowhere and resigned in frustration in August 1961. Vice-President João Goulart took office only after senior army officers suspicious of his leftist leanings had brought the country close to civil war.*

Facing an economic slowdown—Quadros had deliberately applied the brakes—coupled with political stalemate and rising demands from the new working class for a greater share of the pie, Brazil lurched from crisis to crisis during the early 1960s.

*The dispute between the military and the "constitutionalists" was resolved when Goulart agreed to accept a constitutional amendment changing Brazil's presidential system into a parliamentary one, thereby greatly curbing the President's powers. In practice, this arrangement proved unworkable and a 1963 referendum restored a presidential system.

Inflation soared to 80 percent in 1963 and foreign investment plummeted. Goulart, a tragically ineffective figure, in desperation sought support from a coalition of radical students, intellectuals, and politicians—*esquerda festiva*, the "festive left," as it was called. He called for "basic reforms" such as giving the vote to illiterates, expropriation of many large landholdings, legalization of the Communist Party, and creation of new state monopolies over such commodities as coffee. Not only those on the far right but also moderate democrats began to worry about a radical takeover of Brazil.

Cracking Down

In March 1964, Goulart announced a mild initial land-reform program and the nationalization of all privately owned oil refineries, engendering a wave of protest from the right, a rush to organize on the left, and demonstrations in the streets by middle-class Brazilians opposed to the government's direction. Later that month, Goulart's demagogic appeals to noncommissioned officers and enlisted men to stand up to their superior officers—and his amnesty of 2,000 sailors who had mutinied—persuaded reluctant commanders of the armed forces that they had little choice but to remove the President. On March 31, a civilian-military uprising signaled the end of the 1946 Republic. Goulart and his allies, unable to rally significant support, fled into exile or were arrested.

It was generally assumed by most Washington observers of Latin American politics that the coup of 1964 would simply give Brazil a repressive military regime like that of so many of its Spanish-speaking neighbors. Indeed, for about a decade it did. The tenacity of the Brazilian generals was unprecedented. For, despite the military's active involvement in political life since the overthrow of the empire, the leaders of Brazil's armed forces had never before held on to power after having forced a change in government. Traditionally, Brazil's military commanders had usually seen themselves as guarantors of the Constitution. But in 1964—self-confident, committed to modernizing Brazil, and sharing an esprit, as well as training in political science and economics acquired at the Superior War College (created after World War II with U.S. assistance)—the generals decided to govern the country themselves. Shortly after the coup, they issued an Institutional Act, the first of a series, that began the transformation of politics in Brazil. This act did not rest on any constitutional justification; its preamble stated that the revolution "is legitimized by itself."

In the view of the military high command, as initially of most middle-class Brazilians, the revolution was a moral one—"born out of the indomitable will of the people not to allow themselves to become dominated by communism or by the corruption which was undermining our national life," as one general put it. Politicians, labor and student leaders, journalists, and military officers identified as ideological enemies or as incompetents were purged from their positions. While no one was executed, some were jailed and the first reports of torture began to surface. Hundreds lost all political rights for a period of 10 years. A widely respected four-star general, Humberto Castello Branco, was named President.

Miracle Workers

The new regime's first goal was to get control of the economy. Roberto Campos and Octavio Bulhões presided over a stabilization program that received strong financial support from the United States: curtailing government spending, increasing tax revenues, tightening credit, and squeezing wages.* Three years later, the successor military government, led by General Artur da Costa e Silva, inherited a house that was more or less in order. New loans and grants were forthcoming from Washington and the World Bank, and foreign investment surged. Inflation had been cut in half.

While the cost of economic stability appeared to weigh most heavily on Brazil's lower classes, the government argued that the poor would ultimately profit from the creation of new jobs, the construction of new housing, and the extension of social security. That was undoubtedly true for a small minority of urban laborers. But the government's refusal to undertake land reform, to sanction rural labor unions, or to extend workers' benefits to the countryside (where 40 percent of the population then lived) left a large proportion of the Brazilian people with no stake in the country's economic progress. Many have gained no stake in it to this day.

The regime's second order of business was to alter the political system. After initial hesitation, the government rewrote the Constitution, further strengthening the decision-making powers of the President. The Supreme Court was enlarged—and packed

*Campos had achieved prominence during the 1950s as one of a new generation of young economists, engineers, and civil servants concerned about national planning and development. He had served as president of the National Bank for Economic Development and Ambassador to the United States. Bulhões had led Brazilian delegations in postwar economic discussions with the United States and had served as director of the Brazilian monetary authority (SUMOC) and as Minister of Finance.

with the regime's sympathizers. Brazil's 13 political parties were distilled into two: the pro-government National Renovating Alliance (Arena) and the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), an opposition grouping. The real difference between the two parties, the joke went, was that whereas Arena said "Yes, sir!" to the regime, the MDB merely said "Yes." Elections continued to be held for some offices (direct election of state governors and big-city mayors had been eliminated in 1965), but both political parties were strictly controlled; the legislature became little more than a rubber stamp.

The Costa e Silva administration brought to prominence Antônio Delfim Netto—sometimes described as a "fiscal Merlin"—a stocky University of São Paulo economics professor who remains a controversial figure in Brazilian life. Capitalizing on the gains of Campos and Bulhões, Delfim, as Minister of Finance, reigned over the Brazilian "miracle years" of 1968–1973. Exports soared and the economy grew at rates of 10 to 12 percent each year. An urban middle class acquired growing economic and political importance. Global prosperity, cheap petroleum (Brazil must import over 70 percent of the oil it uses), and heavy public investment in development projects helped account for the boom. It all appeared to justify the generals' contentions: that political order would lead to economic stability, that a strong central government was the prerequisite for a healthy economy.

Widening the Gap

Costa e Silva, incapacitated by a stroke in 1969, was succeeded by a third four-star general, Emílio Garrastazú Médici, who reaped the miracle's political rewards. A tide of nationalism swept Brazil. *Grandeza*—greatness—became the theme of the moment, mesmerizing everyone but the poorest of the poor and a scattering of standoffish intellectuals.

Construction began on the Trans-Amazon Highway and vast new mining and industrial projects were undertaken. In foreign affairs, Brazil showed a new independence, emphasizing among other things its historical and cultural affinity with Black Africa, in particular with the five former Portuguese colonies on the African continent. Trade with developing nations increased. And almost as important, Brazil retired the world soccer cup in 1970, convincing the nation's middle class that perhaps God was, indeed, Brazilian.

Amid general prosperity for those Brazilians whose good opinion mattered most to the regime—the relatively well-off

RELATIONS WITH THE ESTADOS UNIDOS

"Friendship does not mean total agreement," President Ronald Reagan remarked in a toast during his two-day state visit to Brasília and São Paulo in November 1982. "Instead it suggests shared values, ideals, mutual respect, and trust."

In truth, the respect and trust had not been much in evidence for several years, and Reagan's trip was largely designed to patch up some of the many differences that had arisen between the United States and Brazil. At least on the surface, it succeeded. The tangible tokens of friendship the President brought along did not hurt: $1.2 billion in short-term U.S. loans, for example, and a waiver of U.S. import quotas on Brazilian sugar. (Reagan also offered to send a Brazilian astronaut into orbit aboard the space shuttle.)

As it happened, President João Figueiredo's regime improved the atmosphere by holding free elections—the first in two decades—only days before the President's arrival. While sharp disagreements between Washington and Brasília persist—notably over Reagan's policy in El Salvador, the sufficiency of U.S. economic assistance to the Third World, and the fairness of Brazil's export subsidies—outwardly, relations between the two governments are better now than at any time since the mid-1960s.

Washington had welcomed the 1964 coup that swept the military into power in Brazil, and the foreign policy goals of the Castello Branco government—"to defend the security of the continent against aggression and subversion, whether external or internal"—found favor in Lyndon Johnson's White House. In 1965, Brazilian troops joined other Latin contingents and U.S. Marines in restoring order in the Dominican Republic. Between 1964 and 1967, Brazil received some $900 million in U.S. grants and loans.

With Brazil's economic boom in 1968 came a relative lessening of dependence on American aid and a new sense of autonomy. As Yale's Albert Fishlow puts it, "Brazil now had the economic credentials required to assert its independence more seriously." It refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, claimed a 200-mile coastal limit, and strengthened its ties with Portuguese Africa. While the Brazilians continued to oppose Fidel Castro's Cuba, they refused to join Washington's effort in 1975–76 to thwart a victory by Marxist MPLA guerrillas in Angola (where Cubans were fighting).

The quadrupling of world oil prices in 1973–74, which shook Bra-

readers of *Jornal do Brasil*, for example, rather than the nation's 50 million or so illiterates—it was easy to overlook an increasing polarization of income. It was estimated in 1960 that the poorest 40 percent of the population took home 11.2 percent of the national income; 10 years later, the figure was nine percent. Dur-

zil's economy, brought new strains. Seeking to reduce its oil import bill, the regime in Brasília pursued an ambitious nuclear power program. In 1974, however, the U.S. government, citing an overload on domestic capacity, decided it could not guarantee processing of nuclear fuel for the Brazilian reactors being built by Westinghouse. Brazil took its business elsewhere.

In 1975, the Brazilians signed a $4 billion agreement with West Germany, with the Germans undertaking (among other things) to build 60 nuclear power plants and a plutonium reprocessing facility. In 1977, the Carter administration objected to the arrangement—fearing the spread of weapons-making capabilities—and vainly sought to scuttle the deal. President Carter and his aides also periodically chided the Brazilian regime for its sins against human rights, a tactic that may have had some good effects but did nothing to endear Mr. Carter to the generals in Brasília. In 1980, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Brazil refused to participate in the grain embargo directed at the USSR or to boycott the Moscow Olympics.

The current "thaw" in Brazilian-American relations, such as it is, does not quite live up to all of its reviews. ("Brazil and the United States: Partners at Last," ran an exuberant headline in *Correio Braziliense* during the Reagan visit.) In Third World conclaves, in its dealings with Latin neighbors, and on such touchy matters as Law of the Sea, Brazil has its own objectives and will continue to pursue them. Though anticommunists to a man, the generals do not share Washington's alarm over Soviet threats in the hemisphere and have no wish to become involved in East-West disputes.

The words of former Foreign Minister Antônio Silveira (currently Ambassador to the United States), spoken in 1976, remain an accurate formulation of Brazil's diplomacy: "An emergent power, with a wide range of interests in many fields, cannot allow rigid alignments, rooted in the past, to limit her action on the world stage."

President Ronald Reagan and Brazil's President João Figueiredo, November 1982.

ing the same period, the share taken by the wealthiest five percent grew from more than 27 to more than 36 percent. "The economy is going well," President Médici once conceded, "the people not so well." Yet, in a naturally congenial society where Brazilians of all colors and sizes mingle in the streets day and

night, visions of condominiums, second Volkswagens, and vacation homes bought the acquiescence of the middle class.

The disparities in good fortune were accompanied by a level of political repression not seen in Brazil for decades. During the late 1960s, a wave of urban terrorism, highlighted by the kidnapping in 1969 of the United States Ambassador, Burke Elbrick, convinced the government, and many ordinary citizens as well, that a well-organized Marxist guerrilla movement was attempting to plunge the country back into the chaos of 1964. "It is possible to defeat the dictatorship and the exploitation if we arm and organize ourselves," read the manifesto that Elbrick's kidnappers forced the government to publish as a condition for his release.

One of the masterminds of Brazil's urban terrorist movement was Carlos Marighela, whose National Liberation Alliance (ANL) combined within its ranks a number of smaller terrorist bands. Another revolutionary coalition, VAR-Palmares, with a following of university students and intellectuals, became a romantic leader of protest against the regime. Against this patchily united front, the government mobilized a highly efficient security system dominated by the SNI. Within a few years, the terrorists were eliminated—hunted down and arrested, exiled to Cuba, or, like Marighela, slain in shoot-outs.

Settling Scores

The security apparatus itself proved harder to control. Even when terrorism subsided, the regime's witch hunt went on—against students, intellectuals, journalists, and anyone else considered possibly or potentially subversive. Some disappeared, some died during questioning. Not only federal and state security forces but paramilitary and "private" groups assumed responsibility for eliminating enemies of the state. Off-duty policemen, depraved drifters, and the thugs of São Paulo's infamous Death Squads often settled old political scores under the guise of working with the government. While never of the magnitude of the human-rights violations in Argentina or Chile, the repression clearly demonstrated the consequences in Brazil of the absence of political accountability.

The 1973–74 oil price increases decreed by OPEC mark the historical moment at which the Brazilian miracle ended, but the economy was not the only aspect of Brazilian life then in the throes of change. If the middle class had accepted or ignored the excesses of a dictatorial state during the prosperous late 1960s and early 1970s, it appeared less willing to do so by 1974.

Opposition-party (MDB) votes in local and congressional elections increased dramatically in 1974 and again in 1976, and the MDB acquired a taste for saying "No," or at least trying to. The Catholic Church, journalists, lawyers, and other professionals —all openly questioned the right of those in power to rule without a minimal respect for human rights and civil liberties.

Against this ominous backdrop, the selection of General Ernesto Geisel as the fourth military President of Brazil was fortuitous. Geisel, an austere Lutheran, represented the "democratic" rather than the *linha dura* (hard line) faction of the Army. Though a strong adherent to the 1964 Revolution, he nevertheless conceived of military rule in Brazil as transitional. *Abertura* —his program of gradual restoration of civil rights and democratic rule—sprang as much from a personal commitment to liberalization as it did from growing public pressure.

The Road Ahead

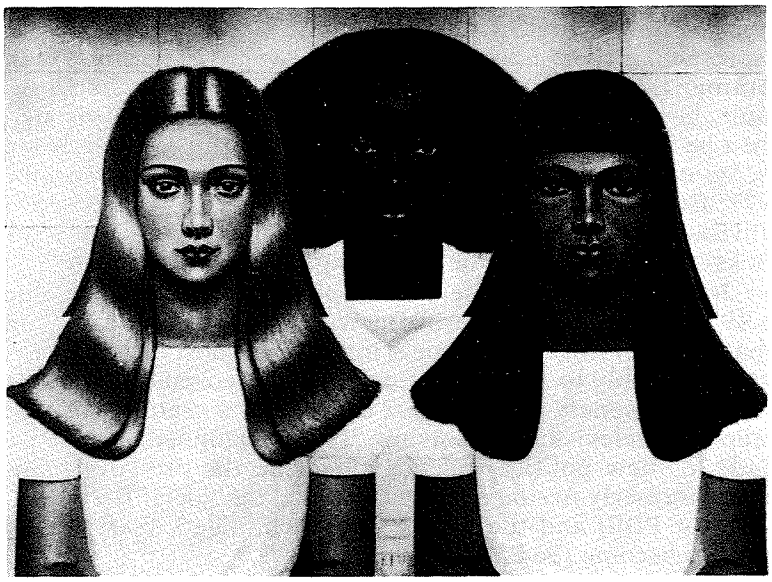
Though criticized by many in the armed forces, along with many conservative landowners, senior bureaucrats, and industrialists, the general and his chief political adviser, General Golbery do Couto e Silva, made it clear that they meant business. In a spectacular pair of decisions in 1977, Geisel first dismissed the commanding general of the Second Army, stationed in São Paulo, because of the death-under-torture of political prisoners. Then he fired the Minister of the Army, whom he correctly suspected of plotting against his policy of *abertura*. In December 1977, Geisel lifted some of the harsher sanctions imposed by previous governments—e.g., censorship of newspapers and books—and announced the beginnings of political reform.

João Figueiredo, Geisel's hand-picked successor, took office in 1979 and pledged to proceed with *abertura*. Though somewhat skeptical of the regime's intentions, most Brazilians reacted favorably to the restoration of habeas corpus, amnesty for political prisoners and political exiles, and a gradual easing of radio and television censorship. Torture stopped. Room was made for new political parties alongside the pro-government group (formerly Arena, now rechristened the Social Democratic Party, or PDS) and the old MDB (which added "Party" to its name to become the PMDB).

The government's behavior was not, it should be added, without blemish. Thus, the pre-1964 Labor Party, the PTB, reappeared, but without such former leaders as Leonel Brizola; hoping to limit Brizola's impact on the national elections, the government-controlled electoral court had awarded the PTB to

another politician. Brizola set up his own party, the Democratic Workers Party (PDT), and organized labor created the Workers Party (PT). Meanwhile, the government pushed through the legislature a series of self-serving *pacotes*, or "packages," of electoral reforms—including a "compulsory coattails" law (the *voto vinculado*, or linked vote) which, by prohibiting split-ticket balloting, gave the PDS a huge advantage wherever its local candidates were strong, especially in rural areas where the opposition was poorly organized.

Such machinations, however, did little to dampen national enthusiasm for *abertura*. Even the recognition that voting is mandatory in Brazil could not mask the obvious delight with which the average Brazilian followed the campaign and cast his ballot last November. There was little violence, and even less evidence of electoral fraud. The regime came away with control of the electoral college (as planned) and the Senate, although the opposition parties won governorships that account for 80 percent of Brazil's wealth and a majority of its population. General



Three Girls from the Same Street, *by Maria Margarida. Brazil's population is one-third "mixed," one-tenth black, and about one-half European. Brazil is also home to several million Arabs and to the largest (pop. 800,000) Japanese community outside Japan.*

Golbery do Couto e Silva summed up the implications for the military high command: "The time has ended in which half a dozen individuals painted monumental panels, like the Mexican muralists but without the help of ladders, of nothing."

No sooner was the counting over—it took two weeks, because ballots are cast by hand in Brazil, not registered on machines—than speculation began over whether the regime would have the courage to allow a direct vote for President in 1985. Much depends on popular pressure and the conduct of the parties during the next two years. Dominating local government in all of industrial Brazil, newly elected opposition officials such as Montoro and Brizola along with their allies are in a good position to bargain with the national government.

It is generally believed that the armed forces want to retain the Presidency—and hence ultimate authority—for at least one more six-year term. But the regime's own party, the PDS, was badly shaken internally by the election results. While President Figueiredo emerged as a popular campaigner, he can not succeed himself, and several of the PDS candidates with presidential ambitions went down to defeat in gubernatorial races last November.

All of which could portend an acceleration of *abertura*, as rival politicians get down to the business of cutting deals and building support. On the other hand, it could bring back the kind of political turmoil that makes Brazilian generals—and other Brazilians—uneasy. My own guess is that the regime will proceed with liberalization cautiously. President Figueiredo has already disciplined mutinous officers in Rio de Janeiro who sought to bar Leonel Brizola from taking office. And public opinion seems overwhelmingly in favor of "staying the course."

If and when full democracy returns to Brazil, its champions will face many of the same problems that contributed to its demise two decades ago: general economic disarray; the need for some sort of meaningful land reform; a continuing influx of the dispossessed from the countryside to the cities; the appalling poverty that afflicts at least one-third of the country's population. It is far easier to embrace democracy, after its absence, as an *ideology* of government, than it is to employ democracy as a satisfactory *system* of government. The challenge this time is to make the system work.