

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

Research
Memorandum

RAR-14.1, May 1, 1969

To : The Secretary

Through: S/S

From : INR - Thomas L. Hughes *Thomas L. Hughes*

Subject: The Armed Forces and Police in Brazil: A Summary

This memorandum summarizes the fifth in a series of reports on the Latin American armed forces and police, with special focus on their political role.* As background to analysis of the political role of the security forces in Latin America, the basic study--like others in the series--includes a comprehensive assessment of their development, missions, expenditures, and equipment. It has been facilitated by a contribution of support from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; and it has benefited from working-level cooperation by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

ABSTRACT

Military in retrospect. Until March 1964 the Brazilian military had long been viewed as something of a special case in Latin America because of their apparently strong commitment to a practice of restraint in political affairs. This tradition and Brazil's peaceful civil-military relations owed much to the country's freedom from severe or prolonged political crises and turmoil during the 20th century. Also the armed forces were slow to contend for power, having occupied a

* The basic study, which this memorandum summarizes, has been issued as "The Armed Forces and Police in Brazil, RAR 14. It may be ordered from INR/RAR, Room 7830, Extension 4360. See also RAR-27, "The Armed Forces and Police in Venezuela," September 15, 1967 (~~CONFIDENTIAL/NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~); RAR-8, "The Armed Forces and Police in Peru," April 18, 1968 (~~CONFIDENTIAL/NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~); RAR-18, "The Armed Forces and Police in Chile," September 3, 1968 (~~CONFIDENTIAL/NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~); and RAR-5, "The Armed Forces and Police in Argentina," March 25, 1969 (~~CONFIDENTIAL/NO FOREIGN DISSEM~~);

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relatively humble role in the political system until the Estado Novo of Vargas beginning in the 1930's. Subsequently they enjoyed a position in which elected governments were readily responsive to the wishes of the military. Indeed, after they became a power in the land, the military were not seriously crossed or threatened by the civilian authorities until the early 1960's when during a period of acute political conflict, President Joao Goulart attempted to split the military and to undermine discipline among the noncommissioned officers.

Since overthrowing Goulart in the March 1964 revolution, the military have continued to increase their authority in government. Some worthwhile economic results have been achieved. Their austerity measures have been unpopular, however, and the formerly easy relations of the military with the public and popular interests have become strained, particularly with labor and student groups and progressive elements in the Church.

Military expansion and arms costs. Since the days of the Estado Novo the Brazilian military establishment has expanded and become much better organized and equipped. The defense budget more than quadrupled in constant prices between 1940 and 1968. Nevertheless military acquisitions of heavy combat equipment remained at a fairly modest level and, largely through US aid beginning with lend-lease and the Brazilian Expeditionary Force of World War II, arms costs were kept low. The armed forces are now planning to make substantial purchases of naval vessels and combat aircraft over the next 10 to 15 years to maintain or to rebuild combat equipment holdings. The estimated cost of

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these acquisitions represents a considerable increase in arms expenditures by comparison with previous levels.

Authoritarian trend. By closing Congress in retaliation for the legislature's refusal to penalize attacks on officers, the Costa e Silva regime in December 1968 put an end to most of the pretenses of political legitimacy and institutional continuity that were preserved following the 1964 revolution. The civilians are pressing the military to give up power after five years in office, but the majority of officers remain unalterably opposed to a return to a political succession of the Vargas heirs which they fear would result from civilian rule.

Reforms appealing to progressive and popular groups have been mooted among the officer corps as a means to gain civilian support and make up for losses suffered as civilian political allies of the revolution have gone into opposition. Meanwhile--to justify their continued stay in power--the military are leaning heavily on a broad concept of "national security" which links internal security with economic development as all important to achieve Brazilian goals of national greatness.

Reform or Reshuffle? The stability of the Costa e Silva regime now depends more than ever upon the support of the officer corps. Costa e Silva's officer constituency is united by institutional bonds and considerable inbreeding. At the same time the officers are acutely aware that political action has inherent risks to their

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institution. They have by no means granted the regime a blank check to represent their interests, and their normal unity and discipline is qualified by the extent to which the regime represents the views of most officers.

To placate military opinion and to maintain armed forces unity, Costa e Silva may press on with some of the reforms that have been sought by many younger officers. A thoroughgoing reform program appears unlikely, however, given the cautious nature of the senior military commanders, a probable wariness about alliance with populist forces, and questions about the political feasibility of radical measures. Should Costa e Silva seriously disappoint the officers and be forced out before his term ends, the military can be expected to stay united and the presidential succession would probably be decided by the military hierarchy.

Political prospects. How the military manage to cope with the dilemmas of power during the next several years will do much to determine the after effects of the politically adventurous course which they have followed since 1964. Although now the chief constituency of a military president and to this extent enmeshed in political affairs, the officers have kept free of entangling political alliances. If, in seeking a formula to legitimize military rule and forestall a return to the Vargas succession, they gamble on extremist solutions, they could become much more deeply involved in the political system and also factionalized by political intrigue.

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Thus, as happened to the Argentine military under Peron, while supporting a sweeping program of radical nationalist reform, they could in the process be drawn along behind a "maximum leader." In some such event the officers might well lose their present unity and autonomy in the turmoil of political battle, and become involved in the cycles of plotting, coup action, and purges that create the climate of political militarism in Latin America.

Barring some such outcome, the military are expected sooner or later to cede power to the civilians, doubtless on a basis agreed to by the officer majority. But even a relatively peaceful and painless transition would not carry military-civilian relations back to the status quo ante. The boundary change that has taken place in military-civilian relations almost certainly means that Brazil will be subject to recurrent military activism and that the military will stay much closer to the decision and succession-making processes than prior to their break with a tradition of political restraint in March 1964.

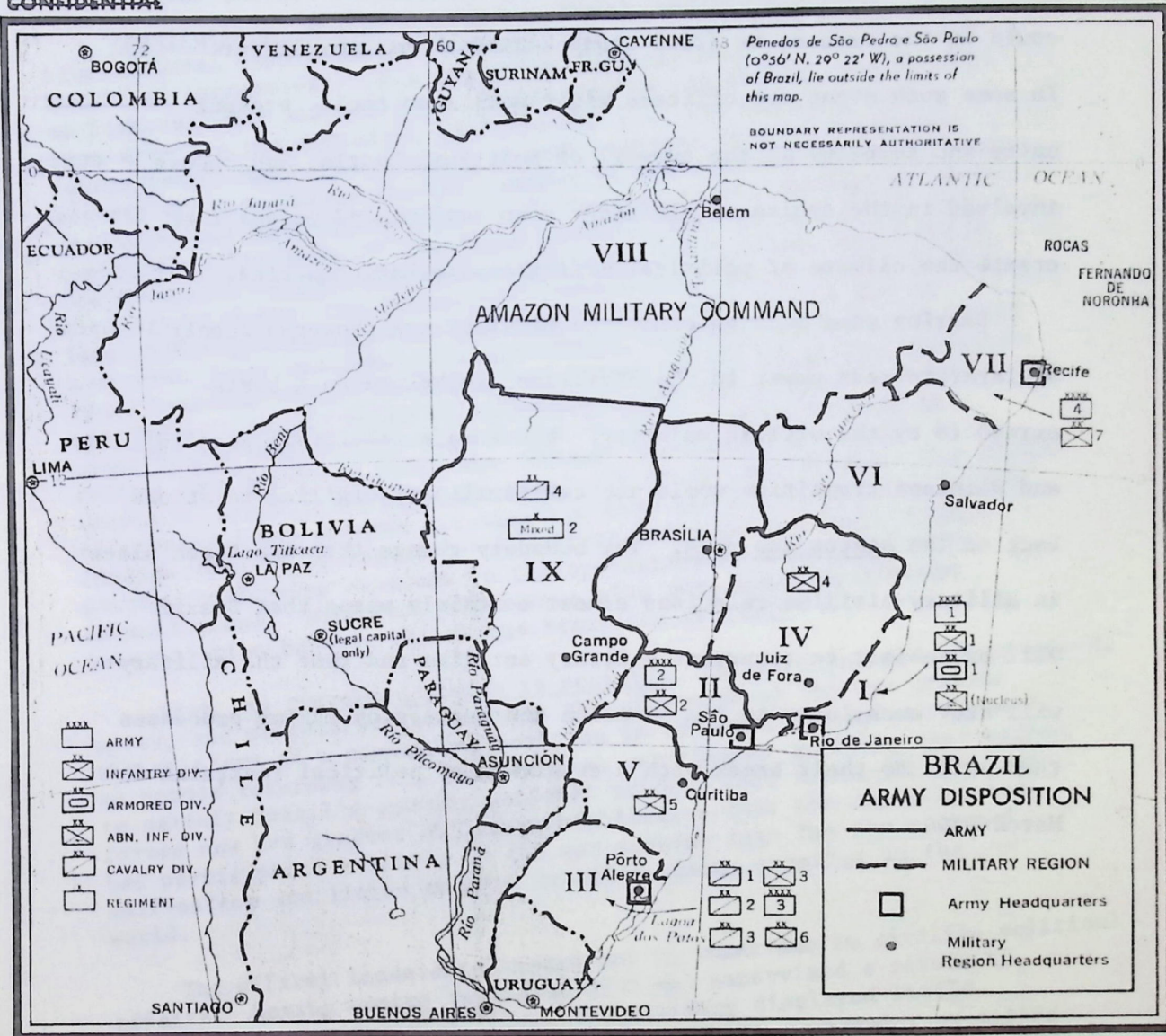
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Military in Retrospect

The Brazilian armed forces were slow to assume a leading military rank in South America and to attain their present predominant role in national political affairs. Despite Brazil's wealth, size and leading position in the area, its forces have held first place among South American military organizations only since World War II. The Brazilian Army played a decisive role in politics when it overthrew the monarchy and assumed power in 1889, but this institution was already by then tottering to a fall. The military men held power for just five years, phasing out after a turbulent period of civil war in which the Navy rose up against the Army-controlled regime. The armed forces exerted only a limited influence in politics throughout the period of the "Old Republic." It is true that political protest movements in Brazil during the 1920's emanated almost entirely from dissident junior officers of the Army and their grievances revealed a gathering political thrust within this organization. However it was not until the era of Getulio Vargas--at the beginning of Brazil's industrial revolution and the rise of the "new society"--that the military establishment finally started to evolve toward its present scale, institutional levels, and great influence in the political system.

The military under the "Old Republic." The narrowly-based upper class civilian elements that ruled Brazil during most of the "Old Republic" (1889-1930) were not inclined to build up strong national armed forces. Their political instrument throughout the period was the Republican Party, an alliance of state machines, each controlled by local family or associated economic interests, which nominated the presidential candidate who was to gain election. The state authorities had their own powers and police forces--in effect, their own state armies.

The national government made periodic gestures to strengthen Brazil's military establishment. Between 1904 and 1910 a number of combat ships were purchased; after World War I foreign (French Army, US Navy) missions and institutional reforms contributed to professionalizing the services. In Brazil, however, there was no serious alarm about the threat of attack from neighboring countries. National rivalries and foreign policy goals by themselves did not weigh heavily enough to make the government decide on a sustained buildup of the services, and the Foreign Office was able to carry on an active international diplomacy without making any serious calls on the military for a show of force. The Army had even smaller pretensions than the Navy to a role in national defense. The protection of law and order in Brazil's great expanse of territory, the chief mission assigned to the Army, was shared with the police forces of the state governments, and some

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of these state forces equalled or surpassed in strength and equipment the Army units stationed in the region.

Institutional growth during the 1930's and World War II. The institutional development and prestige of the Brazilian military benefited successively from the political ambitions of Vargas, from an international atmosphere of war crisis in the 1930's, and finally from Brazil's participation in World War II. The national armed forces found themselves playing a much enlarged role in Brazilian society as they became the key element in the dictator's centralizing policies, and made the decisive contribution to his success in overcoming the opposition of the state machines that survived from the Old Republic. Despite continuing economic difficulties and foreign exchange problems, the prevailing atmosphere of world crisis in the late 1930's encouraged Brazil to expand its armed forces and to modernize their equipment to some extent, although in 1941 they still rated lower in capabilities than the armed forces of either Argentina and Chile. The new sense of confidence that the officers gained under Vargas undoubtedly contributed to their desire to play an active combat role in World War II when the opportunity arose as a result of Brazil's wartime alliance with the United States. The 25,000 officers and men and the air squadron that saw active service in the Italian theater during 1944-45 gave the armed forces their first strong, continuous exposure to the operations of modern military organizations. Upon this experience also were based continuing personal ties between the US and Brazilian military.

High and respected status in society. Their increased effectiveness, unity, and professionalization in the aftermath of the war assured the military of a commanding position in national affairs. Welcomed as heroes returning from the European war theater in 1945, they helped to satisfy Brazil's growing national pride. That the Brazilian armed forces now had greater military capabilities than the Argentine and had participated actively in the war entered into the new national self-esteem and linked them to Brazil's rising prestige in the world.

The officer leadership tended not to intervene in civilian political affairs. Having ousted Vargas in 1945 and supervised a return to democratic constitutional forms, the military displayed little interest in either taking direct control of the government or acting as a shadow government. Dominant armed forces opinion reflected confidence in the national future, trust in the workings of the constitutional system, and reliance on Brazil's prospects for economic development through state promotion of industry and national enterprise. Under the postwar regimes they gained new freedom from the constant interference and divisive tactics that Vargas had used to bind the

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personal loyalty of the officers to him, keep potential plotters off balance, and support his caudillo-style rule. Having achieved recognition of their autonomy in professional affairs, the military appeared to be ready to respect the autonomy of the civilian political forces and to leave civilian leaders and the electorate to choose Brazil's chief executive, while retaining for themselves an arbiter role in the crises that periodically interrupted the constitutional process.

The Brazilian Army became an increasingly homogeneous organization after World War II. The proportion of officer recruits who were themselves the sons of military officers rose steadily to reach a level of more than one-third of the entering cadet class in the 1960's. Military unity was tested from time to time by politically inspired factionalism, sometimes severely, but these strains never seriously split the institution's centrist, legalist majority, undermined discipline in the officer corps, or substantially affected the promotion and assignment process which was the cornerstone of an ordered and united institution. The popularity of the armed forces, particularly of the Army, remained high as they refrained from taking control of government in the successive political crises between 1945 and 1964, a period in which most other Latin America armed forces experimented with military rule at one time or another.

Changing Attitudes and Public Relations of the Military

The prolonged succession crisis under President Goulart (1961-64) gave a new orientation to attitudes among the officer majority that foreshadowed a change in their relation to the civilians. Military opinion became less satisfied to leave politics to the politicians and legalist sentiment had a much diminished influence. Fears of revolutionary communism--in these years personified by Castro's Cuba--gave sharper focus to their dislike of the political extremism that President Goulart promoted in his role as populist political leader and heir to Vargas. In ousting Goulart as they did in March 1964, the officers were also acting to protect the military institution against the threat he posed when he attempted to split the military and to undermine the authority of the officer corps by condoning mutinous conduct among the noncommissioned officers.

The military in the public eye. The shift in officer attitudes and their continuing exposure after 1964 in a position of responsibility for government inevitably undermined the traditionally easy relations of the military with the civilians. Presidents

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Castello Branco and Costa e Silva (until December 1968) were not "military dictators" although the military had a commanding voice in the government because the President manifestly needed their support and they were his chief source of authority. The suspension of Congress on December 13, 1968, however, removed the facade of constitutional process that helped shield the officers from the public glare. This act also brought them into a direct confrontation with the political parties and the press, who were the prime targets of military moves to suppress criticism of themselves and the government.

The identification of the officers with the presidency, an office which has long been more representative of the popular will than the interest-dominated Congress, has been particularly sensitive. Under the Castello Branco and Costa e Silva governments, policies of austerity sponsored by the executive and endorsed by the military in order to restore economic stability have seemed to bear heavily not on propertied groups but on real wages, social services, educational development and other popular interests. The resentment of the many groups who have been accustomed to look to the president as a responsive and beneficent figure and to see the armed forces as an institution in many ways identified with the common man has probably focused primarily against the regime's austerity policies. That anti-democratic political measures have been used by the military chief executives to impose these policies and stay in power may not have particularly aggravated popular opinion, cynical as it tends to be regarding the role of "politicians" in Brazilian life.

Military and popular forces. Military relations to labor and student groups and the Church have suffered the most damage from armed forces identification with unpopular regime policies. Although the revolutionary governments may not have failed by too much in their objective of maintaining the workers' share of the national product, heavy-handed official tactics in dealing with labor have resulted in stamping the military regime as hostile to the unions. The more direct responsibility of the armed forces for government has also brought them into close contact with student unrest. Students in the federally-supported universities have been in the vanguard of opposition to the Castello Branco and Costa e Silva governments. Their protests have been directed particularly against long-standing weaknesses in Brazil's traditionally elitist educational system, but in the absence of normal political outlets the

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student protest has also become the channel for other currents of dissatisfaction. During 1968 student groups confronted the police backed up by the armed forces in violent demonstrations which had wide repercussions. Progressive Catholic elements supported the students, reflecting their increased awareness of Brazil's social problems. These actions caused friction in Church-military relations which was exaggerated by the officers' resentment of Church "meddling" in socio-political issues.

Missions of the Forces

Since the World War II period external defense has become an important mission of the armed forces. Taking part in the war reinforced the Brazilian military officers' belief in the existence of a serious external defense mission and they were encouraged to emphasize this mission by US policy and requirements during the war and postwar periods as well as by Brazil's rising international status.

The Navy has been a particularly strong proponent of the external defense mission and envisions an increasing need for anti-submarine warfare capabilities. Meanwhile the traditionally important law and order functions of the Army have assumed a new guise as the armed forces have trained and equipped modern units for internal security missions. Military effectiveness in this field has greatly benefited from the mobility gained by expansion and modernization of their transport aircraft inventories. The armed forces' readiness for international peacekeeping missions has likewise improved, depending as it does on capabilities that the Army and Air Force have evolved for carrying out internal security missions in Brazil's vast expanse of territory.

The Military Establishment and the Arms Issue

Size of forces and budgets. In keeping with her size and population Brazil now has a military establishment that ranks first in South America in personnel strength, cost, and amounts of major combat equipment. To maintain this establishment, including a personnel strength of about 230,000, the Brazilian armed forces were allocated the equivalent of about \$US 700 million in 1968. The military budget represented 22.6 percent of the proposed national budget in that year, about 15 percent of estimated spending by the public sector as a whole (national, state, and local), and about 3 percent of estimated GNP. The Army share of the military budget was 48 percent, the Air Force 27 percent, and the Navy 25 percent. The latter two services have the bulk of Brazil's major combat equipment and account for most of the military's investment in equipment of this kind while the Army bears the largest share of personnel expenditures.

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Trends in strength and appropriations. In keeping with trends of national and institutional development, military strength and appropriations have been tending upward since the 1930's, particularly since World War II. In the past thirty years Brazilian military forces have approximately doubled in personnel strength. During the same period military appropriations in constant prices have more than quadrupled.

The first strong increase in military appropriations and share of the budget occurred in World War II when the armed forces were growing and reaching a higher level of professionalism and capabilities. The armed forces of the Old Republic that had trouble finding the Prestes Column as it roved the back country in the 1920's emerged from World War II with training and equipment that much increased their capabilities but with substantially heavier military costs. By the mid-1950's military expenditures were more than twice the 1940 level, but declined at the end of the Kubitschek regime and levelled off for several years, taking a sharply reduced percentage of the national budget.

In the early 1960's there was again rising pressure in the military establishment for larger appropriations, particularly for pay, pension funds, and construction of barracks and housing. A substantial pay rise to offset the effects of inflation was planned by Goulart but the Castello Branco government actually decreed the increase, which explained much of the 80 percent rise in military expenditures that occurred between 1963 and 1964. The foreign exchange component of the military budget is now tending to grow because equipment costs are higher, foreign supplies of used and surplus equipment are either not available or no longer satisfy armed forces requirements, and Brazil's equipment inventories are at a low point.

Circumstances of arms buildup since 1890's. Brazilian acquisition of major combat equipment prior to World War II was occasionally very substantial but was sporadic, for the most part unplanned and not part of a larger design related to military missions and national policy. In the pre-World War I decade of ABC country naval rivalry there was a dramatic buildup in Brazil's naval tonnage which culminated in an order to British builders for a battleship larger than any then afloat. Unlike the buildup in Argentina and Chile, however, the Brazilian entry in the naval race was not sustained. The big ship, which represented about half the major combat tonnage ordered by Brazil in the course of the ABC nations' arms race, was sold in 1913 when naval mutinies and financial difficulties supervened. Brazil's Navy remained distinctly inferior to that of Argentina and Chile in capabilities and to the Argentine Navy in total tonnage.

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When, because of Brazil's immense strategic value to the allied conduct of the war, the day of Brazil's armed forces dawned in World War II, the military were relatively poor in equipment holdings, reflecting their still fairly low level of professional development. Although Brazil had begun to build air wings in the Army and Navy in the 1930's, little had been done to modernize naval and ground force equipment. The Army and the newly founded Air Force, both of which had units with the allies in the Italian campaign, benefited most in wartime acquisition of combat and other equipment. In the postwar era Brazil continued to receive used or surplus equipment from US military assistance. During 1952-64 the Brazilian military received military equipment of all kinds with an estimated value of about \$US 25 million per year, including purchases and grants from all sources. The actual cost to Brazil of these acquisitions appears to have averaged about \$US 10 million per year, of which major combat equipment purchases accounted for about \$US 4 million annually or about \$US 50 million in all. Two-thirds of this latter figure represented the cost of acquiring and rehabilitating a surplus British aircraft carrier in the 1950's, Brazil's first conspicuous act of military consumption since her pre-World War I move to acquire the world's largest battleship.

Large arms purchases planned. The armed forces are now planning a major reequipment program over the next decade, including heavy combat equipment, that, could have a foreign exchange component of as much as \$US 30 million per year. The Navy wants to become a small, modern force with new destroyer escorts and good anti-submarine warfare capabilities. The Air Force is expected to acquire jet interceptor aircraft, its holdings of combat equipment having sunk to almost nothing in recent years. Meanwhile Brazil's own industrial plant is expanding so that at least much of the increasing amounts of transport and communications equipment being used by the armed forces, particularly by the Army, can be produced by domestic industry.

Attitudes toward arms acquisition and control. Acquisition costs of major combat equipment have remained quite small over the years compared with total military appropriations in Brazil, and arms limitation has yet to become an issue there. US aid has minimized equipment costs to Brazil, probably helped to limit the ratio of show equipment in Brazilian inventories, and generally served to keep arms acquisitions from becoming conspicuous in the period of military institutional growth since World War II. Should the services' planned heavy purchases of equipment during the coming decade coincide with austerity for workers, foreign exchange crises and

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currency weakness, public criticism of military costs might be expected. But the critics are apt to focus on total military expenditures, not on armaments, especially since naval tonnage, the need for which has wide acceptance among the general public, will probably represent a large part of heavy combat equipment acquisitions. Such pressure as may develop to contain military costs on an overall basis would probably occasion only some limited cutback or stretchout in installments of the arms acquisitions program.

Brazil is sure to reject any significant limitation on her right to acquire weapons of her choice. Military weapons of course represent one highly visible means of symbolizing Brazil's sovereign independence and demonstrating her ability to find patrons and allies outside the western hemisphere. During the impending cycle of reequipment the armed forces are apt to be particularly receptive to outside influence being brought to bear through generous terms on arms supply.

Brazil and regional arms ratios. Brazil's arms buying has not been fundamentally affected by regional rivalries, except perhaps in the pre-World War I battleship race. When Brazil achieved better military capabilities than Argentina and went far ahead of Chile after World War II, the change reflected influences external to the region; Brazil was not "racing" Argentina and Chile. On the contrary, since the war Brazil's horizons have been influenced by her close relations to the United States and a recognized but delimited commitment to hemisphere defense. Her purchase of an aircraft carrier in 1956 despite this controlling influence reflected a combination of inter-service rivalries, morale considerations, political calculations, and desires for "national grandeur." However, the purchase precipitated Argentine acquisition of a carrier and signalled the importance of Brazil to setting the pace for Latin American arms acquisition and establishing new and higher standards for arms inventories in the region. Moreover should Argentina begin to pioneer in new types of combat equipment, Brazil is not apt to hesitate very long to meet the challenge to its military prestige.

Political Role of the Military

Unlike most other Latin American armed forces, the Brazilian military long had the reputation of not being active contenders for political power. Until the March 1964 revolution Brazil had no experience of direct military rule in the 20th century and no prior

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experience except for the turbulent five years following the downfall of the monarchy. The country likewise enjoyed an exceptional freedom from military pressures, plots, and coup attempts. The unquestionable fact that Brazilian officers were far less prone to political meddling than their Spanish American counterparts was often cited as evidence that military-civilian relations in the Brazilian and the Spanish American political systems were in some way generically different. Events of the past five years, however, have raised questions whether Brazil either has been or is a special case in terms of military-civilian relations or the conditions that determine the political role and activism of the military.

Political capabilities of the military. Although they did not attempt to impose direct military rule before 1964, the Brazilian military had political influence that was as strong as that of the armed forces in other major South American countries. In national political crises they began to assume a leading role in the process of decision-making and determining the succession to power in the 1930's when the state machines lost their hold on the national government and the state police forces which had rivalled the national Army in military capabilities were curbed by Vargas. Despite their reputation for political forbearance, in the past 40 years the Brazilian officers have had a decisive voice in all the presidential successions except for the second succession of Vargas in 1951 and that of Quadros in 1961. Until the advent of Goulart, moreover, no chief executive of Brazil during this period had seriously presumed to cross the military.

The military and the national political system. That the Brazilian military avoided full participation in national politics for so many years while other military forces were in the thick of political warfare did not reflect either greater military virtue or civilian political strength; rather it resulted from the absence of extreme strains in national life. The Brazilian officers developed a tradition of aloofness from the political struggle in the context of a socio-political structure that was not essentially different from the Spanish-American. Nevertheless, this structure had never been subjected to very severe challenges of social change or political instability. The crises of political succession before Goulart, even the transition from monarchy to republic, were not particularly threatening to the status quo. The most notable political event of the 20th century, the 1930 revolution that ended the Old Republic, brought some changes in the traditional socio-political hierarchies and the officers became more important figures in political life. Still tensions in the political system never reached the extreme level registered in Argentina, where abrupt and radical changes took place under the authoritarian, labor-based regime of Peron and where

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the military became involved in a cycle of plotting, coups and purges during which their own institution and the constitutional process were seriously damaged. Brazil's basic power structure, although modified under Vargas and broadened to admit new groups, continued to operate by a process of compromise among competing forces and had considerable success in achieving consensus. So long as economic trends were relatively favorable and the political pressures generated by popular unrest remained low, the modified traditional system maintained much of its effectiveness in supporting an orderly and stable government process.

Political parties vis-a-vis the military. In accommodating over the long run the strains and tensions of change and avoiding crises that would invite military activism the Brazilian "power structure" has not received much support from the political parties. The national political organizations have probably been weaker in fact than parties of other leading Latin American countries. Brazilian parties are poorly developed, particularly at the national level, and have been ill-prepared to oppose military intervention in government whenever the political system did enter a period of serious crisis. They have never contributed much to the process of democratic constitutional politics but a facade and machinery at the local level for mobilizing voters at election time. Based in factional hierarchies of the states, the parties have functioned well enough in local affairs, but at the national level they have been conglomerates, temporary campaign vehicles, or personalist followings. Organizations of convenience for political bargaining, the parties have played only a limited role in decision-making and in determining the political succession. These organizations also lacked the capabilities to develop and promote reform programs or to provide stability to the system in times of rapid change.

The competitive party politics with increasingly wide voter participation that developed in Brazil after World War II did lend a kind of legitimacy to a system that continued to be run essentially by and for upper-class interests. But the growing voter participation in part reflected widespread popular dissatisfaction with the conditions of life in Brazil which threatened to assume critical proportions, especially if exposed to the ministrations of ambitious popular leaders. Themselves having little independent authority because of their weakness vis-a-vis the executive, during periods of crisis the parties tended to form a shifting kaleidoscope of personalist and state sub-factions. Indeed, when the weakness of the parties left a vacuum of authority in crises subsequent to World War II and the armed forces moved in to settle the presidential succession, it was always with the encouragement of major political leaders. The parties had remained weak while the military had grown in corporate strength and cohesiveness. Still, the officers avoided

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becoming deeply involved, and in each case withdrew having accomplished a predetermined mission.

Tradition of military restraint in politics. To conclude that the Brazilian military play a political role not very different from other major Latin American forces is not to pass over the military tradition of respect for representative, constitutional process. Clearly prior to 1964 the officers had earned the reputation they enjoyed for supporting responsive and representative government. The Army was the indispensable ally of the first Vargas regime, (1930 to 1945) which produced a kind of Brazilian "new deal" that made government more responsive to popular needs and brought new groups into the political system, particularly through officially sponsored organization of labor. The orderly constitutional process that seemed to be taking root in Brazil during the two decades after World War II, while most other leading South American nations were experiencing one or another variety of military dictator rule, owed something to deliberate military policy as well as to the absence of serious crises in national politics. Thus the military struck a blow for representative process in 1945 when they evicted Vargas and presided over a constitutional succession. They opposed the growing populism of Vargas during his second regime in the early 1950's, but the officer majority supported the installation of Juscelino Kubitschek in 1956 even though he was part of the Vargas machine. Then they refrained, although under some duress, from intervening to exclude Goulart from the presidency in 1961 following the resignation of President Quadros. Hence, as of 1964 the Brazilian officers had a record for respect for law, the constitution, and the representative principle in national politics better than any of the major South American military forces with the exception of the Chileans.

No doubt in part because of the precedent of restraint in political action that they had built up, the Brazilian officers still appear uncomfortable and uneasy in a front-line position. They benefited from, and doubtless would like to regain, the status they had prior to 1964, when the armed forces generally stayed well out of the limelight, avoided the stigma of authoritarianism, and preserved the image of a beneficent military who did not contend for power, whose political action was the result of crisis, not the cause, and who supported rule by the majority.

Break with tradition in 1964. The Brazilian officers' tradition of supporting representative government and constitutional process, strong as it had become, was not immune to the acute conflict

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that finally broke out in Brazil's political system in the 1960's. As the problem of succession became critical in the years after the resignation of Quadros and the officer corps perceived the threat of a social revolution in Goulart's strident challenges to the established order, they gradually but inevitably parted company with their tradition of legalism and abandoned their principle of remaining behind the scenes and not usurping civilian authority. The military are still new to the problems of direct rule, with its high degree of public visibility, complex and often difficult relations with civilian interests, and sometimes conflicting responsibilities of the "commander in chief" as president and military commander. Nevertheless the military so far have shown much less reluctance and caution to move into ever wider control of authority than might have been anticipated on the basis of their record. Military expectations arising from their past ability to wield predominant influence in national affairs and get their way without serious opposition perhaps account for some of the assurance and vigor with which they have periodically responded to civilian attacks since 1964. Also, for the first time having asserted themselves boldly as a political force, the officers have yet to be faced with any really threatening civilian opposition.

Stages of Military Involvement in Politics, 1945 to Date

In the political events after World War II the Brazilian military passed through three distinct stages in their relation to the national government. First, during a constitutional period from 1945 to 1961 they avoided political entanglements but remained highly influential in the elected, constitutional governments of the time. There then followed several years of crisis and severe challenges to military political influence and institutional integrity. As president from August 1961 to March 1964, Goulart failed to take away from the officers their commanding influence in national politics or to undermine to any serious degree the unity of the armed forces. But the events of these years upset the balance of civilian and military relations and severely weakened the mutual restraints that supported the observance of constitutional process. In the final stage, having overthrown Goulart the military moved quickly into the vacuum created by the failure of the weakened party system to find a solution to the succession crisis.

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Military political involvement, 1945-1961. During the postwar decade military intervention in Brazilian politics followed a fairly consistent pattern even though details varied significantly in each instance. Typically, in a moment of crisis and after a period of tension and the failure of compromise proposals by civilian political chiefs, the Army command in the capital stepped in to depose the president and arrange for the immediate transfer of the office to the elected official next in order of succession. This was the course of events when Vargas was overthrown in 1945. Again in 1954 the military deposed Vargas, who had been reelected president in 1950 and was then surrounded by grave scandals, and power was constitutionally transferred to Vice President Cafe Filho.

The decision to demand Vargas' resignation, compounded by the effect of his subsequent suicide, split the military into two main groups, those who opposed the move and argued for strict constitutionalism and these who urged a higher moral obligation to the country to ensure that irresponsible politicians would not endanger national institutions. The constitutionalists won out when Juscelino Kubitschek, running as the heir of Vargas, won a plurality of votes in the 1955 presidential elections; the Army under General Lott, the War Minister, carried out a "counter-coup" to ensure that Kubitschek would take office, once more arranging for an immediate civilian succession in the pattern of 1945 and 1954.

The five hectic and exciting years of Kubitschek's administration (1956-61), during which the process of economic development absorbed much of the attention and energies of military men and civilians alike, witnessed a withdrawal of the military from active politics. General Lott as War Minister played a major role in the "pacification" of the military by insisting on complete discipline, prohibiting political statements by individual officers, including retired personnel, and transferring nonconformists to minor posts or to reserve status. The apparent success of his and Kubitschek's efforts were demonstrated by the almost completely apolitical attitude of the armed forces during the 1960 elections which saw unorthodox, reformist Sao Paulo Governor Janio Quadros overwhelmingly elected. Lott was the administration candidate, but was not regarded as a representative of the military. In fact armed forces support for the outcome of the elections was doubtless reinforced by the antagonism that many officers felt toward Lott because of the heavy-handed methods and the double standard that he used in promoting his candidacy while still on active duty.

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Rise and fall of Goulart 1961-64. When Quadros after only seven months in office inexplicably resigned, vaguely alleging that "terrible forces" made it impossible to govern, he was probably bidding for the military to invite him to return with more extensive, even dictatorial, powers. If so the invitation was ignored. Normally there would have been no occasion for military involvement in the succession, but as Vice President Goulart, then visiting Red China, was considered by the military to be an unscrupulous opportunist and an ultra-leftist unfit for the presidency, they confronted a dilemma. In military eyes his unfitness required action against his succession as a matter of national interest, yet constitutionally he should take office as President. Tension grew as the issue was debated in and out of Congress. Pressures from Goulart's brother-in-law, Rio Grande do Sul Governor Brizola, and his state militia influenced the alignment of the southern border (Third Army) forces command, which strongly supported a constitutional solution and refused to recognize the authority of the anti-Goulart War Minister. The Second Army was ordered south from Sao Paulo to enforce that authority. Before the issue was joined a compromise was reached--generally regarded in Brazil as a victory of civil power over military might--under which Goulart could assume office but much of the office's power would devolve on a Prime Minister responsible to Congress under a modified parliamentary system.

Once in office Goulart maneuvered shrewdly to restore presidential powers and finally succeeded through a national plebiscite held on the issue in January 1963. In the following months, however, Goulart's inability to deal with growing economic problems, his continuous political intrigues, the increasing radicalization of his policies, and his attempts to subvert military discipline confirmed the worst fears and suspicions of the military leaders who had sought to bar him from the presidency or to strip the presidency of its power. As the political situation deteriorated to the point at which the general expectation was for a revolutionary outcome, military and civilian leaders opposed to Goulart and his policies conspired to seize power, awaiting only a suitable opportunity.

The revolution began on March 31, 1964, when the Commander of the Fourth Military Region in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, released a manifesto to the armed forces and the nation directing his troops to overthrow the President, and dispatched troops to take Rio de Janeiro. Within 72 hours the military phase was over, with only token resistance by Goulart loyalists in Rio Grande do Sul and isolated groups of communist-led students and workers, and Goulart was self-exiled in Uruguay.

In important respects the intervention of the armed forces in national politics in March 1964 differed from the established pattern. For the first time since 1930 there was loss of political rights,

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mass arrests, and involuntary exiles. More significantly, for the first time since 1889, the military in 1964 retained political power after the revolt had succeeded and imposed a political program on the government. In this respect if no other it was a revolution rather than a coup d'etat.

The military in power, 1964 to date. The "Supreme Revolutionary Command" (War, Navy and Air Force Ministers) prevailed upon Congress to elect as President General Castello Branco, Chief of the Army General Staff and a top revolutionary leader within the military establishment. The new president was to exercise authority under an "Institutional Act" proclaimed by the Supreme Revolutionary Command which left the Congress in being but reduced it to a near rubber-stamp body. The departure from the armed forces' usual role was justified by the military on the grounds that the national interest demanded a strong and incorruptible administration which would cleanse the government of communism and corruption while restructuring the economic system to control runaway inflation and promote sound economic development.

After administration-backed candidates were badly defeated in October 1965 gubernatorial contests in the key states of Guanabara and Minas Gerais, military leaders demanded that Castello Branco further modify the electoral and party system. So strong was military feeling that, had he refused to do so, it is doubtful whether they would have permitted him to remain in the presidency. The changes made under the Second Institutional Act, which were designed to remove the executive from the direct pressure of popular opinion and to establish a two or three party system, were eventually incorporated into the Constitution approved by Congress in January 1967.

The election of Marshal Costa e Silva to the presidency in October 1966 was unopposed since the congressional opposition chose to boycott the election. After he took office in March 1967 Costa e Silva sought to minimize some of the more unpopular aspects of the government's economic policies but adhered rather closely to the major tenets of the Castello Branco administration. There were changes of emphasis but no radical departures or major innovations. A shift occurred in Brazil's relations with the United States, in which the Costa e Silva regime sought to effect a more independent stance. This position was further emphasized by Foreign Minister Magalhaes Pinto, a presidential aspirant anxious to curry nationalist favor among both military and civilian factions.

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More Institutional Acts. The regime of Costa e Silva maintained a working coalition with important civilian political leaders and a functioning Congress until December 1968, even though the military officers were the main constituency of the administration, acted as a kind of second parliament to which the regime leaders were responsive, and filled a number of leading positions in government. By closing Congress in retaliation for the legislature's refusal to penalize attacks on officers, Costa e Silva rode with a strong tide of officer sentiment in favor of drastic measures to control the political opposition and avoided a showdown within the military that could have threatened the stability of his regime. With the issuance of the Fifth and Sixth Institutional Acts, however, military rule in Brazil came to resemble the pattern in Argentina, where the Onganía government had made no attempt to disguise the military base of its authority or to conceal its decision to keep power as long as the military leaders thought necessary. Under the Fifth Institutional Act of December 13, 1968, a law which in its definition of presidential powers is the most sweeping and repressive of any law promulgated in Brazil since the 1964 revolution, the Costa e Silva regime recessed for an indefinite period the national Congress and seven of the 22 state legislatures, stripped about one-quarter of Brazil's congressmen of their jobs and in most cases of their political rights as well and brought at least a temporary halt to all political activity in the country. The promulgation of the Sixth Institutional Act forced three Supreme Court justices regarded as offensive to the regime into early retirement, permanently reduced the Court's membership from 16 to 11, and sharply limited the jurisdiction of the entire judiciary system.

"National Security" Rationale for Political Activism

To support their departure from the tradition of remaining a power behind the throne and deferring to the people's voice, the Brazilian military have leaned increasingly hard on a broad concept of "national security." This ideological rationale for political activism took shape in the Superior War College (ESG) of the armed forces beginning in the early 1950's. According to the doctrine evolved in the ESG, the threat to Brazil's security is not that of attack from abroad so much as it is weakness from within. An authoritarian, nationalistic and reformist view of society, the national security concept represents the military's formulation of their commitment to the orderly social and economic progress of Brazil. As stated in the National Security Law of March 13, 1967, national security is the "guarantee of the attainment of national objectives against the opposition of antagonisms, internal as well as external." The military in effect claim authorization from "the nation" and the needs of "national greatness" separate from if not superior to the legitimacy that political parties gain from "the people" and "the popular will" in democratic parlance.

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The national security concept evolved by the ESG generally parallels concepts developed in recent years by other area armed forces, notably in Argentina and Peru, with its emphasis on the doctrine that national sovereignty and progress are dependent upon the interlocking factors of security and development. Not surprisingly the repressive aspects of the national security concept have provoked more criticism and been debated more actively in Brazil than in the other countries, if only because Brazil has had a much better record of constitutional observance in recent decades. Then too, in proposing to extirpate the influence of the Vargas machine in Brazilian politics in the name of "national security," the officers would do away with a system that is intertwined with the modernizing institutions in Brazilian society and developed as part of the great economic growth and broadening political participation since the 1930's.

The use of the national security concept to legitimize military rule without reference to the popular will has been attacked as opening the road to fascism in Brazil, and the ultimate purpose of rooting out the Vargas succession could indeed involve extreme measures. At present, however, the concept seems actually to be more defensive than offensive. Somewhat beleaguered as the officers are in the seats of power, it provides a means of defending the essentially difficult position in which they find themselves, having held power for five years and taken absolute governing authority and having settled on staying for an indefinite term of years.

Outlook under Costa e Silva

It is increasingly clear that from the point of view of the political leadership the officers' mission is finished and they should retire to the wings. But now that they have come so far in demolishing the mechanisms of civilian authority and abandoning their own tradition of political restraint, the military are hardly able to retreat to the status quo ante or to reconstruct the system of give and take and tacit understandings that sustained the essentially fragile system of representative process in Brazil until March 1964 and continued to provide at least the forms of legitimacy until December 1968.

The feeling is widespread among the military that Brazil will fail to achieve national goals unless it has strong executive leadership for many years to come. They are unwilling to rely on the representative process and entrust such a strengthened national executive to civilian leadership lest it become excessively dependent upon and responsive to mass support. At the least they suppose politicians to be more concerned with votes than with fiscal stability and sure to dissipate the economic gains achieved in the past five years.

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But they fear most of all seeing the presidency fall into the hands of a leader who can mobilize a coalition of popular forces, form a consensus in support of a civilian authoritarian regime, and perhaps engineer a drastic change in the existing order.

The officers of course particularly distrust any civilian political leadership that represents a return to the political succession identified with Vargas and his heirs. They are accustomed to the destabilizing social effects of modernization and are not extremely intolerant of disorder in the political system, but they see a Vargas succession threatening to produce the events that the March 1964 revolution forestalled, including drastic purges of the officer corps, an end to their institutional autonomy, and, eventually, an allout conflict between the military and the populist forces which could impose fatal strains on the Brazilian social order. To the officers this prospect bids them hold on and complete the process of reform rather than withdraw under political party pressures, be subject to a possibly irresponsible civilian government and again be drawn back into the political process.

The President and the officers. As the former head of the military hierarchy and the presidential choice of the officers, Costa e Silva commands the authority which is enjoyed by the top leadership in the Brazilian military establishment and is uniquely qualified to understand officer opinion and reactions. Having led the institution into the forefront of politics, he and the senior command have incurred risks that place considerable strains on officer discipline and unity, and they are continually being judged by the officer constituency upon whose evaluation depends the stability of their regime. However, the programs that the younger officers want to see carried out in order to achieve their objectives of a reformed and purified political and economic system and setting Brazil on the road to become a developed nation with great power status remain somewhat vague. They are more certain of what they do not want, namely, a repetition of the Goulart experience, than what they do want. Moreover, although they can propose, plan and exhort, the national executive disposes and also, within limits, controls officer careers through promotions and assignments.

Reform vs. status quo. The options for the Costa e Silva regime appear to include a reversion to the moderate and cautious policies that he and his senior colleagues prefer, striking out into brave new experiments of crowd-pleasing reform, or some variants of either. The tides of activist sentiment among the officers and the difficulty of reconstructing a convincing facade of constitutional process make

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the first option seem not very feasible. More open to speculation is whether the Brazilian military can maneuver themselves into a stronger position through sweeping reforms that would silence the political opposition by stealing the thunder of the left yet not endanger economic and other larger national goals.

For the military to attempt an authoritarian populist program has a certain plausibility. There are many kinds of socio-economic reform that are long overdue in Brazil. There is also a strong institutional motivation to become identified with popular reforms and place the military in a good light with the majority of the people. Reform now, moreover, has the strategic advantage of diminishing the opportunities of a demagogic leader anytime in the future. On the other hand, military activists pushing reform have considerable inertia to overcome at the senior officer level. With only the officers and the technocrats behind it, and no political organization, reform might not pay off politically or even gain the momentum needed for success. Moreover, it could face a formidable combination of an unfriendly press, discontented politicians seeing their thunder being stolen, and angry vested interests. Among the normally apathetic public, gratitude for reform benefits would probably be cancelled out by the effect of organized opposition and by other less popular measures of the regime. In any case the results of true reform measures are always slow in appearing. The military have few means to realize credit from good intentions. The high early returns from reform that usually come from levelling down the upper class with demagogic gestures and showmanship would come hard for the Brazilian military and are fatally associated with such as Peron. Upgrading the lower levels is a slow and difficult process. The Brazilian officers' appetite for reform could well be limited by their instinctive knowledge that radical measures which do not work will do them little good in the absence of amplifying political organization and propaganda media. In short, there is serious doubt that, given their institutional limitations, the Brazilian military will be inclined to carry out a program of radical reforms.

Costa e Silva and his associates are most likely to try to reconcile the conflicting forces for the status quo and fundamental reform rather than go to either extreme. Limited reforms may be possible, even for the cautious and somewhat elderly group of generals now in command, which will permit a workable compromise with their impatient juniors, especially given continued favorable economic conditions and steady growth. They may be able, for example, to "export socialism" to the Northeast where the landowners are are certifiably backward, the population both poor and numerous, and public opinion ready to applaud. Even here there are obstacles, especially since agrarian reform legislation rouses the influential

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landowners of the south; but support from such sources as progressive Sao Paulo industrialists with whom the military are in sympathy and liberals among the clergy could provide real dividends in terms of improving the political legitimacy of the military regime.

Line of succession. Were Costa e Silva to disappoint the majority of officers so seriously as to bring about a reshuffle that removed him from office before the end of his term, the line of succession would probably be decided by the military hierarchy itself. A change would most likely be in response to pressures from the officer majority, but the hierarchy constitutes the mechanism by which such decisions are very likely to be implemented, modified, or stalled and basically compromised. A breakdown of military discipline in which the junior officers acted independently of the chain of command is not expected since the Brazilian Army is an organization which, like the other major armed forces of South America, places a high value upon military unity. Such a breakdown would have to result from a political crisis of a magnitude not foreseen during the remaining less than two years of the presidential term that Costa e Silva is scheduled to serve. Thus a reshuffle is not apt to result in a drastic departure from the character of the present military regime. However there might be considerable modifications of government policy if the change weakened the officer moderates and reinforced the ranks of the activists and hardliners who favor more radical and authoritarian solutions.

Long-term outlook

Never before having been involved in direct military rule, the Brazilian officers are relatively untried in politics. Beyond the rather amorphous goals of the national security doctrine they do not seem to have even general schemes for long-term reform in the national political system, let alone specific formulas. Some possibilities are:

"Continuismo." Perhaps the most likely eventuality after Costa e Silva is an attempt to continue a regime on the order of that now in existence, in various ways modified to respond to changing economic circumstances and pressures for reform. The ability of the military to sustain such a regime over a long period of time or in the face of serious economic difficulties is doubtful. Still influenced by their legalist traditions, sensitive to public moods, and frustrated by their inability to carry through any very impressive reform program, the officers are likely to withdraw their support from such a regime and opt for a return to civilian rule when they feel they have indeed worn out their welcome with the public and face a sharp deterioration in their popularity and ability to rule.

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and political involvement of the Argentine officers. However the Brazilian military have kept free of that kind of political involvement and the plot-coup-purge cycle that gripped the Argentine military establishment for a period of years. Though, in the process of continuing with Goulart, divisions among the officers increased and the purges and retirements after the 1964 revolution were substantial, military ties with politicians remained superficial and have not impaired the officers' unity and loyalty to the institution.

Just how deeply the officers become enmeshed in politics is apt to be determined by their success with the problem of military rule in the next few years and with the transition to civilian rule. At such time as the process of restoring power to an elected civilian government gets under way, there is sure to be apprehension in the officer corps over possible consequences to individual careers and a great intensification of political concerns. Alternatively, should the military actually support an attempt to implant some kind of populist authoritarian rule, they would, if successful, probably bring a "maximum leader" to the fore. In this event they would be drawn into the full range of politics, experience heavy new strains on their unity and discipline and also further weaken Brazil's political system. Such a line of political development moreover, would almost certainly release the forces of militant nationalism and endow them with new and unprecedented authority to determine national policy.

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