

# Brazil News

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Editorial

## **Communism—A postmortem**

The old saying that it's possible to fool all of the people part of the time, and part of the people all of the time, certainly doesn't include God. He is able to fool all of the people all of the time, if He so desires.

President Ronald Reagan's referral to the Soviet Union as the "evil empire" was actually more of an evaluation of the system – communism – than the country. In this succinct statement was embodied a profound truth. Evil because communism was built on the foundation of atheism, with a total disregard for human life and the nature of man. Empire because at its zenith, communism had approximately half of the inhabitants of the earth under its ungodly influence.

Now, as we sift through the ashes of communism, we come up with some interesting relics.

What was communism? Basically it was a concentrated effort by the evil one to rule all the literal kingdoms of the world. Interestingly, to make his plan plausible, he borrowed the biblical concept that all men are equal spiritually and applied it naturally. Under communism, its propagators promised, there would be neither rich nor poor. All would be equal. Cultural differences would vanish.

There was really a lot of truth in this promise. At least to a point. After eliminating both the rich and the intelligentsia, the masses were made up of but one class – the poor. Everyone was equally poor.

The evils of communism are well known and need not be reiterated here. Rather, we want to think in terms of how communism changed the course of history. Or more specifically, what might have happened had communism not existed.

Power without hierarchy is anarchy. This is true in government, in the military, in business, in the home and in the church. All power established by God is hierarchical.

This can be seen even in informal groups, as in the case of survivors in a plane

crash. Within a very short time an individual, or individuals, assume leadership roles. Others become subordinate to these impromptu leaders.

This is also true among nations. There is always a nation that takes a leadership role. All other nations, to a greater or lesser degree, become subordinate to the top nation. Obviously this position is constantly disputed – and frequently changes.

Through the centuries the requisites to being a world power were: a) military might, b) knowledge, and c) wealth – in that order. Under this setup barbaric nations were able, by sheer numbers and physical strength, to overcome superior peoples.

The 20th century has progressively changed the order of the requisites for world leadership, which today are: a) knowledge, b) wealth, c) military might.

In all major wars fought in the 20th century, the US has played a decisive role. It should be noted that these wars have been fought on foreign soil and that the US has come on the scene as the savior of democracy. Without this intervention, the world order would most certainly be entirely different than it is today.

The world leadership role (or “the role of world policeman” as detractors say) exercised by the US is scriptural. I have no doubt what the US has and is occupying an extremely important place in God’s overall plan.

The Air Force motto that “The price of peace is eternal vigilance” aptly describes what it takes to retain a position of world leadership. During this last century there have been two serious attempts by small, but powerful countries to upset this order. The first was WW I, by Germany. The second was WW II by both Germany and Japan, on different fronts.

In both cases the tremendous advances made by these belligerent nations was due to tactical, not numerical superiority. In other words, superior knowledge produced a superior fighting force – and not vice-versa. Had either Germany or Japan, with their superior knowledge, been backed by numerical superiority, only God knows where we would be today.

In retrospect, this brings us face to face with a frightening possibility. What would have happened if either the Soviet Union or China had decided to try what Germany and Japan tried?

Both countries had in their favor enormous land masses, which represent natural resources. Ethnically both were composed of intelligent, courageous peoples. Especially China has a fabulous numerical superiority. In other words, both were natural potential enemies of the US.

This brings us to communism.

When the world began to go communist, Christians became alarmed – and rightfully so. Not only Christians, but the strongholds of democracy over the face of the earth took note.

To make matters worse, exactly the most serious contenders for the top world position – the USSR and China – fell for this new theory of equality.

We know the story. The terrible cultural and ideological purges, the constant anti-democracy propaganda, the cold war, the spy networks, and especially in the case of the

USSR, the formidable build-up of nuclear weapons zeroed in on both European and N American targets.

An evil empire. Why did God permit Satan to establish this evil empire? Satan is powerful, but God is all-powerful (and there is an eternity of a difference between the two). He was able to see that which the evil one couldn't see. For lack of a better verb, we will say that God fooled even Satan when he permitted him to dominate approximately half of the population of the earth through communism.

Why were we fooled? Why was Satan fooled? Let's go back to the order of the requisites to be a 20th century world power: a) knowledge, b) wealth, c) military might. What did communism do? The first and fatal step was to destroy knowledge. Secondly, by its flawed concept that all men can produce equally and be recompensed with the same wage, both countries were reduced to abject poverty. These two factors made communism self-destructive. This renders the military practically useless, as wars are no longer fought by brute force (and to begin a nuclear war would have been suicidal). The old saying that all it would take for China to dominate the world was to give each of their citizens a broom stick and let them swing their way around the globe no longer holds true.

I considered calling this article A Eulogy to Communism, but fearing such hyperbole might offend sensitive natures, a more mundane title was chosen. But stop and think. Where would the world be today if communism hadn't mutilated the two greatest nations on earth?

You ask, but what would be wrong with the US handing the reins over to some other power? A lot. The US was conceived as a Christian nation. This wasn't by chance. God had a definite role for it to play in these last times. Neither Russia nor China were suited to be the host and defender of Christianity. Had communism not come along, it is extremely unlikely the US would continue to be the leader of nations.

The other two very serious contenders to be world powers were Germany and Japan. Had Germany not been fragmented as an aftermath of the war and part of it handed over to communism, it's hard to know where it would be today. The cursed Berlin wall may have been the salvation of democracy. So thorough was the defeat of Japan that the only thing left for them to do was go to work. That is exactly what they did. And look where they are today.

And now?

Now that communism is dead, we can expect some radical changes. (Is communism dead even in China? Yes. It's just that they haven't gotten around to have the funeral yet.) The continuance of present leadership, or the emergence of a new leader, will be determined to a great extent by the formula already mentioned: knowledge, wealth, military might.

This requires a bit of an explanation.

Knowledge is more than knowing how to build a nuclear reactor or successfully transplanting organs. As used here, knowledge is the ability to think clearly and objectively and understand that academic achievement and hard work go hand in hand

– the Japanese know this – instead of believing that a diploma is a free pass to a life of ease.

Wealth, on a national level doesn't refer to an affluent standard of living as much as to high production in both factory and farm and a vigorous international trade. This kind of wealth is impossible without knowledge.

Military might is more than stealth bombers that can sneak in, destroy, and sneak back out. It is also being able to do this and not be despised by other nations. In other words, for a school master to discipline an unruly student, he must have the respect of the school.

With communism out of the way, we certainly will be tempted to think this world is a safer place to live, that peace will now be easier.

Don't fool yourself. ▲

## Colonization

### **Vinagre**

Vinagre is vinegar. That isn't all it is. It's also a little town in Mato Grosso with less than a thousand inhabitants, approximately four miles from where the Leo Dirks family now lives.

Sunday, May 30, we had a farewell in church for the Dirks family. May 31 they loaded their most essential belongings on four pickups and on June 1, 1993, at 5:30 a.m., the caravan left for their new home. Beside their own pickup, Carman & Celma Loewen, Bill & Gracie Miller, and Jair & Connie da Costa took theirs. At 7:00 p.m. that same evening they arrived. The trucks, which didn't show up to load the implements, went several days late.

This is the first move made from the Colony to another part of Brazil for colonization purposes – except for the brief move to southern Brazil by two families shortly after the Colony was begun.

Mim says the family has resolved to keep a diary. Obviously, I feel that Brazil News has a total right to portions of that diary. I hope Mim feels the same about things, because if she doesn't, about all I'll be able to write is: "They continue in vinagre." ▲

### **Baumgart**

The deal with Baumgart is still in the works. It's hard to know for sure what he is doing. Sometimes it appears he is playing a game. He is extremely erratic in his negotiations. Knowing him and how far he has gotten in life, I can't help but believe this is simply his way of dealing.

The outcome of this will have a definite influence on the Mato Grosso move. So far as moving to Sorriso, everything is on hold right now. ▲

## A Brazilian Story

### The Scoop

[Mário de Moraes tells this story. “Scoop” in this case is a journalistic term used by reporters to indicate a lead on an exclusive story that makes headlines.]

There are spies even in journalism. Some of them, schoolboy style, try to see what their fellow reporters are writing, and then quickly write it up as though it was their scoop. Then there are reporters from other journalistic establishments who pay a courtesy visit, but as they circulate, chatting, they continually cast surreptitious glances at the work that is being done, hoping to come up with something hot.

Once when I was on the O Cruzeiro [a magazine similar to Life] staff, I caught one of these fellows with the goods. I was working on a cover story. When the competition’s magazine hit the newsstands, it had the same cover story. This happened the second and then the third time. I knew something wasn’t right. Then one day I saw a reporter, a “good friend,” who used to work for us and still came and went at will, boldly stealing a proof of our magazine that would soon hit the press. We pinned him down and he finally confessed that on occasion he did some spying for our competitor.

Some time later Jacó, his name, moved to the State of Bahia and that is where he hit the wall. I found out about this through a friend.

At that time there were two principal newspapers in Salvador [the capitol of Bahia]. The competition between them was fierce. Number two declared a no-holds-barred war on number one. Jacó ended up getting a job at number one, where he worked as a spy for number two, handing over all their hot information.

For a while things worked like a clock. Jacó would amble around the desks where the reporters were writing up their stories, looking over their shoulders. He was trying to learn all he could about the profession, or so he said. That was how he got his “scoops” from veteran reporters and passed them on to the competition.

Number one was baffled. Was it pure coincidence? The thing really caught fire when a top secret scoop, that was being saved for the Sunday edition, made headlines in newspaper number two before their own hit the newsstand.

“Someone in here is a traitor,” was the conclusion of one of the editors.

“What do you mean?” the editor-in-chief wanted to know. “I don’t know of anyone who might do such a thing.”

“That’s what I thought too,” said the editor, “but I don’t think so anymore.”

“Did you see something unusual?”

“I believe so. I saw Jacó coming out of our competitor’s shop. Does that mean anything to you?”

“Of course it does! So then you think that maybe...”

“That’s right.”

Immediately they began setting a trap. And what a trap! The next day Jacó was seen

circulating between the desks – as was his custom when not out on the street looking for news – picking up leads for the competition. It was when he got to Alencar’s desk that he ran across a scoop that made his mouth water. As number one’s top reporter, Alencar had once again proved his competence in the journalistic field. Still in his typewriter was the hot news.

Jacó glanced around to make sure everyone was absorbed in his work and wouldn’t notice what he was doing. Alencar happened to be out of the room at that exact moment. Reading rapidly, Jacó turned the knob on the end of the carriage so as to be able to read the entire article. What he saw made shivers go up and down his spine. There it was! A famous congressman from Bahia had just suffered a severe heart attack!

After getting all the information, Jacó left almost running, oblivious to what others might think of his behavior. He had to get to the competition before their paper hit the press.

“Are you positive, Jacó? Are you sure you’re not mistaken?”

“I’m absolutely positive! It was in Alencar’s typewriter. Now I understand why he was so mysterious all day long. He must have known the man was in bad shape. I even heard when he called the hospital. Apparently he has someone in the hospital that hands this information over to him.”

“Don’t you think it would be better to check this out, Jacó?” one of the staff wanted to know.

“It won’t do any good. Since they still aren’t officially announcing his death, they will deny everything. And one more thing, we all know that Alencar is a top reporter.”

“In that case,” exclaimed the editor of number two, “we have ourselves some real headlines for tomorrow morning!”

Number two’s newspaper hit the stand the following morning with enormous headlines telling of their beloved congressman’s heart attack.

When number one’s paper hit the stands some hours later, the same congressman made headlines. A large photo showed him out on his ranch, together with his family. Following was an interview with Alencar, in which he gave his opinions on the local political situation.

It’s easy to imagine what happened next. Jacó lost his reporter’s license in the state of Bahia. The editor of newspaper number two was fired. And number one enjoyed the whole incident for a long, long time. ▲

## Politics

### **A New Minister**

In Brazil a president is judged almost exclusively by how he handles inflation. That’s unfortunate. As I have mentioned before, both Collor and Itamar have done Brazil a lot of good. But unless inflation can be brought down, they will get no credit for anything.

On second thought, maybe that's good. The truth of the matter is that unless Brazil can be rid of this terrible plague, few people will benefit from the advances made by these two presidents.

Since most presidents aren't economists, their role in combating inflation is limited to choosing a good Minister of Finances and then backing up his decisions. Both Collor and Itamar made extremely poor choices. As a result, we can expect a new minister every three or four months.

Now President Itamar has chosen a highly respected politician, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, to be his new Minister of Finances. It is felt this is the president's last cartridge. If Cardoso fails, Itamar's only way out will possibly be to resign from the presidency. If, on the other hand, the new minister is able to get a grip on inflation, Itamar will be a national hero.

Not only that. If Cardoso is victorious, he stands a good chance of being our next president. If he fails, Lula, the socialist, has a 90% chance of being the next president. In a recent visit to the Northeast, he began showing his true colors. The press coverage was extremely negative.

Remember Brazil in your prayers. There is a lot at stake. ▲

## Parrots

### Chico

Mary Schultz tells us about Chico, – pronounced **she**-co – their parrot.

One of the songs that Chico liked to sing was, *Sou um Passarinho de Jesus* [I Am Jesus' Little Bird]. Sometimes, as we approached his cage, instead of saying, "Open the door, please," he would sing, "Open the door for me..." from the song "Who At My Door Is Standing?" He knew exactly when it was appropriate to sing this song.

Sometimes Chico would mix up the words from different songs and sing them to a totally different tune. For example, he would sing, "Open the door for...sinners," to the tune of "Read Your Bible."

He has a master at imitating our son Sergei when he was little. He would cry so much like him that I didn't know if it was Chico or Sergei. He did the same thing for Weldon, but being older, he failed to see the humor of the mimicry.

Chico was able to reproduce the sounds of a bunch of children playing together. When Daniel Kramer was putting the brick facer on our house, we all left one afternoon. Imagine how perplexed he felt when he heard the children playing nearby. He decided to check it out. All he found was Chico putting on his own little show.

He had a big time calling our dog. Then he would yelp just like dogs do when suddenly frightened. Another specialty of his was imitating two dogs fighting.

When we got hungry, he would holler for our daughter Wanda. Sometimes when we would feed him, he would say, “Thank you.”

We taught him to not peck us by thumping his beak. Sometimes he would come straight at us and act like he was going to peck us good and proper. But at the last moment he would back off and say, “No, no, no, Chico!”

At mealtimes we would call the hired man, “Moacir, vamos comer.” Real early one morning Moacir heard us call him. He jumped out of bed and rushed to the house. Everything was quiet – except, of course, for Chico.

Once our neighbor, Enos Miller came to get a piece of equipment. We weren’t at home, but knowing it was OK, he loaded the implement. Later he told us that he did feel a little like a thief when Chico kept yelling at him, “Read your Bible!”

When the aunts were here for a visit from the US, aunt Dorothy liked to whistle. Her whistle was a bit quivery. A month or so after they had left, I heard that same quivery whistle. You guessed it. There was Chico bringing back memories of aunt Dorothy.

Cris Alves, who now lives in Moundridge, used to live with us. She had allergy problems and did a lot of sneezing. If you think it’s bad when Cris sneezes, you ought to have heard Chico when he imitated her.

When it was about to rain, Chico was at his loudest. Cecil Unruh and his wife spent the night at our place. The next morning Stanley asked Cecil to have devotions. You can imagine his bewilderment when a bunch of children began making noise outside of the house, talking, laughing and singing. It appeared that all of our children were quietly seated, listening to what he had to say. That Chico!

Similar to some children, when we wanted Chico to talk, he wouldn’t. And when he was supposed to keep quiet, he would really pour it on. This is what happened when Verle and Vesta Peters were here for breakfast one morning. He refused to say anything – until Verle began with devotions! I felt sorry for Verle, it appeared that he had a hard time concentrating on what he had to say.

When people came on the yard, he would invite them in. Even if we weren’t at home. When we would get ready to leave, he would tell us, “Bye now.”

For a while something was the matter with our car starter and in the morning it would go, ua, ua, ua, ua. Stan got it fixed, but a few mornings later the starter gave out again: ua, ua, ua, ua. Chico.

Quite often in the morning when I would tell Chico, “Good morning, Chico,” he would answer, “Good morning.” ▲

## **Uma Longa História (3)**

**By Jorge José da Silva**

It was evident that I would be able to take only what was in that bedroom. But even so, I was able to take a lot of valuables. They were small objects, but worth a lot. Before I made my escape, someone in the other part of the house let out a terrified yell. Then I heard a gun go off.



I made a dash for the hole I had made in the window. In my haste I cut my chin. I dropped the things I had stolen on the ground outside of the house. When I slid down the outside of the wall in front of the house, my trousers ripped from top to bottom. It looked like I was wearing a dress. Even so, I managed to get out of the neighborhood in just half a shake. That shot really shook me up. And worse, with my clothes all ripped up, if the police showed up and saw me, I would have to do some tall talking.

I decided that my only solution would be to break into another house and steal a good pair of trousers. That's what I did. It was a house I had targeted out during the day. Here everything was easy and I had no problems. I broke into another house and then went back to the first house and picked up the things I had dropped on the ground.

Then I went to the bus station and bought a ticket to get out of town. Through this all, I once again decided, "I WILL NEVER AGAIN STEAL!"

I went back to the woman with whom I had been living and began to work – to work hard. I didn't make much, but I was happy now that I was living honestly again. But the woman I was living with wasn't happy.

I discovered that there is no such thing as a perfect crime. Sooner or later one must face his past. Maybe one is picked up by the police, or worse, simply eliminated. Even though I was going through a lot, I didn't waver on my decision not to steal anymore. And to tell the truth, I was never again directly involved in a robbery.

My life became monotonous. We had another child. I wasn't able to support my little family. And worse, I still craved drugs. But what I made on the job wasn't enough to even buy groceries, much less buy drugs. So I got hung up on pinga [home brew]. I would get so drunk that I would end up sprawled out on the sidewalk.

I finally told the woman I was living with that I couldn't do without drugs. So we separated. She took the two children with her. On drugs again, I began wandering from place to place. Now that I didn't steal anymore, I consumed less drugs than before. I constantly switched jobs, always trying to make more money for purchasing my drugs. What a sad life!

I would buy drugs rather than food. Then on a high, it looked simple to earn money to buy food. But drugs were always in first place.

It was for this reason that I ended up in a gold mining camp. What I wanted was enough money to stay on drugs. I found myself in extremely difficult situations, working as a miner. I was able to come up with a lot of gold, but I spent it all on drugs.

Then I began to lose my health. I almost died of malaria. Time and time again, I would be down with malaria, but even so I kept right on taking all the drugs I could.

During that time even my thinking became warped. When I wasn't on drugs and my head was clear, I thought everything was lifeless and sad. I felt I was a dull person. But when I was on a high, then everything changed, everything became beautiful and I felt like working. This is why I was a good miner. I was courageous and worked like a slave, almost day and night, day after day.

[At this point I am going to switch over to O Mensageiro number 115 from March 11 of 89, where Jorge tells his conversion experience. It is more complete than what he put into this article. He begins here by saying he was a diver. This was his job in the mining camps. He would work with a powerful suction hose at the bottom of the river – an extremely dangerous job, as he has explained to me in private conversations.]

At this time I was a diver. I learned this profession on the Cripurizão River, in the state of Pará. It was a place that we had to fly in and out of. Later I got a job on the Madeira River in Porto Velho, Rondônia. I made this change because that way I would be closer to the drug center.

In my profession, I lost all fear of the dangers I had to face. If there was gold, I dived, no matter what. That was the only way I could keep myself in drugs.

But things weren't going well with me. The drugs were destroying my health and this was bad. A diver must be in excellent health. I became desperate.

I would pray to God and ask Him to help me, but in the middle of the prayer I would suddenly think, "Why pray? I can't get off of drugs anyway." To tell the truth, I had become willing to go to hell, only I didn't believe that God would leave me in a place like that during all eternity. I thought that after "doing" twenty years or so, I would get out of there. [The way Jorge says it makes it plain he looked at hell sort of like a jail sentence for bad behavior.] After that I would be able to go to heaven.

The evil forces demanded more and more of me. It was like they were saying, "I want more! I want more! I want more...!" I didn't know what to do anymore. Across the river from where I got my gold was Bolivia (from where my drugs were coming). I began to think, "I have to get as far away from this as possible. Maybe that way I can manage to quit these drugs." I decided to give it a try.

I was young at that time. My long hair always got the police's attention. So I cut my hair real short and began growing a beard. That's how I looked when I returned to Goiás (but I did have a good supply of drugs with me).

Everything comes to an end in this life. I began to run out of money. I ran out of drugs. I ran out of everything! I went through some terrible times when I couldn't buy drugs anymore. Without money a person can't buy a solitary thing.

My mother is a Christian from another church. My brother is a member of the Church of God in Christ. Both of them were worried about how things were going with me. They always tried to show me the right way. This always left me in a dither. I would listen to what they said, but down deep I wanted to return to the mining camps. And that is where the problem was. I was so broke I couldn't even buy a ticket to go back to my old life.

I asked my mother and my brother to loan me some money. My brother answered me, "In the name of Jesus, if I am able to make myself heard, you will never return to that infernal mining camp."

Today I'm happy for the wisdom that my brother showed. When he said what he did in the name of Jesus, I respected his words. After this he found me work on the

American Colony near Rio Verde. It was while I was working for Earl Schmidt that the church in town had a short series of revival meetings.

To tell the truth, in the beginning I went to the meetings just to please the Americans. It was four evenings of preaching services. On the third evening they had an invitation. My heart was beating fast, but I hardened my heart. The sermon the fourth evening was about how we need to accept Jesus with our whole heart. The preacher said that anyone who wants to accept Jesus with 99.9% of his heart should not stand during the invitation. It was for those who wanted to accept him with one hundred percent of their heart.

I saw others stand to their feet, but I was unable. My heart was beating so fast that it seemed it was going to jump out. My hands were wet with sweat. My neck felt all cold. I couldn't stand to be in that church anymore. As soon as the meeting was over, I left through a side door, almost running.

I felt that I was the most miserable of all human beings. Why didn't I accept Jesus? Was I really going to spend eternity in hell, like the preacher said? I was desperate. I hated myself. As I walked down the street, I kicked cans or anything else that was in my way. I thought, "That's just how it is. Now I'm going to go to hell because I didn't accept Jesus as my "Savior."

When I got home I said to my mother, "There is no way out!" I was so discouraged that I said, "What in the world did I want in that church. They have no solution for my problem. Either I belong to God or to the devil. I don't know why I ever went to work for the Americans."

The following day I didn't know what to do. Should I go back to my job on the Colony or should I stay in town. I decided to go back to work. It happened that Min. Richard Mininger gave me a ride out. He asked me if I liked the meetings. I answered, "It's a serious matter. I am thinking about taking this step, but I want it to be one hundred percent."

That night they had a meeting in the church on the Colony. I was more hopeful. I thought to myself, "If they have an invitation, I'm going to stand to show my decision." I told my brother, "I'm not going to smoke anymore." I took my pack of cigarettes and threw them away. But in the back of my mind was the possibility of returning the following day and picking them up. So to eliminate this possibility, I filled the pack with water. When I was done, the cigarettes were no longer any good.

Then I went to church. But that night wasn't preaching services. It was a mission report. I didn't have the opportunity to show my decision to accept Jesus as my Savior.

The following day I went back to town. My brother gave me a tract. I still have it. It was through that tract that I learned to know Matthew 10:32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." This made me remember the sermon on the one hundred percent. I felt that I had confessed before men and in that moment I accepted Jesus. This happened in the wee hours of the morning.

I could hardly wait for the new day to break to be able to go to church (since it was Sunday). When Min. Cláudio da Silva gave liberty for testimonies, I quoted this verse. I knew I had

accepted Jesus one hundred percent. After this I felt so light. This happened on June 26, 1988.

“My peace I give you” (John 14:27). These words of Jesus became a reality in my life. I felt peace and quietness – and a deep concern for other lost souls. I felt like telling the whole world what Jesus did for me, how He released me from my captivity and forgave my sins. This is something I can never forget. At times, when my love begins to cool off, I remember the bondage I was in and then I feel like it is easier to suffer the tribulation of a hundred Christians and be sure of one day having a home with Jesus in Heaven. ▲

## **Emma Burns' Diary**

### **Two Families Move to Southern Brazil**

#### **Mon – Jan 19, 70**

The men worked on the road. Denton and Charlie went to Manoel's fazenda to get mangos. Homer Unruh and John went to get firewood. These wood stoves burn up a lot of wood. Mary spent the day helping Clara Coblentz wax floors. Their new house isn't done, but they are going to move in anyway. Charlie and Carl Toews shot a deer. They divided the meat. The girls and Genuína went from house to house singing this evening. We woke up at 3:30 this morning. Here they were singing for us.

#### **Tue – Jan 20**

Denton and some others left for Brasília. Enos Miller shot a deer. Irene and Annie brought us the head.

#### **Wed – Jan 21**

I made soap in the big iron kettle. The lye I used wasn't very good.

#### **Thu – Jan 22**

Have been canning mangos, but have so few jars, we get empty gallon powdered milk cans and put the fruit in them. To seal them we put melted paraffin over the top. Two men came out from town to dig a well for Enos Miller.

#### **Fri – Jan 23**

Daniel Kramer and Charlie went to town. They killed a porcupine and brought it home. I ground stick cinnamon in our coffee grinder and then made cinnamon tea. It was delicious.

#### **Sat – Jan 24**

Our rice really looks pretty. Joe Coblentz hurt his toe, so Charlie had to fix it up for him. Those who went to Brasília got home tonight.

#### **Sun – Jan 25**

John Penner preached this morning. In the evening we had a sort of C.E.

**Mon – Jan 26**

My 48th birthday. Carlos and Yolanda came over to wish me a happy birthday. Faith & children, Hazel, Mary, Miriam and I went to spend the day at Manoels to have Dona Ana teach us how to make goiabada [a jelly-like candy made of guava fruit]. We took the gun along. We had gone only a few kilometers and there stood a deer. Faith got out of the car, aimed, and shot. The deer fell over so we loaded it up and took it home and then went to Manoels. We had a nice day there. We brought home a lot of goiabada. Denton helped Jona Dyck make a cab for his pickup. In the evening Homers, Charlies and we were together. While we talked, Faith fried down the deer meat and stored it in containers of lard.

**Wed – Jan 28**

Homers, John Penner, Dan Coblentz, Denton and I went to town and then down the highway to a place where a man wants to sell his machinery. Brazilians always serve visitors something. Today they served us cheese with a kind of syrup on top. It wasn't too bad. The girls and Hazel and I went outside and picked mangos, pineapple and cashew fruit to take home.

**Thu – Jan 29**

A truck came and loaded up Jona Dyck's belongings. In the evening a number of us took refreshments to Dick Toews' place and had a little farewell for them. Jonas and Dicks are leaving tomorrow for Lapa, in the southern state of Paraná, where they plan to live. Enos Millers moved into Jona's house. We got Jona's beds. Tim was sure glad. He had to sleep on the kombi seat for a year.

**Wed – Feb 4**

Denton and some of the men went to our neighbor across the river to see about buying cows. We carried brush off when the men cleared. Anna Kramer and four boys helped us hoe rice.

**Thu – Feb 5**

Miriam and Tim carried brush and burned piles in the new fields. Some were over for Portuguese classes this evening. Denton and Charlie are the teachers.

**Remembering Out Loud**

**Roads**

I think that our church weddings here are similar to yours in N America. Due to our climate, our receptions are possibly a bit more informal. Between the church and social hall in the Monte Alegre Congregation we have a breezeway. Tables are set up both in the social hall and in this breezeway for the lunch.

After the lunch, when the new husband and wife begin to open their gifts, there are two kinds of wedding guests: The kind that like to sit around the tables in the stifling hot social hall ohhing and ahhing at the gifts that come around, and the kind that stay in or around the cool breezeway, discussing the past, present and future with old friends.

Anyway, one of the subjects being discussed – outside, naturally – was roads, as they were when we first came to Brazil.

Coming out of Rio Verde, we drove for a ways on the road that went to the neighboring town of Montividiu. There were some real holes in that road – holes that you drove into, and hopefully, out of again. Someone told of the time Duane Holdeman got several of his brothers from the airport in Goiânia in his kombi. Coming home, apparently it had rained and the holes were full. As the kombi nosed into one of them, the headlights suddenly went out, under water.

The newcomers were watching two things: the hole in the road and the expression on their brother's face. As the story went that evening, Duane pulled out of the hole, the headlights began to shine again, and pokerfaced, he kept on driving as if nothing had happened. That was almost more than the gringos could take. If that was just a normal everyday hole, what would the sure enough deep ones be like?

Someone also remembered the time Harold & Emma Dirks and another couple went to town together. I might mention that the water in these holes was a dark, soupy red. As they were going through one of them in the Chevy pickup that Harolds drove to Brazil, the door on the passenger side popped open and the passenger popped out.

Uninjured, but miraculously a totally different color than he was when they left home, the only solution was for the passenger to get into the back of the pickup for the rest of the ride to town, where they stopped at a filling station and hosed him down, trying to get some of his old color back.

## Evil Spirits

Paulo David was at the wedding too. He told us about several incidents in town involving evil spirits.

The first one involved Salmo de Davi, Jorge's brother. He is in a situation similar to what Jorge was in before he got converted. Now he has gone to the spiritist church looking for help. Somehow they detected that people are praying for him. Apparently they told him that as long as this is going on, they can't help him. So Salmo looked up someone in the church, I don't remember who, and asked that everyone quit praying for him.

Paulo is very encouraged by the fact that the prayers of the saints are hindering the work of the spiritists.

The second incident he told about is even more interesting. One evening as Cláudio, the minister, and Paulo were locking up the church after services, a man drove up on a

cycle, I believe, and wanted to know who was responsible for that church. He seemed to be quite agitated. So they began talking with him to see what was up.

It turned out he was the medium from one of the spiritist organizations in town. His complaint was that their prayers were hindering his communications with the spirits.

They kept talking with him, trying to calm him down and get him to reason. Finally they asked him if he didn't want them to pray for him? No, no, of course not!

Cláudio and Paulo didn't give up. Finally he gave in and permitted them to pray. Both brethren took turns praying and finally Cláudio commanded, in the name of Jesus, that the evil spirit leave this man. Hearing these words, the man simply collapsed on them. Both kept on praying. Suddenly the spirit left the man, he stood up, blinked as if awaking from a bad dream, headed for his cycle and left.

It is important that we remember this little congregation in our prayers. These two incidents tell us that something is moving. Especially remember Jorge's brother, Salmo de Davi. He is going through a life and death struggle. ▲

## More on Weddings

When we still had our store, a Japanese girl worked for us for a number of years. She got married on May 29 and we were invited to her wedding in the Catholic church.

This brought back memories of a wedding we were invited to when we first came to Brazil. Not realizing what they were like, we stayed for the reception. Beer was served. Some young girls, possibly 12 or 13 years old, were wanting to drink some too, but apparently their parents wouldn't allow it. So the priest began slipping them glasses of beer.

Sometime later I met the same priest on the street. He himself brought up the subject of the wedding and with just a trace of a satisfied smirk said, "Bem animadinho, né?" Roughly translated that would be, "Quite a party, wasn't it?"

Marilsa, the Japanese girl, didn't have a reception. Even so, it was understandable why she apologized beforehand for the kind of weddings they have. She has been in a number of ours and knows the difference.

Since Brazilians traditionally have weddings only on Friday and Saturday nights, it's not unusual to have maybe four or five of them scheduled, one right after another – or rather, one on top of the other. Before one is over with, the guests for the next one come crowding in. It's really a traffic jam with one group trying to get out of the church and the other one trying to get in.

Possibly the first thing that strikes a Mennonite, accustomed to silent, solemn weddings, is the noise. The music being played by a lady at an organ was amplified to where it hurt my ears. Occasionally she would lean forward and sing a short line or two into the mike.

The next thing that catches one's attention is the constant movement of people. Never does the crowd settle down.

Then comes the part I sincerely detest. The photographers. Blinding strobe lights are placed right up front, facing the audience, literally placing the priest and the couple in the limelight. Soon not only ones ears are hurting, but also the eyes.

The priest, possibly in his early thirties, had a Mennonite style beard and haircut. He cut quite a figure in his magnificent white robe. His sermon was much better than I had expected. He based his sermon on different scriptures read from the Bible and gave the couple some good advise.

After he had married them, he disappeared behind a panel behind the altar. Before he was even out, he was shucking his robe. Soon he was back in faded blue jeans and a shirt unbuttoned a third of the way down, arranging things on the altar for the next wedding.

Thank God for preachers whose ministry is more than a robe that is put on at appropriate times. ▲

## **This & That**

Enos & Clara Miller left for the States, where they plan on spending at least a year, possibly in the Lobelville Congregation.

Phil & Alfrieda Martin are spending several months in N America.

Corinne Isaac returned to Canada after teaching a term in the Monte Alegre School.

Ike & Rosalie Loewen and Walt & Alberta Redger returned to the US for indefinite periods.

Jesse & Delores and children, together with Velda Loewen are spending several months in the US. Stacy & Jeanette Schmidt and daughter, ditto.

Shawna Belle was born on April 30. Dean & Esther Lou Mininger became the proud parents of “the new bouncing baby girl” (as the Nigerian Messenger puts it). They plan to begin adoption procedures.

On May 15 the Colony had its annual consignment sale. This is Glenn Hibner’s little – or rather, big – project. There’s only one thing wrong with these sales. We don’t have them often enough. Stephen Kramer ran the bookwork of this sale through a computer, saving Glenn and the clerks three days work at the end. Guess what Glenn plans on buying in the US.

After spending sometime in town, Luís Duarte is back at Walt Redgers helping take care of his fazenda.

School vacation has begun. The Rio Verdinho School had their play day on June 20, the Monte Alegre School on June 21.

There used to be a time when you could say that a baby looked like its mother, and she would take it as a compliment. Not anymore.

Richard Mininger has written up a ten lesson course called The Christian Home & Child Training. He just got done giving it to a number of couples from both congregations. I think you folks in N America could make good use of this course. Contact Richard if you’re interested.



## Brazil 17 News

Milton & Cindy Loewen moved into the little house on Dennis & Vera Loewen's yard.

Chris & Anita Stoltzfus moved into the house that Miltons lived in.

José & Lucimar and children moved into the little house on Frances Schultz's yard.

Stanley & Mary Schultz bought the necessary equipment to set up a printery. It should go into operation the beginning of June. José Cardoso will be the printer.

Tony & Wynelle Loewen are living in Ike & Rosalie's house.

Nelson Unruh and Ruth Kramer got married on May 27 in the Monte Alegre Church.

Excellent reception. They will temporarily live in Jesse Loewen's house, and then plan to move into the house the Dirkses vacated.

Since our Thanksgiving services are held exactly six months later (or earlier?) than yours, we had ours on May 27.

On May 30 the Monte Alegre Congregation had a carry-in dinner as a farewell for the Dirks family that moved to Mato Grosso.

The Ministry of Health in Brasília sent out a doctor to pay the Colony here a visit.

Through some international health organization they found out that there was an outbreak of polio in a Mennonite Colony in Holland that refuses to take the vaccine. A similar problem was detected in a Colony in Canada. So they came to check out the Colony in Rio Verde. Approximately 30 stool specimens were sent to Rio de Janeiro to be analyzed. Should any passive viruses be detected, they will be out to do some vaccinating. It isn't likely there will be any problem since children are all vaccinated, usually a number of times.