

# Brazil News



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Editorial

## **To Harness a Horse**

If you are less than 70 years old today, there is a good chance you have never harnessed a horse, or a team of horses. In fact, you have probably never even ridden in a cart or a buggy pulled by a horse. And needless to say, if you have never ridden in a horse-drawn vehicle, you won't have the slightest idea how to harness a horse.

A hundred years ago for a man or a boy not to know how to harness a horse was a strike against him. This was doubly true for anyone living on a farm. Back then people went to church in a buggy. They went to town for supplies with a cart. They plowed their fields with a team of horses.

Not only did men and boys know how to harness a horse, or a team of horses. They knew what the whiffletree was, the hames, the traces, the breast-strap...

We no longer know how to harness a horse, churn butter, make headcheese, trim a wick... In fact, it's doubtful if many of the present generation even know how to milk a cow.

And, when you get right down to it, why should anyone know how to harness a horse, milk a cow or churn butter? These are bygone arts. We today are living in the twenty-first century.

When Josiah rose to the throne, he was a mere child, eight years old. After the disastrous reigns of his father and grandfather, Israel was in an advanced state of decay. The book of the law, which some believe was the original manuscript written by Moses, had simply disappeared. It was lost. It is also believed it was the only existent copy of the law. It appears this sacred book had been lost long enough to where the king, the priesthood and the people had either forgotten it ever existed, or given up hope of ever finding it again.

When Josiah was 26, in the eighteenth year of his reign, he determined that the temple should be repaired. It was during this time that the book of the law was found.

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Hilkiah the priest gave the book to Shaphan the scribe, who took it to the king, who asked that it be read to him.

The scribe hadn't read very long before Josiah realized that this would be a turning point in his life and kingship. He understood that it would take a lot more than to merely repair the temple to restore his people. The word being read to him was unmistakable: Not only was Israel sinning knowingly, but also through ignorance. Unaware of what the law said, even the sincere Israelites, who believed they were living in obedience, were unwittingly transgressing the law.

Josiah rent his garments.

Through the years the church in Brazil has felt the need of translating church literature into Portuguese. Emphasis has been placed on doctrinal and historical material. Currently we have in print *Bible Doctrine and Practice, Keeping the Faith, A Study in Christian Doctrine, Confession of Faith and Conference Order* (which includes *The Articles of Faith of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite* and *The Eighteen Articles of Faith*). Several years back it was decided to translate *The Thirty-Three Articles of Faith* whenever convenient.

A couple of months ago I suddenly got the urge to translate *The Thirty-Three Articles of Faith*. I set to work (evenings, as I had a full schedule on the job during the day). It should be mentioned here that there is nothing quite like translating an article or a book to get the meaning of what is being said. When we merely read, we unconsciously jump over words, phrases or paragraphs that don't make sense to us, something a translator can't do. Thus, a phrase that can be jumped over in a second by a casual reader may tie up a translator for five or ten minutes; sometimes for several hours.

For those of you who have never read *The Thirty-Three Articles of Faith*, the best explanation I can make is a translation of the note I wrote to the proofreaders (in Portuguese):

*The translation of this work is literal. There are three reasons for this: 1) The English is archaic and sounds strange, even to the natives of that language (although it is not incomprehensible), 2) An attempt to render this book in contemporary Portuguese would be extremely difficult, if not dubious. I believe that the same way that English-speaking readers are able to understand what is written, so Portuguese-speaking readers will also understand, and 3) It would be almost sacrilegious to try to improve on that which, in my opinion, needs no improvement. In other words, I feel that this literal translation will serve as a window to penetrate the mind of the holy brethren who left us these thirty-three articles.*

*In the time of the Old Testament altars were to be made of unheven stones. This translation is also made up of unheven words, that is, no effort was made in the original writing, nor in subsequent translations (from the original to English and now to Portuguese), to "hew" the words and produce a softer, or even clearer, text. He who hath ears, let him hear, and he who hath a heart to understand, let him understand.*

As I worked my way through this translation, I was repeatedly reminded of King Josiah. The unembellished, indeed crude, exposition of our basic doctrine made me realize how great a distance there at times is between the old vision and the new practice.

It must be understood that it isn't the archaic, difficult to understand language, that

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lends the Thirty-Three Articles a special aura (that characteristic merely forces us to concentrate), but rather—what better description?—it’s the “unhewn” truth.

Recently a Mennonite missionary in the state of São Paulo, a very fine gentleman and a doctor of divinity, sent me a packet of tracts that briefly states Mennonite doctrine. The tracts are attractive, very well written, easy to read, socially and politically correct. But in contrast to the unhewn stones of Thirty-Three Articles, these doctrines are polished gems; they appeal to the eye. If King Josiah’s scribe would have read him a copy of this tract, he hardly would have rent his clothes.

Doctrinal writings should not entertain; they should not be a sedative to the soul...

My doctor asked that I get a chest X-ray. The technician asked me to remove my shirt and stand up against the film holder on the wall. She said, “When I give the word, hold your breath.” After the film was developed, I took it to my doctor and she was able to see the contours of my heart.

The first function of doctrine is to show us the way; the second is to cause us to remove our earthly garment, hold our breath (stand still) and let the Great Physician X-ray our heart so that *we* can see how our life stands up in the penetrating light of His Word.

(Our doctors ask us to take X-rays so *they* can see what we look like inside. When God orders an X-ray, it is so *we* can see.)

For most of us, there are more enjoyable activities than visiting our doctor. Similarly, there is a lot of literature we probably find more interesting than doctrinal books. Astonishingly, far too many of us believe that living our doctrine has become a second nature—no need to study. Just live it. Like harnessing a horse; why learn how to harness a horse if we can get where we want to go without knowing how.

As I scrutinized the Thirty-Three Articles word by word, repeatedly I switched from translation mode to meditation mode. Like King Josiah, I had to admit there are some rather wide gaps between doctrine and practice. To stimulate our thinking, let’s take article twenty-seven, that begins on page 96, *Of the office of magistracy, and secular power*. We must remember that these are taken out of *The Martyrs Mirror*, and were written during the time of persecution. Following are some excerpts (the italics are mine):

“Of the office of magistracy, and secular power, we confess: That the office of magistracy is an ordinance and institution of God... Hence all believers are duty bound, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, to submit themselves to this power, and as good subjects, to obey it with fear and reverence; *willingly and without murmuring* to render unto their human ordinances and laws everything that is due to them, *whether it be tribute, custom, or excise*; and to pray with an humble heart for the prosperity of the country and city in which they reside; *and though they, for the Word of God, may have to suffer persecution, the spoiling of their property, and death, from the authorities, they may not speak evil of them, nor resist them in any wise with weapons and defense, but commit vengeance to God alone, and expect consolation with God after this life (Rom. 12:2).*

“But if the authorities, through Christian equity, grant liberty to practice the faith in every respect, *we are under so much the greater obligation of submissive obedience to them*; but so far as the authorities abuse the office imposed on them, which extends only to the

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temporal, bodily government of men in temporal things, and encroach on the office of Christ, who alone has power over the spirits and souls of men, seeking, through their human laws, to press and compel men to act contrary to the Word of God, we may not follow them, but must obey God rather than men, seeing Christ has been set by God His Father above all authority and power, the head in His church; and to this Father of Spirits we are directed, that in all things pertaining to the faith we should obey Him...

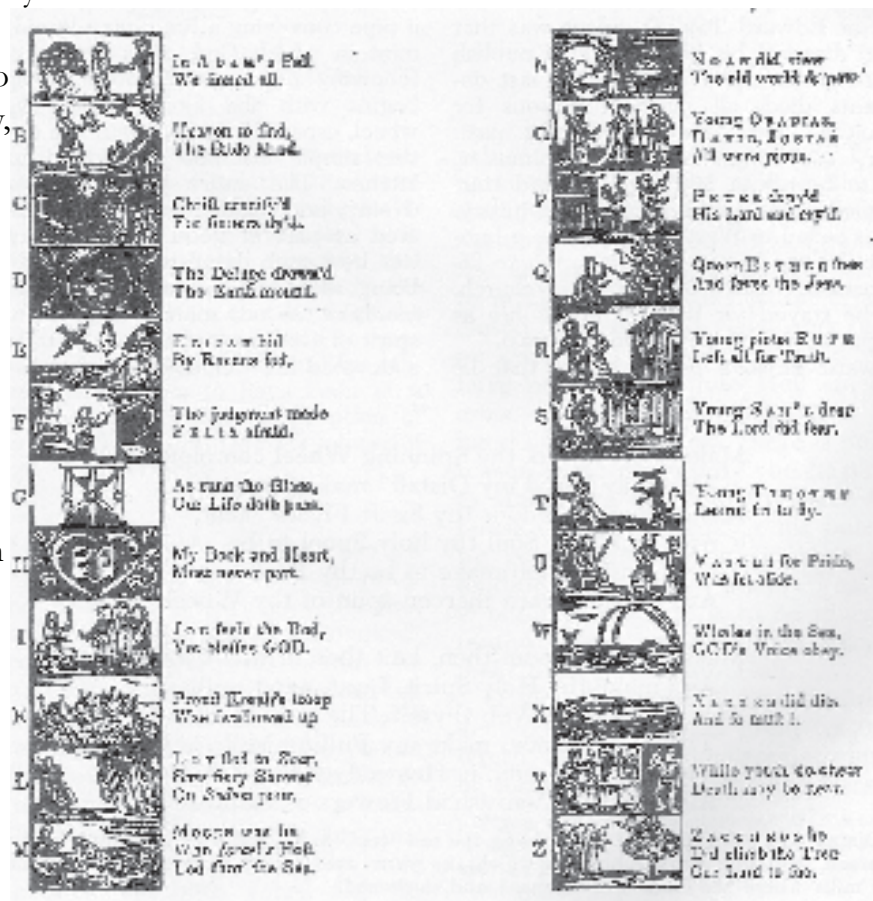
*“But as all Christians are not permitted, but very strictly prohibited by God, to speak evil of, judge, or condemn any one that is without their communion, we would with this still much less speak evil or injuriously of the magistracy, but trust in the only good God, who keeps all the alms of man as a signet, and his good deeds as the apple of the eye, and has promised a true reward to him who will give only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple; that He, the Blessed, will also be gracious to, and not leave unrewarded the good deeds of all authorities, particularly those who administer their office aright according to the ordinances of God, which consists chiefly in protecting good, innocent, defenseless people, and in punishing the evil. Hence all Christians are in duty bound to regard the authorities as God’s ministers and to pray for them with a fervent heart, that it may please God to be gracious to them and give them eternal salvation...”*

Josiah rent his garments when the law was read to him. As you read these excerpts from article 27, one of three things probably occurred: 1) You honestly felt you are living within the spirit of what the martyr brethren taught, 2) You felt a sharp pang in your heart (like Josiah felt), or 3) You shrugged your shoulders and said to yourself: Things are different today.

If you could have your public library all to yourself for a whole day, without another soul present, what would you read? Think hard. If you found yourself inexorably drawn to the kind of books your soul most longs for, where would you find yourself?

The older generation (those who still remember harnessing horses) would probably find themselves in a different section than the new generation.

The metamorphosis in literature from the



time America was settled until today is as extreme as riding in a buggy and traveling in a modern jet airliner. Please notice a page out of *The New England Primer*, believed to have been in existence since 1688, which was used to educate the Puritan children for more than a hundred years. Remember, that the *Primer* was used in secular schools (see page 5).

Now notice what all school children were expected to commit to memory:

Speak the truth and lie not.  
Live well that ye may die well.  
Use no ill words—  
Ill words breed strife.  
Do not be proud. Scorn not the poor.  
Give to them that want.  
Love to learn your book.  
A good boy will be a great man.  
*Love good boys, and play with none that swear,  
or lie, or steal, or use ill words,  
or do ill things, for fear you learn their ways,  
and be as bad as they.*

Choice Sentences.

1. *Praying will make thee leave sinning,  
or sinning will make thee leave praying.*
2. *What we are afraid to speak before men,  
we should be afraid to think before God.*

Today children are more at home with Winnie-the Pooh. Notice these excerpts out of one of the more “serious” poems, in which a child says his prayers:

*...God bless Mummy.* I know that’s right.  
Wasn’t it fun in the bath tonight?  
The cold’s so cold, and the hot’s so hot.  
Oh! *God bless Daddy*—I quite forgot.

If I open my fingers a little bit more,  
I can see Nanny’s dressing-gown on the door.  
It’s a beautiful blue, but it hasn’t a hood.  
Oh! *God bless Nanny and make her good.*

Oh, *Thank you, God, for a lovely day.*  
And what was the other I had to say?  
I said “Bless Daddy,” so what can it be?  
Oh! Now I remember, *God bless me...*

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Let's face facts. Children who read that kind of literature are going to have a different concept of life than those who read the old Primer. When children who feed on Winnie-the-Pooh grow up, they probably won't find our doctrinal writings real inspiring. In fact, there is a very good chance they won't even know what kind of doctrinal material the church puts out—and much less read it.

Would it be an exaggeration to say that someplace we have lost the “book of the law?” And that the new generation isn't even aware that it has been lost?

Can we survive without the “book of the law?” I distinctly hear: Hold it! Hold it! I read my Bible every day.

I believe it.

But do you study it? There is a big, big difference between reading and studying. When we truly study the Bible, an urge is going to be born within us to compare our understanding of what we read with the understanding our forefathers had as they read (“Comparing spiritual things with spiritual”). To read the Bible for our “daily bread” is certainly good and necessary. But, in a sense, that is survival. The real blessing comes when we mix this reading with prayer and meditation, with study and research. We can pan for gold on the surface. Or we can sink a shaft deep into the earth where the rich veins are hidden.

We are aware that some brethren have a greater capacity to study and understand the writings of the forefathers than others. But is it a gift “they” can exercise for “us?” Can we rejoice in their knowledge, that they still know how to harness a horse?

Adam Clark has an interesting explanation for Psalm 127, in which he refers to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem:

*“Except the Lord keep the city —* When the returned Jews began to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuild the city, Sanballat, Tobiah, and others formed plots to prevent it. Nehemiah, being informed of this, set up proper watches and guards. The enemy, finding this, gathered themselves together, and determined to fall upon them at once, and cut them all off. Nehemiah, having gained intelligence of this also, armed his people, and placed them behind the wall. Sanballat and his company, finding that the Jews were prepared for resistance, abandoned their project; and Nehemiah, to prevent surprises of this kind, *kept one-half of the people always under arms, while the other half was employed in the work.* (Italics are mine.) To this the psalmist alludes; and in effect says, Though you should watch constantly, guard every place, and keep on your armor ready to repel every attack, yet remember the success of all depends upon the presence and blessing of God. While, therefore, ye are not slothful in business, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; for there is no success either in spiritual or secular undertakings but in consequence of the benediction of the Almighty.”

We understand that the entire adult male population of Jerusalem was responsible for the safety of the city. Not just a few who had the “gift” of warding off the enemy.

Our responsibility as watchmen begins with our own soul and reaches out to our own household, to our home congregation, and finally to the Church (Jerusalem).

Increasingly, surveillance cameras are taking over the work of watchmen. Recently a Brazilian was in Germany, when his cell phone with international roaming rang. He

answered and heard the burglar alarm from his home in Brazil. Quickly he got on the Internet and logged into his home computer that was equipped with a surveillance system. There he saw the burglar going through his belongings. He called the police and in a matter of minutes they nabbed the thief.

Would that describe the modern watchman of Zion? Probably. Yet, the apostle writes that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Once again we must face facts: Principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness and spiritual wickedness cannot be detected electronically.

Where does that leave us? Are we, like Nehemiah’s men, prepared to both work and watch? Are we equally adroit with trowel and sword? Or are we depending on surveillance cameras to keep the walls of Zion?

We say that the book of the law is the Bible. If the Bible doesn’t create in us a desire to understand the “breadth, and length, and depth, and height” of what we believe, is it possible the book of the law *has* been lost?

Should this be the case, the solution may be to once again learn how to harness a horse. ▲

## Readers Contribute

### **Wherever You Are, Be There**

A delightful story is told about a young man who applied for a job as a telegraph operator. He answered an ad in the newspaper and went to the telegraph office to await an interview. Though he knew Morse Code and was qualified in every other way, seven other applicants were also waiting in the large, noisy office.

He saw customers coming and going and heard a telegraph clacking away in the background. He also noticed a sign on the receptionist’s counter instructing applicants to fill out a form and wait to be summoned to an inner office for an interview. He filled out the form and sat down to wait.

After a few minutes, the young man stood up, crossed the room to the door of the inner office and walked right in. Naturally the other applicants perked up, wondering why he had been so bold. They talked among themselves and finally determined that, since nobody had been summoned to interview yet, the man would likely be reprimanded for not following instructions and possibly disqualified for the job.

Within a few minutes, however, the young man emerged from the inner office escorted by the interviewer, who announced to the other applicants, “Thank you all very much for coming, but the job has just been filled.”

They were all confused and one man spoke up: “Wait a minute... I don’t understand. We’ve been waiting longer than he and we never even got a chance to be interviewed.”

The employer responded, “All the time you’ve been sitting here, the telegraph has been ticking out the following message: ‘If you understand this, then come right in. The job is yours.’”

This man knew a valuable life-lesson that most people miss: *Wherever you are, be there.* If you're there physically, also be there emotionally. Be there mentally. Be there attentively. Be there as fully as you can.

It's about being present and fully alive in the moment. Wherever you are, be there. Give your full attention to others (is there really a better gift?). Give yourself fully to the task at hand or to the present moment. When you're completely present, you'll make the most of every minute. And minutes lived fully add up to a life lived magnificently. ▲

## A Friend Indeed

In August of 2001, Moshe (fictitious name), a successful Jewish businessman, flew to Israel on business. On Thursday, the ninth, between meetings, Moshe decided to have a quick lunch in a pizza parlor located on the corner of Yafo and Melech George Streets, in the center of Jerusalem.

When he got there, he found there was hardly standing room. The line was enormous and the businessman realized there would be no way to have lunch before his next meeting. Nevertheless, in a vain and inexplicable hope that something might turn up, he walked up to the register and stood there a moment.

Seeing the almost desperate look on his face, a local businessman, about to give his order, invited him to step in line ahead of him, an offer which Moshe gratefully accepted. In a short time had his meal and was on his way.

Less than two minutes after leaving the pizza parlor, he heard a terrible explosion. Bewildered, he asked a young boy coming from the direction of the explosion what had happened. Moshe turned white when he was informed that a suicide bomber had just exploded a bomb in the Sbarro Pizza Parlor, where he just had lunch.

Moshe immediately remembered his new "friend" who doubtlessly saved his life by his kindness. Had he managed to get out of the restaurant before the bomb exploded? Was he wounded? Or one of the dead? Quickly he returned to the shambles to see if his friend needed help. What he found was total chaos. The thousands of nails surrounding the bomb made the destruction even more lethal. Beside the terrorist, 23 people died, six of them children. Approximately 90 were wounded, some in critical condition. Tables and chairs were strewn on the street. People were screaming, running about in panic. Some tried to help, but with no one to control the crowds, it was difficult. A woman with a bloodied baby in her arms was pleading for help. To add to the confusion, another bomb was found, which specialists were attempting to disarm.

Amidst all this confusion and noise, including that of many sirens, Moshe tried to find his friend who saved his life. So great was this urge to find and thank his friend, that he forgot all about his afternoon meetings. Not finding his friend on the scene of the explosion, Moshe began touring the hospitals.

Finally he found his friend. He was injured, but his life was not in danger. His son was already at his side, so Moshe told him the entire story of what happened, how his



dad saved his life. Giving him his business card, he went on to say that if his dad ever needed him, all he had to do was call and wherever he was in the world, he would drop everything and come to his aid.

Approximately a month later, Moshe received a telephone call from his friend's son saying that his dad was needing an emergency surgery and that the only place this surgery could be done was in Boston. Moshe didn't bat an eye. He arranged for his friend to take the first flight out of Israel for the United States. On the day of his arrival, he took the day off, met him at the airport and accompanied him to the hospital, where he arranged for him to get the very best care.

This was on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. If he had not taken the day off to be with his friend, he would have been at work on the 101<sup>st</sup> floor of one of the towers of the World Trade Center. ▲

## Wordplay

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.

A backward poet writes inverse.

A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.

Dijon vu – the same mustard as before.

Shotgun wedding: a case of wife or death.

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.

When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.

A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.

What's the definition of a will? It's a dead giveaway.

Time flies like an arrow.

Fruit flies like a banana.

In democracy your vote counts.

In feudalism your count votes.

She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

If you don't pay your exorcist, you get repossessed.

With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.

When a clock is hungry, it goes back four seconds.

The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.

You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.

Local Area Network in Australia: the LAN down under.

He often broke into song because he couldn't find the key.

Every calendar's days are numbered.

A lot of money is tainted – it taint yours and it taint mine.

A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.

He had a photographic memory that was never developed.

A plateau is a high form of flattery.

A midget fortune-teller who escapes from prison is a small medium at large.

Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.

Once you've seen one shopping center you've seen a mall.

Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.

Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

Acupuncture is a jab well done. ▲

## Thinking Out Loud

### On Ideas and Words

*When ideas fail, words come in very handy.* —Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832)

Henry Kissinger, one of the greatest statesmen of all times, not only observed the making of history from a box seat, but often it was he who was making history. Especially during his years of shuttle diplomacy, he could, in the space of a week, meet with dozens of world leaders. In his memoirs he gives detailed descriptions of some of these men with whom he spent hours around a negotiating table.

Much of Kissinger's diplomacy was carried out prior to the fall of the Iron Curtain. In the initial sessions with his Soviet counterparts, each side would make an opening statement. It was normal for the Soviets to begin theirs with a harangue, sometimes up to two hours long, in which they would extol the virtues of communism and bluster the Free World, enumerating their many evils. Needless to say, some of these opening sessions must have taxed Kissinger's nervous system almost to the limit.

There were also sessions in which he had to endure unprepared diplomats who would ramble on endlessly without saying anything.

It was possibly in one of these sessions that an indiscrete photographer caught Kissinger in a contemplative moment, carefully analyzing a bit of matter on the end of his index finger which he had just extracted from one of his nostrils.

Goethe says that when ideas fail, words become very handy. He doubtlessly never was present in a meeting in which Holdeman Mennonites expressed their views in an attempt to reach a decision. We believe some of these meetings would have strengthened his feelings on the subject.

The tongue and vocal cords are the only human organs that can be exercised without any fatigue. To exercise the brain, on the other hand, can be quite exhausting, which may explain Goethe's theory on ideas and words.

Enough said. All my good readers have nostrils. ▲

## Life in Brazil

### Money

If there is an eighth wonder of the world, it is the humble US penny. The brainchild of Benjamin Franklin, the first one-cent coin, known as a Fugio, was struck in a private mint in 1787. Needless to say, the buying power of this penny was far greater than that of today's penny. The wonder of this little coin is that it buys anything at all, that it still exists.

Brazil's monetary history can't be told in pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters.

To understand Brazilian history, you must remember that for many years, Brazil was a Portuguese colony. All early commerce was through bartering. Sugar, tobacco and cotton were the preferred goods. The first currency used was the *real*, imported from Portugal.

The *real* was used until 1942. Slowly its buying power was eroded by inflation

In 1942, President Getúlio Vargas cut three zeros off the *real* and renamed it the *cruzeiro*.

In 1967, during the Military dictatorship, three zeros were lopped off the *cruzeiro*, and it was renamed *cruzeiro novo* (new cruzeiro).

In 1970 the *cruzeiro novo* regained its old name of *cruzeiro* (without the loss of zeros).

In 1986 another three zeros were taken off the *cruzeiro* and it was renamed *cruzado*.

In 1989 three more zeros were chopped off and the new currency was called the *cruzado novo*.

In 1980 President Collor (who was later impeached) renamed the currency *cruzeiro*.

In 1993 President Itamar Franco removed another three zeros from the currency and it was now called the *cruzeiro real* (actually the brainchild of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the finance minister, who later served two terms as president).

In 1994 a total new set of currency was printed and minted. In a matter of several weeks all the *cruzeiros* were substituted for this new currency, known as the *real*, at an exchange rate of one *real* for each 2.750 *cruzeiros*. It is interesting to notice that 3.4 billion *cruzeiro* bills were incinerated after the switch was completed.

We continue using the *real* as our currency. Fernando Henrique Cardoso is given the credit for having tamed inflation in Brazil. Our inflation has been running at seven or eight percent per year, an improvement from when it was at its worst and hit two percent per day (you read right).

For you to get an idea of what inflation is, let's suppose you had one quadrillion dollars. That's a pretty good hunk of money.

1.000.000.000.000.000.

Then one day, in 1942, three zeros are cut off and you have only 1.000.000.000.000 left.

In 1967 another three zeros are lost, and now you are down to 1.000.000.000 dollars.

In 1986 another three zeros hit the fan and you have 1.000.000 dollars left.

In 1989 another three zeros go the way of the Mohicans and you are down to 1.000 dollars.

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In 1993 three more zeros are chopped off and you have ONE DOLLAR to your name.

In 1994, with the final surgery, this one dollar is now worth 0.00037 cents. That is, approximately 4 ten thousandth of a cent. Yep, the little penny that even beggars disdain is really quite a hero when seen from this perspective.

What happens when three zeros are taken off currency? Who loses? Who wins? No one. There are no losers or winners. Let's say you have a hundred thousand dollars in the bank and then suddenly your balance sheet shows only a thousand dollars. Sounds bad.

But it isn't. It happens you were owing a fellow a hundred thousand dollars for some land you bought. When you go to settle with him, you find your debt has dropped to exactly a thousand dollars. Not bad.

I said there are no winners nor losers when three zeros are removed from currency. Actually, everyone is a winner.

When inflation hits a percent or more a day, you almost need a wheelbarrow to carry cash. Some of our banks, like the Banco do Brasil, used to have 15 or more windows. When choosing a line, one carefully scanned those already waiting. If anyone was carrying a bulging attaché case or a cardboard box, that line was avoided like the plague.

I remember a fellow in line with no sachel or box to indicate he had a lot of money. Upon getting to the window, he began digging in his pockets and I never knew so much money could be stuffed away in trouser pockets. Then he unbuttoned his shirt and began to remove more bundles of money. It was sort of like the widow's oil; it appeared that the money would just keep coming.

Anyway, you have never, ever seen anyone in your life who could count money like those tellers. They did it by feel. It wasn't unusual for a teller to be counting at a hundred and fifty per and all the while looking over the crowd. Seeing a friend, he would nod his head and smile—without ever missing a beat.

Once the teller was counting my money, apparently paying no attention to what he was doing. Suddenly he stopped, held a bill up to the light, and said, "This a counterfeit bill." Sure enough, it was.

So far as inflation itself is concerned, there *are* winners and losers. In a perverse game of Robin Hood, inflation robs the poor and rewards the rich. Never was it easier to make money in Brazil than during the days of hyperinflation. This was also true in farming. People who had money could make money with inflation. People who didn't have money were constantly having their noses rubbed in the sand. In fact, quite a few businesses went broke when inflation was vanquished.

Inflation is cruel. I had a building project and was needing roof tile. I went to a building material store and priced roof tile. The price was exorbitant. I told the fellow I felt the price was pretty steep and I would be checking around before buying. He didn't seem to be the least bit concerned about my looking for a better price. I drove around town and discovered everyone was sold out, so that left me but one option: humble myself and go back to the first businessman and pay his price. That is what I did. I went back and said, "I'll take the tile." He said, "The price has gone up."

I bought the tile.

Not all businessmen were winners with inflation. There were those who each day would calculate how much the value of their stock went up in the last 24 hours because of inflation. They would say, “You make more money by not selling than by selling.” These went broke.

When Fernando Collor became president in 1980, his first official act was to temporarily confiscate all money in bank and savings accounts above a certain value (I don’t remember how much, but not very much). He did this on the premise that inflation is caused by too much money in circulation. He did help for a short time, but soon Brazil found itself embroiled in a terrible recession.

We have now lived long enough without inflation to where the old mentality has evaporated. It has been a long time since I heard anybody call those the “good old days.”

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In the News

## I Don't Know

*The following thoughts by Antônio Ermírio de Moraes, one of the most successful industrialists in Brazil, were published in EXAME Magazine.*

If you still haven't found your slot in life, imagine this:

You are standing at your window looking out. It is a normal day and all you see are a few clouds floating around. Someone comes strolling by, and seeing you by the window, stops and asks, “Do you suppose it will rain today?”

If you answer, “Yes, I’m sure it will rain,” then you should work in the sales. Salesmen are the only human beings who are sure of absolutely everything.

If your answer is, “I don’t know; I’m thinking about something else,” then you should be in marketing. The folks who work in marketing are always thinking what others don’t think.

If you answer, “Yes, there is a good chance it will rain,” then you should work in engineering. The people who work in engineering are always trying to convert everything into some kind of a mathematical formula.

If you have answered, “It depends...,” then you are cut out for the human resources department. In this department, all facts are dependent on other facts.

If you answered, “The forecast isn’t for rain,” then you should work in accounting. People who work in accounting have more confidence in the data they handle than in their own eyes.

If your answer is, “Aw, I don’t know...but if I go on a walk, I’ll take my umbrella,” then you should work in the credit department, because those people know that anything can happen.

But, if you answer, “I don’t know,” then there is a good chance you will be a successful businessman and may make it to the top. Out of every one hundred people, only one has the courage to answer, “I don’t know,” when they don’t know the answer. The other 99 feel obligated to have an answer on the tip of their tongue for every imaginable type of situation.

“I don’t know,” saves a lot of time and prepares others to look for more concrete information before making a decision. It sounds sort of strange, but in the corporate world, to say “I don’t know” is one of the hardest lessons to learn.

Why?

I sincerely don’t know. ▲

## This & That

**Our telephone service** is slowly returning to normal—or maybe to abnormal. The telephone company is installing new radios (remember that our phones are actually glorified cell phones). If you want to call someone here, there is a fairly good chance that the number you used to call will be working again. However, since these new phones are digital instead of analog, there is no fax service. For you folks who would like to send a fax to someone here on the Colony, you may dial 1-866-435-4016 (yes, that is a States number). It will come to my e-mail address and I will notify the receiver that he/she has a fax at the office. BE SURE to put the receiver’s name on the fax so I know whom to call. I suggest that when possible the faxes be typed to save space.

**Our xxth Annual Meeting** was December 29 – January 1. The youth were together on Friday, the 29th and presented a program at the Rio Verdinho Cong. that evening. On Saturday, the 30th, in the afternoon, the business part of the meeting was held at the Monte Alegre Cong. On Sunday, the 31st, there were talks in both the morning and afternoon sessions on the subject of commitment. On Monday, January 1, there was an all-day school meeting in the Rio Verde Cong. (the town church) for school board members and teachers. The evening session was open for everyone. The topic was Investing in the Future of our Children.

**The Paul Jeffery family** has returned from England and is now living in the Duane Holdeman house. Paul plans on setting up a woodworking shop in the shed.

**Crops are looking good.** We are having rain just about every day, which means that farmers are running to and fro spraying for rust. It appears the price of beans will be considerably better than last year.

**Visitors have been:**

Caleb Holdemans e sons;

Rodney & Gloria Peachey;

Jesse Loewens and children;

Charles Goossens and son;

Daryl Goossens and children;

# Brazil News

Martha and Louise Penner;  
Jason Holdemans and daughter;  
Dan & Clara Coblentz;  
Delton & Tina Ensz and family;  
Sam Coblentz;  
Darren Schultz;  
Melvyn, Norman and Leslie Souto;  
Lorinda Burns returned home;  
Janice Holdeman came home for Christmas;  
Vance & Regina Koehn;  
Mary Jean Koehn;  
Lincoln & Rosanne Koehn;  
Milferd Loewens are spending some time on the Colony.