

# Brazil News

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Editorial

## **Conformity**

Non-conformity doesn't mean being different for the sake of being different. It isn't a badge or uniform that is worn to attract attention. It has no sanctifying power. Rather, it is the result of a sanctifying power.

A Christian, by definition, is one who voluntarily conforms to the teachings and spirit of Jesus Christ. Such conformity will always result in a conflict of interest with the world – which is true non-conformity.

For many centuries it was possible for people, especially those from more remote areas, to live and die without witnessing a single scientific advancement. Their world was often the size of a present day township. Even in more populated areas, in the cities, many years could go by without a major change.

In this uncomplicated, unchanging setting, there was little, if any, outward difference between the Christian and his worldly neighbor. The Martyr's Mirror proves this repeatedly. Among the common people, conversion didn't normally bring about any exterior changes. Since men all wore the beard, the new Christian didn't become conspicuous by having to grow a beard. Obedient to both the law of nature and the Catholic church, women didn't appear in public with their head uncovered. So a head covering didn't set the women apart. Modesty in dress was practiced by the common people, so that didn't give them away.

Many church-goers today still feel that is the way it ought to be – no visible distinction between the Christian and the world. The important thing, they say, is what is in the heart.

Others see the solution in a rigid, highly visible separation.

Both err. Both have missed the point.

The emphasis shouldn't be placed on non-conformity to the world, but rather on conformity to Jesus Christ and all of His teachings. In other words, the solution isn't

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analyzing what the world does and then feeling we are obligated to do differently. We must do as the Master would do if here.

This is one of the greatest challenges facing God's people today – to base non-conformity on conformity to Christ, and not on man-made rules. (Nor on the premise that non-conformity doesn't require any rules.)

Today we are bombarded with change. We see it in the malls, on the streets, on the machines and vehicles we use, in the papers. The launching of a space shuttle that a century ago would have been listed as science fiction, today merits only two paragraphs on page seven of the daily paper. Reporters no longer show interest in routine organ transplants. After a day at work, people sit down to watch the news and see what has happened world-over that day. Emotionlessly they stare at the flickering screen. Mankind is becoming inoculated against change.

And that is what this article is all about. God's people cannot afford to become inoculated. They must be alert, wide awake. They cannot afford to emotionlessly watch the rapidly changing screen of life. They cannot bury their head in the sand and hope danger will pass.

There are groups which perhaps fifty, seventy-five or a hundred years ago decided to put a freeze on change. A supreme effort is made today to maintain a life style that conforms to the time of the freeze. This is not a solid basis for non-conformity. Indeed, life isn't a journey in which we can arbitrarily disembark at a station of our choosing and let the world pass by.

And far be it from us. Not nearly all change is bad. Where would funds come from for our extensive mission and literature programs if it wasn't for modern technology we use in our fields and shops? How would our missionaries reach distant continents without modern transportation? How would hundreds of millions of tracts be printed without computers and modern printing presses?

God's people cannot afford to disembark and let the world go by. They must continue aboard the train of time. What they must watch carefully is the baggage they carry aboard. Make sure they aren't overweight.

There is danger that by dressing differently from the world, by not going to a lot of the places they go, by not having radio or TV, we convince ourselves we are solid non-conformists.

While all that is good, it certainly doesn't turn us into a true non-conformist. Non-conformity is a daily thing. It's a series of small decisions which, when summed up, create a definite line of demarcation between the Christian and the world. It isn't a set of pre-established rules which, if followed, confirm us as non-conformists.

As a church we must understand that non-conformity is progressive. It constantly takes us into new areas. Using conformity to Jesus Christ and His teachings as the basis for our non-conformity to the world, we will be called upon to make more decisions in one year than the early Christians had to in a lifetime.

The Christian that keeps the small decisions up to date will never be caught

unawares on a big decision. In fact, staying current on small decisions keeps most problems from becoming big.

The computer is a prime example of what we're talking about. It's potential for misuse is directly proportional to the heart of the user. The Christian who is solidly grounded on the Church's doctrine of worldly amusements will not have difficulty in categorically ruling out all computer games. To have a heart understanding of why we as a church don't accept the recorder, musical instruments or go to the movies will make it easy to categorically rule out multimedia setups, which essentially are a combination of just that. The Christian who has developed a keen conscience toward the filth of this world will shun networks like the plague.

With changes bursting around us like popcorn in a popper, God's people must be alert as never before. We speak admiringly of the faith of the Martyr brethren. But if they could have looked through the corridors of time and seen the present day church, surely they would have said, "Those brethren must really have something to be able to stand in such an evil environment."

As we reach the end of time, visible non-conformity will in no way lessen or lose its importance. And yet it will be only the tip of the iceberg. Invisible non-conformity, that which is in the heart, will be the foundation for the visible. And that foundation is conformity to the teachings and spirit of Jesus Christ. ▲

## Paraguay

### **A Few Statistics**

Following are a few statistics on Paraguay taken out of my 1994 Almanaque Abril.

Official name – República del Paraguay.

Capitol – Asunción.

Language – Spanish (official) and Guarani.

Religions – Catholic, 96%; Protestant, 2.1%; Others, 1.9%.

Neighboring countries – Bolivia (N), Brazil (E), Argentina (S & W).

Population – 4.519.000

Principal cities – Asunción, 607,700; Ciudad del Este, 110,600; Concepción, 62,600; Encarnación, 44,100.

Ethnic composition – Mestizo (Spanish & Indian stock), 90.8%; Indian, 3%; German, 1.7%; Others 4.5%.

### **History**

Paraguay's history is somewhat less than glorious. From the beginning the Jesuit priests played a dominant role in the development of the country. Founded in 1537, Asunción grew rapidly and for nearly a century outranked Buenos Aires in importance.

In 1609 Philip III of Spain asked the Jesuits to send a hand-picked delegation of their priests to convert and educate the Indians who were either being enslaved by the Spanish or killed by the Portuguese. Once missions were established, both the Indians and the priests were severely persecuted. Because of this they convinced the Indians to migrate to southeastern Paraguay and establish an agricultural colony. Under the expert leadership of the Jesuit priests, the movement prospered and at its zenith over 100,000 Indians had settled in adjacent colonies. They worshipped in magnificent temples built by their own resources and manpower.

Convinced that the Jesuits were in the process of establishing their own kingdom, Spain expelled the entire order from Latin America. Left to themselves, the Indians reverted to their savage existence. Their advanced civilization and magnificent temples were soon lost to the tropical forest and marauding Spaniards.

On May 14, 1811 Paraguay proclaimed its independence from Spain. There followed a number of decades of absolute rule by a series of dictators, a common plague during that period in many Latin American countries.

Paraguayan history bottomed out from 1865 – 1870, during the War of the Triple Alliance, brought about because of an ambitious dictator. Educated in France and inspired by Napoleon's feats, Francisco Solano López, who became dictator in 1861, whipped up the largest army in Latin America and soon was at war with Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. Not only was López killed, but over half of the one million habitants also perished. Nearly all males between 15 and 70, lost their lives. The result was a virtual breakdown of the family structure. For many years thereafter, a high percentage of the births were illegitimate. Attempts to bring in new colonists resulted in failure.

Between 1870 and 1932, there were 32 changes of government.

In 1932 Paraguay declared war on Bolivia because of a border dispute. This war, known as the Chaco War, was won by Paraguay, which gave their national pride a tremendous boost.

This was followed by a new set of dictators. The last one, Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, reigned from 1954 to 1989, when he fled his country and obtained political asylum in Brazil. Since then free elections have been held and Paraguay at least has a certain semblance of democracy. ▲

## **Paraguay – As Seen From Brazil**

When a Brazilian says, “I went to Paraguay,” it is immediately understood to mean that he went to the border town of Ciudad del Este to go shopping.

As BN has mentioned different times, for years Brazil xenophobically protected its own industry by closing the border to imports. Paraguay, on the other hand, having almost no industry to protect, had no such restrictions. This resulted in a curious situation. Paraguayans had at their disposal the best and latest goods produced in

industrialized nations, but didn't have the cash to buy them. Brazilians had the cash, but not the goods.

In a marriage of convenience, Brazilian cash and Paraguayan imported goods joined hands. The border town of Ciudad del Este has become a Brazilian shopping mall. To lend a certain air of legitimacy to the Brazilian "tourists" who flock this artificial "Miami" in cars, buses and planes, nearby Iguacu Falls is often listed as the destination. O Popular, the Goiânia paper, runs daily ads on bus excursions to Foz do Iguacu. I don't know if these busses even stop at the falls.

These excursions aren't all roses. Every now and then border officials crack down on these tourists. Thousands of dollars of excess baggage are impounded. Worse are the assaltantes – thieves – who don't impound only the excess baggage, but most everything else of value, including cash, watches and jewelry.

To the great majority of the Brazilians, Paraguay is a commercial Mecca and that's about it.

Unfortunately, to a microscopic minority, it's another kind of paradise.

There was a time when – and I'm not positive on this figure – 30% of all vehicles being driven in Paraguay were stolen, mainly from Brazil. Let me hasten to clarify that they didn't do the actual stealing. They were conscious consumers. The practice was so out in the open that by law anyone who could prove that he had had a vehicle in his possession for a year, I believe, could get a legal title.

This is the Paraguay that Brazilians know.

Obviously the real Paraguay is somewhat different. What we do know is that when the Mennonites moved to the Chaco some 50 years ago, it was no paradise. But it was better than Communism. More on that next month. ▲

## A Brazilian Story

by Mário de Moraes

### **A Mother's Love**

A hen and her chicks strayed into an obnoxious neighbor's backyard. We don't know how much damage they did, if any. When Alexandrino, the owner, went to shoo them back to his own backyard, something went wrong. Very likely there was an argument. We don't know. What we do know is that Alexandrino didn't survive whatever it was that took place.

Because of the violent nature of the crime, the media in Itabuna, state of Bahia, laid it on heavy. [For the information of you readers here from Brazil, Itabuna is "Elias Preto's childhood home."] People flocked to the local jail just to get a look at the monster's face. José Calixto spent his days staring at the floor of his cell, ignoring the gazing eyes.

He secured the services of a lawyer – the best legal counsel from that part of the country, Raimundo Lima.

In the first and only visit the lawyer paid Calixto in jail, he immediately saw there was only one possible defense strategy. It wasn't to fight for acquittal, but rather for a reduced sentence. To do this he would have to play on the juror's emotions. On the day of the trial [See BN 45, "A Day in Court], the prosecutor was brief in his presentation, citing the facts and giving as exhibits the weapon used to commit the crime and the blood stained garments. Now it was Raimundo Lima's turn.

With his hair in disarray, as was his habit, the defense lawyer made no effort to mitigate the seriousness of the crime. But as he spoke, little by little he began to play on the juror's emotions. Eloquently he quoted what well-known Brazilian writers had to say about motherhood.

One look at the jury box showed he had an enraptured audience. But it wasn't only the jurors who had fallen under Mr. Lima's spell. A spectator, a woman dressed in black and seated on the front row, sobbed uncontrollably. As the defense lawyer's voice rose, he stabbed his finger at the disconsolate woman in black:

"Gentlemen of the jury, there she is, the mother of this criminal! Within that black dress of mourning is a heart bleeding with sorrow. In the depth of her weeping eyes we see the distress that she feels, knowing she now will be separated from her son – a criminal son, it's true, but nevertheless a son!

"Gentlemen of the jury, go ahead and give this young man the maximum sentence. But rest assured of one thing: Every day that you give this man behind bars will be an additional stab in the bleeding heart of this poor woman! Every day you give her son in prison will be another rose on her tomb."

Even Raimundo Lima was surprised when the jury returned with a verdict. The defendant was sentenced to three years in prison. But because of the time he had already spent in jail, he was eligible for parole.

After the session was adjourned, the prosecutor magnanimously went to the woman dressed in black, the mother of the criminal:

"Congratulations Madam. Your son chose a very good lawyer."

"My son?" asked the woman in surprise. "If you mean that young man over there, he's not my son."

Now it was the prosecutor's turn to be surprised:

"He's not your son?"

"No. For some reason Dr. Raimundo Lima asked me to come here dressed in black and act like I was the criminal's mother." [Remember that in Brazil lawyers are usually referred to as Doctor.]

"Then why were you crying so hard?"

"Because Dr. Lima's beautiful words moved me to tears. I remembered my mother, poor soul, she's been gone for a good many years..."



## Field Trips

### Monte Alegre School

BN – Just a little explanation before we hear what the students have to say. COMIGO is the name of a mammoth coop located in Rio Verde, with branches in different towns in the state of Goiás.

André R. Passos – In 1964 Paulo Roberto Cunha and John Lee Ferguson had the idea of founding a coop. They found 64 men who were interested in the project, but in the end only 34 were willing to become involved. Today Comigo has 1,500 members.

Chester Hibner – Comigo has a lot of different factories on a 300 acre place especially for manufacturing oil and milk products.

Marvin Yoder – We came to school around 7:15. When the bell rang we came in and had roll call, then we went out onto the front porch for a prayer. After the prayer we got onto an old bus.

Chester –It was kind of a rickety old bus that held 60 people with a nice driver. We thought maybe the bus might break down going or coming from town, but it didn't. We had a nice trip.

Julie Hibner – We left school about 7:45. On the way we sang a lot. And finally we were in town and got to Comigo at 8:45. We got out and had to stand there for one hour and five minutes before we 7th and 8th graders got to go in.

Silvana Rosa da Silva – To be able to visit the factory, we had to put on some special clothes that included a hat and rubber boots. We had to walk through a place where there was water so that our boots would be clean when we went in.

Adrienne Hibner – The first group were some children in Miss Isaac's room . . . We laughed at them because they looked funny with long coats that came to their feet and hats that covered their neck. Patricia had such big boots that Tim had to carry her up and down the stairs.

Chester – Only 10 people at a time could go through the factory because there were only 10 uniforms. First we saw where the milk came from . . . Pickups would come with big milk cans and put them on a chain where they tested it. If the milk wasn't good, they'd dump it into a big container where they had bad milk. If it was good, the chain would take the cans of milk to a man who was dumping them into a machine to be taken to the factory.

Gloria Holdeman – Next, we went to see another part about milk and cheese in a building. We had to step in water to wash our boots so they wouldn't be germy. We saw where they packaged the milk and a few other things. Then we went to see the cheese factory.

Sara Rodrigues dos Passos – The people who make the cheese are really nice. They put the milk in a vat.

Julie – The vat held 10,000 liters of milk and it surely looked and was big.

Silvana – They put rennet in the milk to make it set up. After it has set up, they drain off the whey.

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Chester – Then we saw them take the cheese out. Some women were making strands of cheese and braiding them to sell.

Julie – There were some men that were cutting the cheese and putting it in some cloth so it would not go out of shape . . . There was one man who was re-cooking the cheese to make mozzarella cheese. We went to a cooler where all the cheese is left in there for twenty-four hours and then they trade [sic] it to another cooler.

Chester – We entered a big freezer the size of a room where the cheese cured for 24 hours. The cheese was then passed into another freezer we saw which cured for six months. We saw another room where some cheese was grated and packaged.

André – This factory usually makes 1,800 kilos of cheese a day.

Otávio Becker – Then we went into a conference room and had some bread and butter, and to drink some guaraná pop. Next we went and ate at a park. We had sandwiches, chips and coke.

Julie – When we were all back in the bus we left and went back to the auditorium. We watched a film and after it was done the lady talked a little bit and we went to the rest of the places that it showed on the film.

Otávio – We went back and saw a tank that held 1,000,000 liters of water. Then we went to the bean factory.

Marvin – The lady showed us where they clean and shell and crush the beans.

Chester – We visited a place where hot air is made for drying beans. There was a big furnace with pipes leading from it. Workers stacked wood on a little cart on rails that lead to the furnace. They would punch a button and the cart would ride to the furnace. When it got there the furnace door opened and the wood was swallowed. The cart would come back steaming. That was very interesting.

André – When the beans are washed, the water that is drained off is dirty, so it is filtered before being released.

Julie – We looked at three or four ponds, but there are six of them. The ponds are to purify the water that comes out of the factory so that it can run into the river and not kill everything. They raise fish in these ponds to see if the water is clean enough to go into the river. If the fish die, then they know that the water in the pond is not clean enough to go in the river.

Chester – Next we went to the place where they make soap. Not everything was working, so we just saw them wrapping the bars of soap in plastic. Next we went to where they put the soybean oil in cans. That was the most interesting place. Empty oil cans ride along this conveyor belt, turn upside down and right side up again to dump out any junk that fell into there while the cans were empty. They go under this machine that fills them, then back out again. A worker which controls the machines with her arm, stacks lids in a machine which clamps down onto the cans. The cans are now ready to be put into boxes. The cans keep on going on the belt to the place where they are being put into boxes.

Julie – The boxes go around the corner and then they get put on a bunch of more boxes full of oil. There is a very cute green 2.5 meter long tractor that carried them away to another part of the building.



André – Comigo also makes products for cattle raisers. They have a factory that produces feed, mineral salt, and some kinds of medicines. They also have planted one thousand hectares of eucalyptus trees that can be used as firewood for their dryers later on. Today, as I see it, Comigo is very advanced for Brazil.

Otávio – We went into the conference room again and had some lemonade. After that we came back to school, had some refreshments and went home. What an exciting day that was!

BN – Thanks, Monte Alegre students. I'm thinking we need to organize a similar trip for your parents (except that they don't want to ride in that old rattle trap bus). ▲

## Rio Verdinho School

BN – The Rio Verdinho School visited the literature center and the Schmidt fish ponds.

Dustin Schultz – First we started out. [We older ones] rode on the back of Clifford's pickup. We got to the literature center at about 10:00. We went in through the library and straight into Charlie's office. There was a huge desk half way around him.

Yvonne Martin – He had his laptop computer hooked up to his big computer screen. The screen faced us. First of all, he showed us his word processor. He was correcting typing mistakes in the O Mensageiro.

Next he showed us God's Word for Windows, which is a program with the Bible on it. If you can only remember one phrase of a verse, the computer searches the whole Bible and finds the verses with that phrase. After that, he got into his Coral Galleries program. There he had different pictures called graphics. He put a pheasant in the O Mensageiro, just to show us how it is done.

Dustin – When he was done showing us this, he showed us a machine that used two batteries that keeps the computer from forgetting everything when the electricity goes off.

BN – The “machine” Dustin is talking about is a no-break that is hooked to two automotive batteries. Whenever there is a power interruption, the no-break kicks in, converting 24 volt d.c. to 110 volt a.c., giving up to four hours of operating time.

Yvonne – Next we went to [the Gospel Tract office, where Stephen Kramer is superintendent]. He showed us their files on their computer. They have the names, addresses, number of tracts sent, and how many letters received of each person that writes them. Before they copied all their files on paper. That must have been some kind of a big job.

Dustin – Stephen showed us two mirrors that he had lined up so that you could see who was coming in. He told us about the fax and showed us the tract room. He showed us how it works to mail the tracts. He then read a letter from Japan [written in Portuguese] that he had just received.

Yvonne – After that we went to Faith Becker's “domain” [– the publication room].

She showed us how she copies the Brazil News [for distribution in Brazil]. Then she folded some issues and stapled them for us to see. She said that the folder and stapler worked on rice and beans. We all got little books there with spirals and plastic covers.

Dustin – Finally we said good bye and went to the dam. Once at the dam we had a delicious churrasco [barbecue]. I myself drank 4 and a half glasses of pop.

Yvonne – We had potato salad, baked beans, soda, grilled pork, beef, sausage and fish. I've never eaten more scrumptious meat! After that Dennis Kramer gave the little kidders boat rides.

Dustin – From there we went straight to Stacy's fish ponds. In the first pond there were about three or four thousand catfish. In the second there was about 500 pacú and 500 carp. In the third pond there was about two thousand tambaqui. We fed the fish and got them to come about three yards from the bank.

Yvonne – Then we went back to the dam, where we ate watermelon. My slice didn't have one seed. Was it ever fun! On the way home it started to rain, but that only added to the fun. When we got to school we all had ice-cream. We could have all we wanted. It was the most fun we had all year! ▲

## Life on the Colony

### **Will We Need to Change Course?**

The Rio Verde area has been – and is – a farmer's paradise. But will it continue to be?

Soybean raisers are alarmed by a fungus that is damaging crops in some areas. Traces of the fungus – stem canker – have been found here on the Colony. With harvest beginning, local farmers will soon know if there has been any actual damage. As of now the recommendations given to try and avoid the problem are crop rotation and the planting of more fungus resistant varieties.

As the Brazilians would say, soybeans have been a real mãe (mother) to the Colony. Never has she let the farmers down. But mothers sometimes get tired. Or sick. Then what?

That is a nagging question that farmers are asking themselves. True, they plant corn. But for corn to do well, it should be rotated with soybeans. Rice is a good crop, but very demanding when it comes to rain. So what happens if soybeans become impractical?

Some time ago BN mentioned the possibility of a large poultry project moving into the area. This possibility still exists. Should it become a reality, it will open new doors not only on the Colony, but in the entire municipality. But Sadia may decide on Goiatuba or some other location. So it's nothing we can bank on yet.

We have hoped that some small industry would start up that would give people a chance to work out for a decent wage, but no one seems to be interested.

Fish Ponds –  
An Option?

For a number of years different ones on the Colony have been dabbling with fish ponds. So far they have harvested more experience than fish. That's no disgrace. It takes a lot of experience to learn to raise fish in a new area.

An exception to this "dabbling" would be Earl Schmidt and his boys. They have been investing considerable time, effort and money for several years. Today, with two acres of ponds, their experience is beginning to pay off and put fish on the market.

Sunday evening after we got home from church, Stacy Schmidt called and invited us to watch them seine that pond the following day at 1:30 p.m. I told him we would be there.

My first favorable impression was to find that to them 1:30 means 1:30. In any enterprise, punctuality is the best and cheapest investment. For the farmer, it's the cheapest fertilizer on the market. More often than we realize, punctuality is the watershed between success and failure.

Stacy explained that they have been working mainly with four different kinds of fish: tambaqui, pacú, channel cat and carp. Unfortunately, I know of no N American equivalent for the first two. What I do know is that the tambaqui that Stacy gave us, roasted on the coals, made a mighty good supper.

One of the big hurdles to raising fish in Brazil is our dry season (winter), when temperatures occasionally hit freezing. The fish develop a fungus. Stacy believes that with the proper fungicides, this problem can be overcome.

Interestingly, in a Catholic country, the biggest demand for fish is during lent, which comes before our winter. Looked at fatalistically, selling off as many fish as possible during lent leaves less to die in the cold weather, if worst comes to worst.

Is there money in fish? Yes. At two US dollars a pound, the margin of profit is as good or better than in N America.

What about the market? Can the fish be sold locally? To answer that question we must go back 25 years to when we moved to Brazil. Back then people ate a lot of pork and beef. Chicken consumption was limited to the frango caipira (roughly: hillbilly fryer) – a cross between domesticated species and jungle fowl. Raised loose they grow slowly, taking approximately six months to reach fryer stage. Accustomed to the frango caipira, a true delicacy, terrible stories began circulating when the first commercially raised fryers began to be sold in the supermarkets. The meat was colorless, they said, tasteless, and simply disintegrated while being prepared.

Today very little pork is consumed. Instead people toss commercially raised fryers in their shopping carts. The meat is no longer colorless and tasteless and it doesn't disintegrate when being prepared. People love it. Only the rich can afford an occasional frango caipira.

What does this tell us? It tells us that people do change their eating habits. Brazilians love fish. So if fish can be placed on the market at a reasonable price, people will buy them.

It may take some ingenuity to get the ball rolling. A large supermarket in Goiânia

has the fish brought in live and placed in a large tank when the customer can point out the one he wants to buy. The fish is netted, cleaned, weighed and handed to the customer. Locally, a clean, efficient, strategically located shop should do a good business. The secret will be price. If the price is right, the fish will sell. Small shops could be set up in neighboring towns. Contracts could be made with supermarkets in Goiânia . . . .

With farming not looking as promising as it used to, will fish ponds bail us out if worst comes to worst? ▲

## Brazilian Wild Life

(Or: Wild Brazilian Life)

### Paulo and the Snake

Some men were mowing the Monte Alegre church grounds the other day. Carman Loewen ventured out into some taller grass with his bush hog and hit something. It turned out to be a rattler.

A really big rattler. He took it to the literature center so that we could see it.

While this was going on, Paulo David was in a meeting.

Stephen and I went out to look at the snake. Since it wasn't mangled very badly, we got the idea it would be interesting to see what it would do to Paulo's personality if we put it up next to the door of his VW bug.

The problem wasn't getting the snake to look life-like. It was getting Paulo's two little children to not let him in on our little project when he got out of his meeting.

Back inside, we took up our stations in front of



a window in the tract storage room from which we had a direct view of the scene of action. This normally drab, somewhat gloomy room, underwent a transformation as the entire literature center staff, plus several board members, settled down to wait, some in the aisle, some perched on top of bundles of tracts.

Paulo by now was out of the meeting and outside the building. We imagined he was headed toward his car. Suddenly someone announced in a loud whisper, “He came back in!”

In a matter of a second, more or less, the tract storage room was again a solitary place. Everyone beat it out into the hall and tried to look normal.

This time we walked out with Paulo as he headed toward his car. For a minute we thought we had lost it. His children came up to him, all anxious to tell him the big news. But his good wife, also anxious to see how things would turn out, managed to draw the children to one side as we kept walking to the car with Paulo.

As we reached the car, I asked, “Paulo, how is your car doing?”

Almost on top of the snake, he answered, “Charles, it’s doing just fi... COOOOOBRA!” (SNAAAAAAKE!”)

What happened next really needs no explanation. His little sketch tells it all. True to what you see, he went up and his feet began to churn the air. Returning to the earth, he was off like a streak, only stopping when a good distance from the car. Looking back and seeing everyone doubled over, he realized he had walked into a trap. And that there was no real danger. This I must say for Paulo David: He is a good sport. ▲

## African Bees

It isn’t unusual to read articles in English publications about the deadly African bees that somehow got loose here in Brazil and are now making their way into Central America.

I can’t imagine why no one from N America has ever asked how we manage to survive with these vicious little creatures.

To begin with, their sting is no more poisonous than that of any other honey bee. What makes them dangerous is that they are very clannish. If one feels threatened or becomes alarmed, it exudes a particular scent that gets the whole swarm up in arms. The unprotected victim can be stung hundreds of times in a matter of seconds. The amount of venom injected in such an attack can easily prove fatal.

The O Popular recently told of an automobile accident that in itself wasn’t very serious. However, the commotion aroused a swarm of African bees that zeroed in on one of the victims. Unfortunately, she was already ill, being transferred from one hospital to another. In her weakened condition, she didn’t survive.

Another case I vaguely remember is of three fishermen out in a little boat. Two of them jumped into the water and occasionally came up for gulps of air, thus saving their lives. The other one, unable to swim, chose to swat it out in the boat. And lost his life.

Just how much of a menace are African bees to us here? What are the chances of being fatally stung? In the normal routine of life, almost zero. For fishermen and people who spend a lot of time in the woods, the chances increase slightly. Even so, it's very rare. So, N Americans, don't call off your trip to Brazil on account of the African bees.

In case you ever run into a swarm of African bees, the first rule is: Stay Calm. If you stay calm and don't agitate the bees, you may get off lucky. ▲

## Education

### First Aid

No one should ever graduate from our schools without first aid training. Our curriculum should include first aid as a subject that is administered from grade one through grade eight.

We're not talking about a traditional first aid course that consists of 10 classes and then is over with. This would be a monthly one-hour class that would teach first aid logic. In eight years of school, a student would accumulate approximately 70 hours of first aid instruction.

What is first aid logic? All too often first aid courses consist of problems and solutions. In math class it works to teach that  $2+2=4$  and that  $8+8=16$ . But on an accident scene formulas don't work. Nothing is that cut and dried. The student must learn that each accident is different and that none are pleasant. To place a tourniquet on a mock (snickering) victim lying on the classroom floor does little to prepare one for the shock of seeing someone who is actually bleeding to death (no snickering).

The first step in teaching first aid is to prepare the student psychologically for different emergencies that may be faced. Put into a different perspective, the student must be taught to administer psychological first aid to himself when arriving on an accident scene, in order to be able to aid others. Until a first aider has gathered his wits, not only is he worthless, but possibly dangerous.

(Folks, I ran out of space, more on this next month.) ▲

### This & That

Lee Koepl from Oregon was out for a few days to keep up his permanent visa, which must be renewed every two years

Oops. In the list of Colony visitors last month, we omitted Donald Sieler from Mississippi. I understand that he is planning on coming back to be reunited with his heart which remained in tropical Brazil. Seja bem-vindo.

Just a little addition to the article on Paraguay. The last VEJA magazine says that 800 (yep, eight hundred) busses loaded with Brazilians cross the border into Paraguay

every day. They calculate that this contraband is costing Brazil four billion dollars a year. According to VEJA, these “Iguaçu Falls tourists” are in for some real surprises right directly.

I had several people inform me that one doesn't have to be in his 70s or 80s to have vivid memories of WW II. After hearing what they have to say, I must agree.

Dennis Unruh from Missouri and Jake Boese from Alberta came to hold revival meetings at the Rio Verdinho Congregation. Jake's wife, Viola, came along, together with their sister-in-law, Esther Boese. They were able to squeeze the meetings in between corn and soybean harvest.

After finishing the meetings at the Rio Verdinho Congregation, Dennis Unruh went to the Pirenópolis mission for three days of evangelistic meetings. After that he held several meetings in the Rio Verde Congregation. Dennis has been here enough times to where we hardly consider him a visitor anymore. May he come many more times. And bring his wife along.

Kindergarten classes began in the Monte Alegre School on March 21. Corinne Isaac is teaching the English class and Luciene Rosa the Portuguese class. Karla Holdeman is helping Corinne with her first and second grade students.

At Rio Verdinho School, kindergarten began on April 3. Lynnette Penner is the teacher.

Do you good readers remember the little episode when the editor of BN anointed the belt of his wife's washing machine with Rhodox, an insecticide intended to kill roaches? Another use has been discovered for this amazing product. When Sylvia B went to see the doctor recently, the lady graciously offered to prescribe a salve to improve her teenagish complexion. She declined the offer by saying, “Oh, it isn't necessary. I already bought something for this problem. It's called . . . let me see . . . it's called . . . Rhodox!” Folks, what a potion, that will kill roaches, fix automatic washers and enhance a teenager's complexion. End of chapter 3.

The Glenn Hibner family (except for daughter Julie, who is in school) is in Mato Grosso to harvest their soybeans, and I believe the Kramer's. They hauled their combine on a truck. However, due to bad roads, they plan on roading the combine for the last hundred miles or so. They want to be back for soybean harvest here.

On March 24 different ones came to the literature center and planted some lawn grass. With all the rains, it has come up real well.

Troy & Sonya Schmidt and son Fielding, from Lone Tree, are in Brazil. Even they don't know how long they will be staying. Maybe a year. Maybe the rest of their life. However long it happens to be, we're glad to have them here. Troy can bring me up to date on the happenings in my old stomping grounds.

Troy's folks, Howard & Judy Schmidt and his uncle and aunt, Harvey & Madeline Jantz came along for a short visit. On their way out they stopped at Pirenópolis to pay Staven & Adeline Schmidt a visit.

Dan & Clara Coblentz are back from the US. They returned there for a month to pick up their permanent visas at the Brazilian Consulate.

Bert & Ada Coblentz and Dan & Clara Coblentz spent the March 26 weekend at the

## Brazil <sup>16</sup> News

Mirassol, São Paulo mission, where Dan & Clara's son William and his wife and family are stationed.

Caleb & Joanne Holdeman are visiting the mission in northeast Brazil. Their children are staying with Lester & Sharon Holdeman.

I can't believe it. In This & That last month I wrote, "In order that none of the parents or grandparents of numbers One, Two and Three accuse me of being impartial in the nice little things I customarily say about babies . . ." No one sat down beside me in church to airily ask if maybe I meant "partial" instead of "impartial." No one called me after church. Wake up people. Don't pass up an opportunity like that.

Bruce, the little boy Bradley & Joleen Koehn from Western Kansas adopted and took home last December, called us the other night. I talked to him in Portuguese and he refused to say a word. When I switched to English, he came on the air – with some mighty fine sounding English.

Paula Schultz has transferred from the Goiânia mission to Mirassol, São Paulo, where she is teaching the missionary's children.

Tony & Maria Soares had a baby on April 5. They called it Edilaine, but it should have been Gasper. Their next youngest child is about 14, and you should have heard the gasps when the news hit the fan, "Have you hearrrrrd? Tony's Maria is going to have a baaaaby!"