

Brazil News



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Editorial

Priorities

A priority is the way we choose to use our time. To understand this better, we will look to a balloonist for some instructions.

Basically there are two types of balloons: The free balloon which receives its lift from hot air or from a lighter than air gas, such as hydrogen or helium. The other is the dirigible, also gas filled, but equipped with motors that drive propellers for propulsion and fins that aid in steering.

We will be interested in the free balloon, in which the balloonist must deal with three basic elements: gas, ballast and air currents.

To keep his balloon on the ground while it is being filled with gas, the balloonist hangs ballast over the side of the gondola – usually bags of sand. Once the balloon is totally inflated, ballast is cast off until the balloon begins to rise. By carefully dropping ballast, the desired flight altitude is reached.

Now comes the challenge. Remember, a free balloon has no motor for propulsion and no facilities for steering. How then does a balloonist travel in a desired direction – due north, for example? This he does by carefully dropping ballast until reaching an altitude with a favorable wind. Obviously in this the experienced balloonist holds a great advantage over the novice. Knowing there are prevailing wind currents, he can make time by heading directly to the altitude where there is the greatest chance of a favorable current or jet stream.

A successful flight is more than reaching a proper altitude and letting the balloon go. Wind currents are unstable and many times it is necessary to change altitude to find favorable winds. Furthermore, cold and heat cause the gas to contract and expand, thus making the balloon gain or lose altitude. The balloonist has but two solutions at his disposal: drop more ballast when losing altitude and vent off gas when in an undesired rise.

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To reach his destination, the balloonist must make wise use of both ballast and gas.

For the remainder of this article we are going to assume that each day we make a balloon flight. The gas in the balloon is time. As we arise each morning, our balloon is inflated, ready for flight. The ballast will be made up of the activities of life. The wind currents, the heat and the cold, will be the circumstances of life.

Before we begin our flight, let's remember that everyone's balloon has exactly the same amount of gas. We ourselves determine the amount and type of ballast we will take aboard. It's true that some hit rougher weather in flight than others, but if we were to know the truth, we would be amazed at how similar everyone's weather pattern is.

Why do some have so much easier sailing than others?

It isn't time. Everyone has exactly the same amount of time. Generally it isn't the weather. It's the ballast we take aboard, that is, the activities we plan for the day. We call that priorities.

Possibly no occupation is more suitable to exemplify what we are talking about than that of the farmer.

A farmer is his own boss. That's one of the reasons he is a farmer. He determines what to do with his time. He knows that to be successful he must respect the laws of nature. He knows there is a time to get fields ready to plant, a time to plant, a time to top-dress and cultivate, a time to harvest and a time to plow, a time to do preventive maintenance on machinery.

Hard work isn't enough to make a farm operation pay off. It takes planning.

Farmer Bate is a nice fellow. A fabulous neighbor. He works like a horse. But alas, farmer Bate should be called farmer Late. He is a terrible balloonist. He has too many irons in the fire. He raises shetland ponies. There's nothing wrong with raising ponies, except that they make him no money. He says they will. So every morning he has to take on ballast to be able to take care of his non-profit ponies. He raises a few cows, a few pigs, a few chickens, a few this and a few that. All on the same basis. More ballast. He has a little shop where he fixes electrical appliances for people. He is good at it and actually makes a little money in this operation. But so many times it's exactly when he should be out farming that he is in the shop fixing an appliance for an impatient customer. More ballast

Of course, farmer Bate is a farmer. More ballast.

So, during the sermon on Sunday farmer Bate tries to decide how in the world he is going to get his balloon off the ground Monday morning with so much ballast. He doesn't sleep right.

Monday morning he awakes with a headache. His ulcer is flaring up. It's two weeks until harvest and he hasn't begun to work on his combine. More ballast.

Weakly he makes his way into the gondola of the balloon. It's evident there is way too much ballast hanging on the side. Now begins what is a daily routine. A laborious process of deciding what is going to take priority. He has to take care of his ponies and cows and pigs and chickens. But he compromises (as he does almost every morning). He decides to feed his menagerie, but not clean the pens. That way he can dump half of the ballast for that project.

The balloon shows no sign of rising.

Then there is Mrs. Clark's washer that he has had in the shop for the last two weeks. No getting around it. It has to be fixed today. That ballast stays. That means going to town for some parts. Since he is going to town anyway, he just as well pay his land tax that is past due.

Farmer Bate looks over his ballast. Slowly he begins dumping the sand out of the bags reserved for fixing his combine. Finally when his balloon begins to sway slightly and show signs of maybe wanting to leave mother earth, his wife comes running. "Honey!" she shouts, "Did you remember that we've been out of chicken feed since the day before yesterday? Unless you grind us some feed, those chickens are all going to die. They haven't laid an egg for the last two months. The pigs are about out of feed too" More ballast.

One solution. Dump all the combine ballast. The balloon begins to rise, dragging the gondola over a cottonwood tree.

Farmer Bate's pickup runs out of gasoline on the way to town. Since he took a back road, it takes a good hour and a half to get it going again. How the ulcer pains.

Suddenly farmer Bate has enough. It is past dinner time and about all he has accomplished is give the chores a lick and a promise and he has his pickup running again. It won't hurt the chickens to go one more day without feed. He chucks the ballast for grinding feed. It won't hurt Mrs. Clark to wait one more day for her washing machine. Another bag of ballast plummets. Ah, that's better. The balloon begins to rise. He checks the ballast on the side of the balloon. Just the right amount to finish the day. Not too bad.

Farmer Bate pays his land tax. The fine is bigger than he expected. He gives a check anyway. Then he goes to the bank to check his balance. That check is going to be a real bouncer. Unless he can come up with some money and make a deposit before closing time. While Farmer Bate is running around trying to collect a few bills, the sun is heating up the gas in his balloon. Suddenly he realizes he is way too high. The only solution is to vent off some gas.

The balloon descends to a proper altitude. Then a cloud covers the sun and the cooler air causes the balloon to continue descending. As he tries to get to the bank before closing time, he realizes what is happening. The solution is to drop some more ballast. But there is hardly any left and the balloon continues to descend.

Finally, just as the bank closes, the soggy looking balloon hits the ground.

That evening Mrs. Bate has to listen to a story she now knows by heart. So do the children. Most of the neighbors know the story. Even some of the local businessmen have heard it different times. It's something like this: He – farmer Bate is a victim. He has an ulcer which keeps him from working like healthy people. Since he is poor and can't afford a new combine like his neighbors, he has to work with old worn out machinery. If the government wasn't so unfair about taxes, he wouldn't be in such a bind. If his customers wouldn't nag him about getting jobs done, he would feel more like pleasing them. If the market wouldn't have gone sour on shetland ponies, he would have money to pay off all of his debts.

So much for farmer Late.

I have watched successful people – farmers, businessmen, laboring men, you name it. Why are they successful when others aren't? Priorities. They know where their money is coming from. They know piddling around doesn't make money. When it's time to fix the combine, that is the only ballast you will see hanging on the side of their balloon. When it's time to harvest, that's the ballast you see.

When I talk about being successful, by no means does this include only monetary success. It means getting a job done. This can apply to a preacher or missionary in their duties. They must learn to work with priorities.

There cannot be priorities without sacrifices. To make a balloon rise, we sometimes must discard some precious ballast. That is the road to success.

As the work of the church increases, more and more brethren are spending more and more time in the different programs and working on committees. That is ballast. God forbid that we drop spiritual ballast and sail along on the material.

But God also forbid that we mix up our priorities on the material and end up not having time for the spiritual. ▲

Politics & Economy

Lula & Maluf

I have in different articles written about Lula, the leftist presidential candidate who made a visit to the Colony some time ago. Also I mentioned that a lot of water would pass under the bridge before elections. We've seen quite a little water the last couple of weeks.

Paulo Maluf, Lula's political antithesis, is presently the mayor of the city of São Paulo. He has been the governor of São Paulo state and has served time as a federal congressman. Twice he has been a presidential candidate. Twice he has lost. Paulo is to the right what Lula is to the left. Both are demagogic and know how to appeal to the masses.

Now Lula and Maluf have gotten into a public mud slinging match. Both are doing so well at plastering the other that it is believed that both have pretty well cooked each other's goose for the next elections. If true, that certainly could be good news.

A name you may be hearing more and more in relation to the presidential campaign is Adib Jatene. Dr. Jatene is Brazil's number one heart surgeon. He was Collor's minister of health. Intelligent, honest, respected by all, and supported by some powerful politicians, Jatene looks like a mighty fine prospect. Keep tuned in.

Three Down

It happened. President Itamar cut three zeros off of our currency, effective as of August 1. No longer are all Brazilians millionaires. Before this happened all it took was 13 US dollars to be one. Now it takes almost 13 thousand dollars.

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When we were in the States last December, I noticed a lot of curiosity about what really happens when three zeros fall off the end of our currency.

First of all, the currency has to be renamed. Let's say that on July 31 you wanted to pay someone the equivalent of a hundred dollars. That would have taken exactly 7,760,000 cruzeiros. On Sunday, August 1, your check would be only 7,760 cruzeiros. That's where the new name comes in. The check would be written out as seven thousand, seven hundred and sixty cruzeiros reais. (Reais is the plural of real, which in this case means regal or majestic.)

In the case of predated checks written in cruzeiros and cashed after August 1, the last three digits will simply be ignored. Does anyone lose with this? The maximum these last three digits can be worth on a check is approximately 1.2 US cents.

The question I was asked in the US was: Who gains or loses when three zeros are dropped? No one.

Think of it like this. Using your dollars as an example, each dollar is a golf ball. If you owe someone a hundred dollars, you owe him a hundred golf balls. If someone owes you a hundred, it's the same story. When the collection plate comes around in church, and you want to give 10 dollars, you put in 10 golf balls. But along comes a mission collection and you decide to give a thousand dollars. You'd have to drag a pretty good sized sack into church. And it would take a pretty good sized collection basket to collect, say, five thousand dollars.

So one day the American government exchanges all the golf balls for marbles. What has happened? So far as what you are worth, what you owe or what others owe you, nothing. It's just that it's easier now to carry your money around. In other words, one marble has the exact value of a golf ball. That's what happened here. Now we can use our 8-digit calculators again.

VEJA magazine gives some interesting facts:

If inflation continues at one percent per day, in two years, two months and ten days we are going to be exactly where we were on July 31 of this year. It will be time to take off another three zeros.

If the zeros hadn't been dropped, at our present inflation rate, in one year a Suprema, the most expensive car presently manufactured in Brazil, would cost Cr\$70,340,252,030 – that is, seventy billion, three hundred and forty million, two hundred and fifty two thousand and thirty cruzeiros. (Figure that in golf balls.)

A box of matches (with approximately 35 matches in it) cost five thousand cruzeiros last week in São Paulo. If inflation would continue at 30% per month and the zeros wouldn't have been dropped, on January 1 of 95, when president Itamar leaves office, the same five thousand cruzeiros would purchase only one fourth of one match.

In the last 51 years, the government has dropped 15 zeros from our currency.

The dropping of zeros will have absolutely no effect on our inflation, as there was no freeze involved. It is likely that within two or three years the operation will have to be repeated. ▲

Remembering Out Loud

I Get Sued

Back when I had my store, one of my regular customers was a law firm from São Paulo – that is, until they sued me.

Their ranch was called Fazenda Canaã and was near the highway on the way to town. Their gerente (foreman) would stop by the store and tell me how many sacks of horse pellets to deliver.

To understand what went wrong, I will have to explain what a duplicata is. A duplicata is sort of a promissory note that is issued together with a sales receipt. For example, I would sell 20 sacks of feed to a customer on time. I would give him a sales receipt. On the bottom was a little perforated section that the customer would sign, declaring he had received the merchandise, which I would keep.

Duplicatas many times weren't signed by the buyer. This would happen if a purchase was made by phone or if there was mutual confidence between the merchant and the customer. In this case they would be honored the same as if they had been signed.

A duplicata can be held until payment is made, when it is returned to the customer. Or it can be taken to the bank for collection. The bank then sends a notice to the customer, telling the amount, the date and the place to make payment. This is especially useful when someone lives at a distance. The customer pays in his local bank and the money is transferred to the firm's account where the purchase was made.

The gerente, with whom I had all my dealings was an absolute gentleman. In his late 20s, educated, upper middle class, he certainly was anything but a typical gerente. His visits to the store were always a pleasant occasion and usually we would spend considerable time discussing different subjects.

At times when I would deliver feed, there would be no one around to sign the detachable section of the receipt declaring they had gotten the merchandise. I would unload and be on my way. Next I would take the unsigned duplicata to the bank for collection.

On one occasion, a month or so after I had delivered a load of feed to Fazenda Canaã, I got a telephone call from São Paulo. The person wanted to know if I had delivered feed to their fazenda on a certain day. I told them I had. They wanted to know why the little stub on the bottom of the receipt wasn't signed. I explained the reason.

A few days later I get a registered letter in the mail from the court in São Paulo saying I was being sued.

Being a law firm doing the suing, they obviously came up with quite a case. The worst charge – and this was serious – was that I had made out a duplicata fria. Literally, a “cold duplicata,” a term used to describe a false duplicata made out by unscrupulous businessmen where no merchandise is delivered. In essence it is stealing.

There I was – a thief. The fact that the stub hadn't been signed was ample proof of this.

I looked up the gerente and asked him if he knew what was going on. Talk about an uncomfortable young man. Yes, he knew about it. Yes, he realized that the feed had been delivered. Yes, he knew it was an injustice. Would he be willing to testify that the feed had been delivered? No he wouldn't. Because that might cost him his job. But could he live with himself knowing he too was being unjust? After all, he said, good jobs like his were hard to come by.

I was finally able to come up with the whole story.

I placed the duplicata in the Banco do Brasil in Rio Verde. They sent it to the agency in São Paulo for payment. What followed was a series of mistakes. First of all, the bank failed to notify the law firm that they were owing a duplicata. Secondly, when payment wasn't made on the due date, instead of waiting several days and then sending it back to me, they threw it into court for payment. Thirdly, the court failed to notify the law firm that they were being taken to law. Instead they put a notice in the São Paulo paper saying the law firm was delinquent in paying a bill.

Being a prestigious law firm, the lawyers hit the ceiling. They sued both the Banco do Brasil and the cartório – the arm of the court responsible for serving notice. And of course, they sued me.

The question is: Did they really believe that I didn't deliver that feed? Didn't the gerente tell them the truth? I have no doubt but what the gerente told them the truth, that the feed had been delivered, and they had no doubts as to my honesty. Then why did they sue me? To make a case against the bank and the cartório. To say they were accomplices to my crime made a mighty fine case.

That also explains why the gerente said he wouldn't testify to the truth. That would have been a real blow to their case against the bank and the cartório.

Here in Brazil the law says that if you are accused of something and don't defend yourself, it is *admissão de culpa* – admission of guilt. Obviously there is no virtue in saying, "Look folks, I'm guilty." Does that mean we have to go to court to defend ourselves? Not really. But it does mean, I believe, that we should lay out the facts. The court recognizes honesty.

I talked to my lawyer. He knows our position on going to court, so he did what he is best at: settling things out of court. He called the law firm in São Paulo and explained our side of the situation. They asked me to call them and give my version of the case. I did this. They were nice about it all and asked that I send them a letter with the same information.

They dropped the case. Against me, at least. I don't know what ever came of the bank and the cartório.

This story has another chapter to it. Even though they no longer bought from me, the gerente and I continued to be friends. One day he called me. Evidently distraught, he told me he was going to have to have surgery and he was fearful about his soul. Would it be possible to have a visit with a minister? Of course. I called Mark Loewen and we went to his place. I didn't remain the entire time, but Mark later told me they had a good visit.

So far as I know, he didn't really make a decision. But a witness was left. I hope to someday see this gerente again. ▲

I Get Sued Again

When I lived on the Jataí highway, I bought just a little piece of ground that protruded into my place – and ended up getting sued.

The piece of ground belonged to some orphans. I had been interested in the piece for some time, but could never find out where the orphans lived. Finally I found them out in the boondocks, living on another small plot they had inherited.

They were in their early 20s and really quite backward. I explained what I wanted. They said they had just sold that piece of land to another neighbor. In fact, it had been only about 30 minutes since the buyer left the place.

To say they sold the place would almost be an untruth. The buyer, a very slick fellow, had given them an old dilapidated jeep, a few other odds and ends, and a little bit of money.

I looked up the neighbor who bought the land and asked if he wanted to sell. Yes, he would sell. Obviously the price had gone way up, but even so it was within reason. Furthermore, he said, the title could be signed directly from the orphans to me. We made the deal and the title was signed over to me.

Several weeks later I was notified that I was being sued. The orphans wanted to have the title annulled.

What went wrong?

Obviously the first thing was that the orphans realized they had been duped by the buyer. They took their case to a lawyer. He found out that there was an illegality involved.

The buyer's lawyer was also a slick fellow. Apparently suspecting the sellers might want to back out, he signed papers in their name and then, one day later, got them to sign a power-of-attorney to him.

I talked to the fellow who sold me the land. He wouldn't budge. Everything was OK. I talked to his lawyer. The same story.

So I looked up the orphans and talked to them. They were understanding. They realized I had been totally innocent. Their only regret was that they hadn't sold directly to me.

Then I looked up their lawyer. I explained what had happened. He immediately realized I wasn't to blame for what had happened. So he simply didn't do anything.

I waited some time and sold the land. I explained to the buyer that there was a lawsuit involved. Our lawyer included a clause in the title making mention of this fact. So far as I know nothing ever came out of it.

Especially the orphan with whom I had all of my dealings, continues to treat me as a good friend whenever I meet her on the street. ▲

And Again

This too happened when I lived along the Jataí highway.

One day an oficial de justiça – roughly the equivalent of a sheriff's deputy – showed up at my place. He was a friend of mine, a short, elderly fellow. Together with him was a heavy set middle aged man with a 38 cal. revolver conspicuously protruding over the top of his trousers.

The man got right down to business. All of the fazendas from that area, very likely including mine, were legally his. Many, many years ago his grandmother, or whoever, was left out of an inheritance. So as an heir, he was the legal owner – even though we all had a title to our land.

Matter of factly he informed me he was going to send out a surveyer to measure my place to make sure it was his.

For years, every time Josias, the oficial de justiça, would meet me on the street, he would begin to chuckle and retell me the whole story of that visit. I told the supposed owner of my place, “Well that’s wonderful if you want to measure my place. I’ve been wanting a map for a long time. Just go ahead.”

It seemed to throw the man for a loop to know that he wouldn’t need his 38 to do any coaxing. He excused himself and left with Josias.

I did some checking around and found out what the story really was.

Years ago the fazendas were enormous – tens of thousands of acres of land. These huge land owners, virtual barons, felt themselves entitled to certain fringe benefits, with the tacit approval of a church always in need of funds. One of these was extra-conjugal activities, often resulting in offspring.

I found it was exactly such a supposed grandchild or great-grandchild of the promiscuous land owner that was claiming all our fazendas. A number of my neighbors right in the middle hired a lawyer to defend them in a group action. They won hands-down in court. As a result the gentlemen with the 38 didn’t even have to survey my place to see if he would get my place too.

At least Josias got a chuckle out of that one.

And another chuckle. This afternoon I went to town and if Josias didn’t come walking down the street. He has aged tremendously. His hearing and memory are both bad. But when I mentioned the lawsuit in the Coqueiros, as that region is called, he chuckled. ▲

Bulldogs

In the last issue I promised to make some comments about bulldogs. What we call a bulldog here is actually a large, stocky, boxer type dog with a jowly face.

These bulldogs are actually quite gentle with people, unless trained to be violent. We used to have a dog that was half bulldog. There was no doubt but what it was

non-resistant, but even so, when strangers would drive up and she would run out to meet them, it was amazing how fast that would get back to their vehicles.

Over 20 years ago when I had an English school in town, I would occasionally go down to the old slaughter house and watch them butcher cattle. It was all very primitive. The cows to be slaughtered were kept in a holding pen and one by one brought to the slaughter house through a chute. One of the workers would straddle the chute with a sledge hammer in hand. As the cow got to the final gate, he would fell it with a blow. The gate would be swung open and the dead cow would tumble onto the butcher floor. One of the workers, armed with a razor sharp knife, would prepare to cut the jugular.

And that is when the bulldogs would frequently come into the picture.

With a bellow the dead cow would rise to its feet, ready to attack man or beast. By now the men were all up on the corral fence or somewhere out of reach. Seeing there was no one to attack, the cow would head out through the open front of the work area.

The men loved these little circuses. The dogs simply adored them. Running along side the fleeing critter, they would grab it either by the the lips or by the ear and hang on. No cow can go very far with two 70 pound dogs hanging on like the plague. There were times, however, when the cows didn't stop until their ears were two short little ribbons. They didn't have to suffer long. Once the workers got to where the animal was, it ended up being dead for good.

I think possibly some people on the Colony would have interesting stories to tell about bulldogs. Let's hear them, folks. ▲

A Brazilian Story

As Ladras Inocentes

[Mário de Moraes tells us another story. A Ladrão is a thief. Ladra is the feminine of ladrão, thus being a female thief. As is the plural feminine article, so we have "The Innocent Thieves."]

To get to the 2º Distrito Policial [2nd District Police Station] in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Inspector Nilo de Oliveira had to walk past the front of the jail where female prisoners awaited their transfer to the penitentiary. Through the bars he could see thieves, murderers, and other criminals, in a scene of total promiscuity.

Nilo de Oliveira had been called to the Police Station to investigate a theft. A lady was accusing two young girls who worked in a nearby clothing store of stealing two of her diamond rings.

There was quite a crowd at the door of the Police Station. Friends of the two girls, as well as other curious spectators, were milling around to see what the outcome of the case would be.

As soon as he arrived, Nilo de Oliveira called in the victim to hear her side of the story. She told of how she went into the clothing store on that same street to buy some hose. Not wanting to snag them, she removed her rings so she could feel their texture. Choosing a pair, she paid for it and left the store. Once outside she realized she didn't have her diamond rings. She went back to the store, but they were no longer there. She concluded that the two girls who waited on her must have stolen her rings.

In another corner of the room, the two girls were seated, sobbing their heart out. The inspector decided to hear their side of the story, but not before he asked everyone else to get out of the room. In a matter of just a few minutes Nilo de Oliveira came out and said he wanted to have a look in the store where the rings were to have been stolen. The owner of the store was upset when he found out what the inspector wanted to do. He said they had looked everywhere and that the rings weren't there.

The same crowd of spectators followed the inspector to the store. He had a hard time getting to the counter where the hose were sold. Together with another policeman he brought along as a helper, one by one he took down the boxes of hose from the shelf and shook them, to see if the lady might have dropped the rings in one of them. On approximately the fortieth box, a metallic sound was heard from inside. Opening the box, there on the bottom, mixed with the hose, were the two stolen rings.

The woman who had accused the two girls came near to collapsing. Crying, she begged the two girls (who the inspector had brought along) to forgive her. Being the 23rd of December, she offered them money so they could buy some gifts for Christmas.

This is the story that was published in the papers in Rio de Janeiro. Many years have slipped by and for the first time we will tell what really happened.

For this we return to the room where Nilo de Oliveira questioned the two girls. A persuasive man, the inspector soon got them to tell the truth. They confessed that they had really taken the rings. When the lady came back, they were scared to admit that they had them. One of the girls produced the rings from where she had hid them in her clothes, handing them over to the inspector.

It was in this exact moment that the inspector remembered the scene he had seen in the jail he walked past. What would happen to these two young girls if they were to be mixed into that offscouring of the human race?

Surely that wasn't the solution for what these two girls had done.

Inspector Nilo de Oliveira told the girls he was going to get them off the hook this one time, if they would promise to never again try something like this – and also, to never tell the story of what really happened.

They promised.

It was for this reason that Nilo de Oliveira took along another policeman, to whom he had given instructions to slip the rings into one of the boxes where they might be "found."

Today these two girls are women, married and happy. ▲

Emma Burns' Diary

First Baptisms

Sunday – March 8, 1970

We started having church in Dick Toews' shed. John Penner bought the land and the shed from Dick. This evening we had convert meeting. Fred Dirks was approved for baptism.

Thu – March 12

All the men went to work on the road. We women all fixed dinner. Emma Dirks came on their horse and brought bread. Some of us took dinner to the men.

Sat – March 14

Mary and Faith planted the trees they got the other day. Charlie went to enroll the children for school. Twenty enrolled. I am one of them. I want to learn Portuguese.

Sun – March 15

Enos had the message this morning in church. In the afternoon a kombi drove in the yard with two bearded men inside. They are Greek Orthodox Catholics. They said they lived 50 miles from the Dick Toews and Jona Dyck families in southern Brazil. They were here custom cutting.

[This group later came and established a colony beyond Montividiu. They are Russians, with whom we have maintained very cordial relations all the while – even during the time of the Cold War. cb]

Thu – March 17

The girls and I put plastic screen on the frames for Enos Miller's house. Today our men made ridges where the pineapple are to be planted. Daniel Kramer got a new cart for their horse. We gathered a lot of mushrooms and had mushroom gravy for supper.

Wed – March 18

Charlie and the girls tore down the cracker box [the masonite house]. We didn't have it for long, but it gave us shelter and left us many memories.

Fri – March 21

We started planting pineapple today

Sun – March 23

Daniel Kramers came to church in their new cart. In the evening Jonathan Coblentz told his experience.

Sun – March 30

A beautiful Easter morning. Fred Dirks and Jonathan Coblentz were baptized. They are the first ones to be baptized in Brazil. Eldon Penner ate some fruit he found growing wild. He ended up in the hospital. A group of men went to sing for him this afternoon. They also stopped and sang for another bedfast man coming into town.

Fri – April 3

We borrowed Enos Miller's truck and went to town to take a day off from planting pineapple every day. Dr. Yashide, the Japanese dentist took us out to his dad's vegetable farm outside of town. It was interesting to see all he had planted there: bananas, papaya and many other fruit trees, plus all their garden stuff. We went to the brick yard and bought some bricks so Denton can make our stove.

Off The Subject

The Flight

You have just boarded your plane for a 40 minute flight between City A and City B. Departure time, according to your ticket, is 11:05. The flight attendant welcomes you aboard, "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome aboard Arrow Airlines flight 222...Our arrival time is estimated at 11:45. We hope you will enjoy your flight."

As your plane is slowly backed away from the terminal, a muffled whir tells you the turbines have been started. The ground crew detaches their tractor from your plane and gives a final thumbs up. The plane is pointed in the right direction, ready to taxi to the runway.

11:05 – "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Welcome aboard Arrow Airlines flight 222 to City B. According to our latest weather reports, we can expect some turbulence once in the air. Needless to say, all precautions will be taken so you can have a safe flight. As you know, Arrow Airlines places your comfort and safety in first place. We hope you can bear with us in case of any inconveniences... Again, thank you for flying AA."

11:10 – The plane begins to slowly taxi toward the runway. Several minutes later the plane comes to a halt. No other aircraft is taxiing in the vicinity.

11:12 – "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain again. We are about to depart for City B. I would like to remind everyone to keep your seat belts fastened. Once we are in the air, a meal will be served by our flight attendants. As you know, Arrow Airlines cuts no corners when the comfort of the passengers is involved. We want you to feel that you are our special guest on flight number 222..."

11:16 – You hear the deep roar of the turbines and the plane again begins to move. Soon you are at the head of the runway. There are no planes ahead of you. Again your plane shudders to a halt.

11:19 – "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. We are about to take

off for City B. As we mentioned before, we expect some turbulence. However this aircraft has been computer designed and mock ups have spent hundreds of hours in wind tunnels...No effort has been spared by its designers to give you maximum safety. Once again, we hope you enjoy your flight with AA.”

11:23 – Silence for several minutes. Sitting by the wing, you notice the pilot is lowering flaps and testing his controls.

11:25 – You are moving. The turbines roar. You ease back into your seat as the aircraft gains speed. Soon you are airborne. At several thousand feet you feel the plane leveling off.

11:30 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the area around City A, we are going to overfly the Bay area so that you can see the majestic coastline. This will delay our flight several minutes, but with favorable tailwinds we can soon make up this time. As you know, Arrow Airlines wants to make this a memorable flight for you. If you will look to your right...”

11:36 – Once again you begin to gain altitude.

11:40 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. We are going to go out of our way just a bit to get around the turbulence. The time lost doing this will ensure a more comfortable trip. As you know Arrow Airlines places your comfort and safety in first place.”

11:45 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Our flight attendants are about to serve you one of AA’s famous meals. We are sure you will enjoy it.”

12:05 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. We hope you have enjoyed your meal. In approximately 10 minutes we should be landing at the Ace Airport in City B. We hope you have enjoyed your flight with us.”

12:12 – The plane shudders slightly as the landing gear drops. Flaps are lowered in preparation for landing. The cars are now easily distinguished on the freeway.

12:15 – The roar of the turbines tells you the pilot has accelerated his engines. You begin climbing. “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Because of a slight cross wind, we are going to circle and land on runway 13.”

12:21 – You are again losing altitude and should soon be on the ground, when the plane again accelerates. “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. We were just a bit low on our approach and the tower has authorized us to circle and come in higher. We hope you continue to enjoy your flight with AA.”

12:27 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Due to heavy traffic, we are going to be on hold for just a few moments. We hope you understand that we put your comfort and safety above all else.”

12:38 – “Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. In several minutes we should be on the ground. Please check your seat belts. We appreciate your flying AA.”

12:42 – Your plane lands.

That’s how some people make a speech.



This & That

The construction of our new literature center is coming along in high gear. All the walls are up and the facer brick is being laid on the outside. Also preparations are being made to pour the cement ceiling.

Stacy & Jeanette and daughter have returned from their visit to the US.

The Paul Yoder family and Denise Litwiller, the schoolteacher from the Pirenópolis mission, are making a trip to the Northeast to visit the missions and swing around to the Amazon basin. They are traveling by pickup with a camper. We're anxious to hear their report when they return.

Elias & Colleen Stoltzfus and Errol & Karen Redger went to the mission in Mirassol, São Paulo to interview some converts. The work there is progressing well.

Cláudio & Susan Silva and Mark Loewen spent some time on the Pirenópolis mission conducting revival meetings. Myron Kramer, the missionary from there sent me a letter I had intended to publish in this issue of Brazil News, but the illustration that Paulo David drew didn't get to me in time, so that will have to wait a month.

The Paulo David family spent several days in Pirenópolis during their meetings and also in Goiânia, visiting his parents and the members there. If you ever need a pep talk on the mission effort, just have a chat with Paulo after a trip like that. He is bubbling over.

Duane & Frances Holdeman are spending a little time in the US.

The John Unruh family paid Leo Dirkses a visit in Vinagre. John helped reassemble some of Leo's machinery that had been taken apart for the trip.

The Eldon Penner family also paid Leos a visit.

Miriam, a 12 year old homeless girl from town is spending some time with Emma Burns.

Waldecí, better known as Wally in the States, paid us an interesting visit. We learned to know him here as a Military policeman. He would occasionally pay us visits here on the Colony. After he moved to the US, he got converted and is now actively helping in the mission in Los Angeles. I was amazed at how Brazilian he still is down deep. We had an enjoyable afternoon together with him and a few of his relatives at the Errol Redgers.

This one is scary. One day Sylvia came into my office looking like she had just seen a ghost. She said, "Daddy, do you know what I just saw?" Since she just came home from someplace, I assumed maybe she had seen a wreck. But no. She had seen an onça – a tan panther about three feet tall. As she came driving down the road, about a half mile from home, it ambled along for a while and then turned into the bush. Later when we went by we saw the tracks. Was it as big as she said it was? Who knows?

Talking about wildlife, at about the same place we saw a tapir cross the road the other day. Also someone told me that just a little ways from here the woods is loaded with

a small species of wild pig. Where Tim Burns and Carlos Becker are renting ground, they built a little shack for their headquarters. Apparently a wild cat came right up close to where they were the other night. The Bible talks about Canaanites. We don't have any of them around any more. Now it's cannonites – people who can't hear of wildlife running loose without feeling like getting out their cannons and firing away. The youth sang for Reno & Marilyn Hibner and Richard & Edith Mininger one evening.

Richard Mininger and John Unruh were to Goiânia several weeks back for two baptisms. I have asked one of our members, Divino, who is an accountant, to write up the story of his life, which of course includes how he found the church. It should be interesting.

We had a three-day cold snap. Our cold is different than N American cold. The other morning Otávio stood around shivering. I told him to go outside and warm up. Maybe the cold is the same, but the houses are different. Usually built with a double brick wall, they insulate so well that it often takes a number of hours to feel the effects of the outside weather. This is especially when the ceiling is of concrete. Anyway, we had the privilege of using our fireplaces for a few days.

You have probably seen in the news the incident in Rio de Janeiro where some off duty policemen shot into a group of 50 street children, killing seven of them. Civil rights groups and the press are really making hay of the fact that quite a few Brazilians thought it was a good deal. Obviously we are opposed to such killings for religious scruples. However, try and imagine yourself living in Rio, a wicked town. You have little or no religion and certainly aren't non-resistant. These "children," as the press loves to call them, really are teenagers who don't hesitate to steal – in fact, that is how they survive – or to kill. Their age and size make them no less dangerous than adult criminals. They are ignored by society. Being minors, their crimes get little publicity. It isn't until someone comes up with a twisted solution, like shooting them, that officials and the press pay them any attention. Street children are the fruit of a sick society. VEJA magazine has a fabulous story about one of the fatal victims, Anderson, 13. I hope to translate the article and publish it in the next issue of this little paper.

The cheapest car on the market today in Brazil is a Lada product. Imported from Russia, it costs a little over six thousand dollars on the parallel exchange. Over 30 thousand of their cars have been sold in more than one hundred agencies in Brazil. More and more the dollar is being used as a reference point for most everything imaginable here in Brazil. I noticed in the Goiânia paper that the VW agency is giving time on the purchase of new cars, dividing the part to be financed in dollar payments with no interest.

Fidel Castro was in Brazil for a Latin American heads of state conference. About all he has to show for his thirty odd years as Cuba's dictator and the champion of communism, are his army fatigues. With typical Latin courtesy, he was politely tolerated by other leaders. So far as his ideas, nobody would give a wooden nickel for

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them.

Just a bit more on our currency. In 1942 president Getúlio Vargas slashed three zeros off the real, which was renamed cruzeiro. In 1967, during the military dictatorship, three more zeros dropped and the cruzeiro novo was created. In 1986, president José Sarney lopped off three zeros and the cruzado was born. President Collor removed three zeros and the cruzeiro was resurrected. Now president Itamar has axed another three zeros and we have the cruzeiro real. Not bad. Not bad.

PC Farias, president Collor's left hand man (right hand man sounds too honest), is a fugitive. An arrest warrant was issued by a lower court judge and sustained by the Supreme Court. This could get interesting.

Ben Giesbrecht's book, *Keeping the Faith*, is finally in print in Portuguese – at least in pre-edition form. The entire book has been proofread. The type has been set and 30 books made. Some of them are being distributed to different brethren who will be in on one final meeting where fine points will be ironed out. Some went to Gospel Tract to be sent to people who want an urgent answer concerning the church.