

Brazil News



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Editorial

If Time Continues

What follows is imagination. It is not to be understood as a subtle attempt at prophecy. As you read, make your own adaptations. Or if you prefer, refute what is said item by item. You have just as good a chance of being right as I do. But remember, dramatic changes may well occur in the coming years and decades – if time continues. These changes will have a direct impact on the Church of God. They will demand vision and action on our part.

Year 2005

Time Magazine

U.S. Supreme Court Charts New Waters

“We have now corrected the unbalance created in the highest court of this nation by conservative administrations in the seventies and eighties,” President Strass declared six months ago, after making his third appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. “We expect action.”

Yesterday’s seven to nine decision on Wilson vs. the State of Nebraska, left no doubt as to whether there would be action. In a landmark ruling, justice Brown, writing for the majority, declared: “...and for years the American people have failed to see the therapeutic value of drugs such as cocaine, crack,...As in anything else, when used in excess, undesirable results can follow. The total liberation of all such drugs for over-the-counter sales will give our police forces and penal institution much needed relief...”

Adult Sunday School Class

Lesson On Purity

Sister A: I have quit taking my children along when I go shopping. I get the impression someone is watching us all the time. Leonard, who is six years old, asked me

the other day why it is that every time I'm not near, someone wants to give him candy. Terry, eight, overheard him and said, "Ya Mom, a guy gave me a piece of gum. He wanted me to go to his car with him. He said he likes little boys like me."

Sister B: The papers used to be full of this kind of thing. I have noticed that here lately you don't read so much about it anymore. Is that a sign that things are getting better?"

Sister C: I'm afraid not. I read the results of a poll the other day that says that eight out of ten adults see nothing wrong with what, well, with what they used to call child abuse. The report said that the attention children get from adults can even be good for their self-esteem...."

Year 2007

Wall Street Journal

GM Closes Last North American Factory

In an exclusive interview with Gene Long, GM president, our reporter asked: Mr. Long, exactly why have you shut down operations in North America and now produce cars only in foreign countries – especially in China?

Mr. Long: Eighty percent of our employees were drug users. Since the Supreme Court ruling several years ago making it a crime to fire someone just because he comes to work drugged, our production dropped over fifty percent. At present we can produce a car in China, ship it to the U.S., and sell it for thirty percent less than an identical car produced here.

Reporter: Don't you feel a twinge of conscience when you see tens of thousands out of work because of your uncompromising attitude toward the American worker?

Mr. Long: You're confusing GM with the Red Cross. We build cars. They take care of disasters....

US News & World Report

Terrorism—Can We Survive it?

Under direct questioning by reporters, FBI chief, J. Munster admitted for the first time that it is believed that at least two terrorist groups now possess suitcase size atom bombs. The chief stated, "Knowing the violent nature of these groups, we can be certain it is but a matter of time before they act."

Bomb threats are constant. This last week the Empire State Building was evacuated three times due to bomb threats....

The Wichita Eagle

Rival Gangs Range Countryside

Gang warfare, once confined to city limits, is rapidly reaching neighboring communities as rival groups stake out new claims....

Gang territories are methodically patrolled around the clock. Any "enemy invasion" is repelled by whatever amount of force is necessary....

When seeing a gang car pull up in front of the house, the dwellers must choose between firearms and fleeing through the back door. Some gangs pride themselves for graciously granting 60 seconds for the house to be evacuated, after which they begin their plunder....

Annual Meeting Report

Topic: Non-resistance

Question: With increased gang violence, especially in small towns and rural areas, what should the attitude of the church be?

Report on West Coast congregations: To date four of our families have been eliminated by gangs...At least seventy percent of the families have moved out and it is believed that the remaining thirty percent will do so within the next year....

Report on Central Kansas congregations: Once known as the Bible belt, this area, as one brother has said, could now be called the Gideon belt, in an allusion to the time when Israel was systematically marauded by the Philistines. To date only six have lost their lives, but material losses are extremely high....

Resolved: That we do not request National Guard protection...The doctrine of non-resistance is just as valid today as it was during the approximately 15 centuries of martyrdom...It is strongly recommended that new areas be investigated for colonization – especially in foreign countries...

Year 2014

A Mennonite Home

Supper conversation

Daughter: I told them at work today that I was getting married soon. People went crazy. They all want to come to the wedding. A lot of them say they have never been to a wedding.

Mother: What do you mean, never been to a wedding? Everyone that works with you is single?

Daughter: No Mom, you don't understand. Most of them live in with someone, but they keep changing partners every six months or so. You should have seen their faces when I told them I planned on living with Jim the rest of my life. They think I am plain crazy...

Time Magazine

America Is Bankrupt

After decades of deficit spending, the curtains have finally fallen on what could be termed “the longest shopping spree in history.” President Roberts has announced a moratorium on all internal and foreign debt payments, as well as the suspension of welfare and Social Security payments.

The dollar, almost as worthless as the paper it is printed on, is being replaced by gold and hard commodities as a means of exchange...

The Wall Street Journal

It Has Happened

The Titanic and the U.S. Government now share a common fate. Both have sunk.

It is estimated that 75% of all American businesses have closed their doors – probably for good. Ninety percent of all airline flights have been canceled. Vehicles are abandoned along the highway where they run out of gasoline.

President Roberts, in an emotional address to the nation, announced that his immediate priority is survival of the nation. Assuming emergency powers, the president has decreed that for the remainder of this winter, only one room may be heated in each household...

News Week

Civil War

With the suspension of Social Security payments, minority groups have turned the U.S. into a virtual battle field. President Roberts has mobilized both the National Guard and the U.S. Army. In large cities entire city blocks are ablaze...Casualties are now calculated to be at least 150 thousand...

Year 2016

Brazil News

Editorial

Colonization Through Persecution

But when they persecute you in this [country], flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the [countries of the earth] till the Son of man be come. –Matthew 10:23

If there had never been persecution, where would the Church of God be today? Sit down some evening and study this out. Recommended reading: The Acts of the Apostles, The Martyrs Mirror, Keeping the Faith.

Without persecution, would there be thriving congregations in Russia, Australia, Africa, Central and South America today?

It has been said that what happened in North America wasn't true persecution. This is true in that it was indiscriminate violence, directed at saint and sinner alike. The persecution aspect would be the fact that the true Christians were defenseless...

A brother from Oklahoma now living in Tanzania was asked if he ever got lonesome for his birth country. "Yes," he replied, "after all, that is where I was born and I have many beautiful memories. But when I go to church and worship together with my Tanzanian brethren, who learned to know the gospel because of the group that moved there, then I know this is where I belong. This to me is the sweet fruit of persecution..."



Pirenópolis Mission

Building a Church

[Myron Kramer, the missionary from Pirenópolis, sent me a letter describing how they made the brick for their new church building.]

In my last letter I mentioned that we had started making bricks for our church building. I thought you might find it interesting to hear how it's done.

Our day begins at 5:30 in the morning when our alarm clock goes off. It's not what you would call a real pleasure to get out of bed then, especially when it's still dark and quite cool, but soon with a good breakfast under the belt, we're ready to get started.

We drive to Antônio's, which is about three kilometers out of town. As soon as we arrive, we make arrangements to catch the horse and get the water gourd filled with the days supply of drinking water. Antônio soon appears with an arm load of tall grass to chop in the small diesel powered feed chopper for the horse to eat during the day.

Soon after daybreak we have everything ready at the olaria (brickyard) to begin work. This olaria sits on the side of the hill beside a small stream. The yard itself has been leveled by cutting into the hill and using the dirt to make bricks in past years. It's about 65 feet wide by 170 feet long. At the one end stands the pipa, which is the horse drawn mud mixer, the picador, a hole in the ground that holds the clay to be used to make the days run of bricks, and the water hole. Thirty feet from there is the bank where we get the clay for the bricks.

When we get there, the first thing is to get the horse hitched to the pipa. The pipa is made of logs set upright in the ground in a circle about three feet in diameter (much like you see in pictures of old fashioned stockades) with a wooden shaft set vertically in the middle. The bottom end of this shaft turns in a hollowed out log. On both sides are posts that stand about as tall as a man. Across the top is a horizontal slab of wood with a hole in the middle, which the shaft turns in.

This shaft has knives, made out of light truck springs, driven into it all around, that cut and mix the clay as it turns. At the bottom are two paddles made out of strong board that push the mixed clay out of a hole on the side.

Fastened to the top of this shaft is a pole long enough to reach out to the horse path around the whole setup. On the end of this pole is a shorter piece of wood that reaches down to the single tree we hitch the horse to. As he walks around in a circle, the shaft turns, cutting and mixing the clay that is put into the top of the pipa.

One man works here, digging the clay out of the picador with a long handled hoe, where it has been soaking in water since yesterday, and putting it into the top of the pipa. As the horse turns the shaft, mixed mud comes out of the bottom and is picked up by another man and hauled on a wooden wheelbarrow to where the bricks will be made and dumped on the ground.

Here is where Antônio again comes into the picture. He has a 2' x 3' work table in

front of him, which stands a little more than waist high and has a 4" board fastened around three edges. On it is a pile of sand and the mold for making the bricks. This mold is made of wood and has three compartments that make one brick each. These compartments are approximately 2.5" x 5.5" x 9.5", with a handle on each end. Each compartment has a piece of wood nailed to the center of the bottom which makes an indentation in the brick, making for better bonding when mudded into place.

Antônio takes this mold and with sand dusts it much like a housewife flours her cake pan. He then sets it on the bench right side up. Next he stoops and gets a wad of clay big enough to make about one and a half bricks, rolls it in the sand and dust on the ground, until molded into the desired shape and well dusted. Then he picks it up and flops it into one of the outside compartments of the mold and presses it into shape. He repeats this procedure, this time filling the other outside compartment. Now, with a stiff wire he cuts the excess clay off the top of the mold and with what is left over, fills the middle compartment. If there is still clay left over, it is tossed back onto the pile.

Now he picks up the whole mold, takes it to where the finished bricks are being placed, turns it over to empty it, and then returns to his work table to repeat this process, again and again and again.

As the bricks are placed on the ground, they start drying fast and soon someone will need to come along and turn them on edge to keep them from drying unevenly and cracking. After they are turned on edge, they are left to dry in the sun for three to four days, or until good and dry.

The work is hard and yet conversation flows easily. About 10:30 Antônio asks one of our boys, who is on the job also, to go to his house and bring the dinner out. We gather in the shade of a tree on the bank of the stream, say grace, and settle down to a well earned meal. All too soon it's time to get up and get the horse hitched to the mixer so we can get back to work.

Around three or four o'clock in the afternoon, Antônio asks someone to count how many bricks have been made – a little over twelve hundred. He asks for enough clay to round out thirteen hundred and says we can start filling the picador for tomorrow. Up to now we have been working hard enough, but now we realize that we still have a big job ahead of us. Using picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, we now need to loosen, load and haul enough new clay to replace all the clay used today, so that we will be able to work tomorrow. At five o'clock the hired help calls it a day, so Antônio and I are left to finish up. By six o'clock the picador is full again, with a trickle of water running in to soak the clay until morning.

After a few days we come to a new phase of the work. Our yard is covered with dried bricks and we need room for the bricks we are making. Now we divide into two teams. While one team continues as described, the other gathers up the dried bricks and hauls them to the caieira – a stack of bricks made in such a way that they become their own kiln – where they are stacked. This is another task that Antônio and I frequently do after normal hours.

This is how we have been working for the past few weeks. Now we have 19,500

bricks made for our church building project. Experience tells us that if we sweat for what we have, it means more to us. If this is true, I believe this church house will undoubtedly mean a lot to these people.

Follow Up

The bricks have been made and I believe they have all been laid up. A number of brethren from the Colony spent some time in Pirenópolis laying up the walls. While the congregations here have given some financial support to this project, as can be seen in Myron's letter, the brunt of the load is resting on the church in Pirenópolis. I understand that the idea is to get the roof on and begin having services. The plastering, cement floor, and other finishing work will be done as they are able. ▲

The Shady Side

The Winning Ticket

[This article was translated out of the O Popular, our Goiânia paper. What happens here is by no means an isolated incident. In fact, it's a sophisticated little procedure that can yield big money – or time behind the bars (seeing a square sunrise, as the Brazilians say).]

Bela Vista – Nilton Viana do Nascimento, 27, who works in a sawmill and lives in this town, was the victim of o conto do bilhete premiado – winning lottery ticket hoax – losing Cr\$19,500,000 [US\$250 at today's exchange], which he had saved up to make his house payment. The golpe – literally, 'blow' – was carried out by two unidentified persons.

The whole story began when Nilton Viana went to the local agency of the Banco do Estado de Goiás to cash a Cr\$30,000,000 [US\$ 375] check which he received from the sale of a chain saw and was to be used to make his house payment. As he left the bank, a fellow asked him if he didn't want to sell his motorcycle.

With the money from the check, Nilton went to the Banco do Brasil, where he deposited Cr\$10,500,000, which left him with only Cr\$19,500,000 in his pocket. From there he went back to where the fellow who wanted to buy his cycle was waiting for him.

While they were closing the deal, the buyer showed Nilton a lottery ticket, number 22,605, from the Federal Lottery, and explained that it was worth two billion cruzeiros [25 thousand US dollars]. While they were still talking, another fellow showed up, listened in a bit, and offered to help collect the money, since the owner of the ticket didn't have the needed identification to prove who he was in the bank.

[This is the crucial part of the plot. In this case the winner wants help collecting the money because he lacks the proper identification. Another variation used a lot is to

say that a close relative – mother, father, child – has been in an accident in another city and the bus will be leaving in ten minutes. He has no money and there is no time to collect the fortune. He is willing (sniff, sniff) to sell the winning ticket for a fraction of its value so that he can get to his mother's (sniff, sniff) bedside before she departs this life.]

They made a deal. Nilton and the other stranger who happened to show up while they were negotiating, will get part of the thirty five thousand dollars if they go to the bank and collect the money for him. At this point the owner of the ticket told them to go to the Banco do Brasil, where they would tell them how to go about collecting the money in Goiânia.

When they got near the bank, the stranger told Nilton he should go in and collect the money by himself. He would wait for him, but would he mind giving him the Cr\$19,500,000 he had in his pocket, just as sort of a guarantee he wouldn't run off with the money from the lucky ticket? Yes, of course!

Going into the bank by himself, Nilton talked to one of the employees. There he learned the truth that the ticket was absolutely worthless. All shook up, Nilton ran out of the bank, looking for his friends, but of course he didn't find them.

Nilton went to the delegacia de polícia and told the delegado – sheriff – his story. He said that both of the men were wearing clothes typical of the poorer working class. ▲

Elvis Presley or Zé Mentira

Quite a few years ago, a handful of German Baptist families from the US settled in the neighborhood. After several years they decided to return to the US.

One of them, Wilmer Long, decided to sell his place through a real estate agency in town. It didn't take long and they came up with a buyer for his place – at a good price.

Our lawyer, Dr. Jerônimo, handled all our land transactions. He had a good nose for smelling a rotten tomato. For some reason, probably at the realtor's insistence, Wilmer let them choose a lawyer to make up the contract. That was the second mistake. The first was to get involved with Zé Mentira. Zé is short for José – Joseph – and Mentira means lie. So we have Joseph the Liar.

Wilmer wanted me to be present for the signing. That is where I met Zé Mentira. I got a funny feeling when I walked into their office. The atmosphere was almost wild. Zé Mentira wanted to know if he didn't look like Elvis Presley. There was no doubt about that one. He did.

Then there was the buyer, a man possibly in his fifties. His hands were calloused from hard work, his clothes simple. He fit perfectly the description of many of our local fazendeiros – land owners. Rich men, some of them illiterate, they looked and worked just like their hired men. These were some of the most trustworthy men that could be found.

So in the middle we had Elvis Presley, acting like a maniac. On one side was Wilmer Long, a fine gentleman, and on the other, a rich land owner from the state of Minas Gerais.

It was during this time that the coffee boom was on in this area. Different ones on the fazenda were getting ready to plant coffee. We found out that the buyer had a coffee plantation in Minas Gerais. He was able to give us a lot of interesting information about raising coffee.

While Zé Mentira certainly cast a shadow on the whole thing, the honesty of the buyer sort of offset all that.

The time came to sign the contract. Since the buyer's money wouldn't become available for several weeks, there would be no title until full payment had been made. That was good. But the realtor had one little item they wanted to discuss. Once the contract was signed, their mission would be fulfilled, which meant they should collect their fees.

That made a certain amount of sense, but Wilmer told them he would give them promissory notes, good for after the final payment was made on the fazenda. Elvis Presley and his cronies agreed to that.

The contract was signed. The promissories were signed and handed out to the individual realtors involved in the deal. Everyone shook hands. Everyone was happy. Especially Elvis Presley.

The due date for the land payment came around, but not the buyer. Wilmer got excited. Here he had paid a high fee to the realtors and their man wasn't paying up. He looked the realtors up. He wanted the notes back. What if the man didn't show up anymore?

Sadly they shook their head. Impossível! They no longer had the notes. They had passed them on to others in deals they made.

As days and weeks went by, Wilmer realized he had been swindled. Apparently the entire thing was a carefully planned farse, starting with Elvis Presley and ending with the honest fazendeiro from Minas Gerais.

To be able to sell his place legally, Wilmer had to go through court (and here is where Dr. Jerônimo made his money) and get the old contract annulled.

I understand that shortly after that Zé Mentira met his Waterloo when someone shot him, very likely for a similar stunt.

And the honest fazendeiro from Minas Gerais? Never again did we see hide nor hair of the man.

No doubt about it, the real professional in this whole deal was the honest man from Minas Gerais. ▲

Advice to Americans Living in Brazil

Never, never get involved with a stranger who suddenly shows interest in your business. No matter how impressive his story is, don't get involved. Our people have had entirely too many close calls where large amounts of money or vehicles were almost lost. Whenever you run across the opportunity of becoming rich by being a good Samaritan, remember in the end you will probably be the victim. ▲

A Brazilian Story

Padre Procópio's Revenge

[Padre means priest in Portuguese – not father, like in Spanish (although maybe it should). Mário de Moraes tells this story.]

This story actually happened in a small town in the interior of the state of Minas Gerais. It's possible that the priest, who would be an old man by now, is still around and could confirm what I say here.

The bride and the groom were very common people, just like their names: José and Maria. Even though they thought the world of each other, that didn't change the fact that a girl by the name of Carmem was doing her best to mess up their relationship. Carmem was José's first cousin and first girlfriend. She went around telling people she was still his first love. Needless to say, this irritated Maria to no end. But realizing that she had first place in José's heart, she relaxed.

The wedding was to be in the little town chapel where Procópio was the local priest. And here I would like to mention just a few things about this priest. When he came to this little town as a priest, he was still quite young. Cheerful and well-liked, padre Procópio was soon invited to every imaginable kind of party or doings. As the years went by, his prestige increased until finally he was consulted on anything of general importance to the community.

Padre Procópio was especially popular at election time, because the candidates he endorsed could be sure of winning a seat on the county commission. By this time padre Procópio was no longer his usual cheerful, smiling self. Incredibly, he turned into a dour, humorless person.

Tall, muscular, dark complexion, bushy eyebrows, it was padre Procópio who was performing José and Maria's wedding. He asked:

“Senhorita Maria do Amparo, do you of your own free will accept José de Oliveira as your wedded husband?”

Just as Maria was opening her mouth to say, sim, she noticed that something had José's attention. She glanced around, and there in a side door, was Carmem. In that instant an intense feeling of jealousy erupted within her. It was so strong that the only thing she could manage to answer was a sonorous NÃO, that rang in everyone's ears. Padre Procópio, was the first to regain his senses:

“Não?”

“That's right!” repeated Maria.

Then, gathering up the train of her wedding gown she ran down the aisle, sobbing all the way. It's easy to imagine the repercussions of something like this in a small town. The town gossips, imagining the worst, spent weeks rehashing the whole thing.

But finally, realizing they were meant for each other, peace was made. Explanations were made, pardon was requested and granted. A new wedding date was set. In the

same church, with the same priest, who this time asked the groom the all important question first:

“José de Oliveira, do you of your own free will accept senhorita Maria do Amparo as your wedded wife?”

Just as José was beginning to say sim, he remembered the terrible humiliation of the previous attempt to get married. A little voice seemed to whisper in his ear, “Why don’t you get even?” It doesn’t take long to decide to obey the voice of the evil one.

“Não,” was the groom’s answer.

Another scandal. This time it was more serious. Maria’s relatives were rolling up their shirtsleeves, going after José family. Padre Procópio was in the middle of everything, trying to throw cold water on their hot tempers.

Months later, when everyone was sure everything was over, the little town was bubbling over with talk. José and Maria had set a new wedding date in the little chapel. Again padre Procópio would officiate. The priest hesitated a long time before going along with their plans. After all, twice they had made a fool of him. But finally he decided to give it another try. Being the only priest, he didn’t have much choice.

“José de Oliveira, do you of your own free will accept senhorita Maria do Amparo as your wedded wife?”

“Sim.”

“Senhorita Maria do Amparo, do you of your own free will accept José de Oliveira as your wedded husband?”

“Sim.”

And then it happened.

Padre Procópio, with a terrible frown, glared at the couple and said:

“But I of my own free will refuse to declare you husband and wife!”

Turning around, he left the sanctuary through a side door, giving the bride and groom a taste of their own medicine. ▲

Brazilian Wildlife

Owls and Hawks

People who spend long hours on a tractor get in on some mighty fine shows put on by nature.

Harold Holdeman tells of the time he saw an aerial battle between a hawk and an owl. After some tight maneuvering, the hawk managed to bag the owl – in mid-air.

Not being able to consume it’s prey while in flight, the hawk landed close to where Harold was working. Noticing that the owl was still alive, he jumped from his tractor and scared the hawk away.

Dazed, the owl remained where it was and apparently realizing Harold was there to help and not to harm, it permitted him to pick it up. Nearby was a clump of grass.

Placed there, it stayed hidden for some time, until the hawk was out of sight. Then it too flew away.

Bill Miller tells of an incident when two hawks were after an owl. The hawks apparently are more agile in aerial battle, but can't gain altitude as fast as an owl. So, with the two hawks in hot pursuit, the owl flew higher and higher, until it became a mere speck. But all the while it had a plan. Suddenly it turned into a dive bomber. Streaking past its adversaries, it plummeted toward the earth at a speed that made it impossible for the hawks to capture it.

Down, down, down it went. At the last moment, when it appeared it would smash into the earth, it flared out, made a safe landing, and ducked into its hole, safe from the hawks.

Now do you still wonder why you never see an owl wearing glasses?

Onças

The other night Tim was coming home in his car. As he crossed the stream near his place, he saw an onça cross the road. It went into the grass, so Tim got out with his flashlight and shone into the grass. There, several yards from him, was the onça. They both had a good look at each other. Neither was dumb enough to try anything smart.

Ostrich Eggs

Chris Stoltzfus was out disking when suddenly he saw something white on the ground. It was a whole nest of ostrich eggs. Chris carefully disked around the nest, so as not to disturb the eggs. One of these days there should be thirty or forty little ones trailing the parents.

And what a beautiful sight. A big bunch of little ostriches trailing the parents in single file can make a person's day.

A Macaw

The other day our good neighbor, Ely Bessa and his wife, Vânia, came walking down the lane carrying a burlap bag. In it was a wounded macaw they found. Would we take care of it? Our son Otávio took over. Within 24 hours he had it eating out of his hand. Since it couldn't fly, we turned it loose. Would you believe it found its way into our publication room and up onto the shelves where we store our plastic book covers.

Apparently it had internal injuries, because one morning we found it dead. ▲

Emma Burns' Diary

Daily Happenings

Sunday – April 5, 1970

Steve Breneman, a Peace Corp worker, and two nuns from town came out for services. We all had a basket dinner at Daniel Kramers under their big tree in the front yard, in honor of the visitors.

Wed – April 8

Miriam, Timothy and Fred went fishing, took squash for bait. Timmy caught an eight inch fish, but it fell back in [Please Tim, for the next issue of Brazil News, tell us how you managed to measure that fish before it fell back in. It all sounds sort of fishie.]. Since the fish quit biting, the boys ended up eating most of the bait.

Fri – Apr 10

My legs got scratched up when we were gathering brush in the field we cleared. Infection set in, so we went to see the doctor. Later, at the grocery store, João, the owner, invited us to have dinner with them. After dinner they took us to their farm near town where they raise fryers to sell in the store. Alma Penner, Bonnie Dirks, and our girls walked to Pedro Pão's place to take them some gifts. They will be moving to another fazenda tomorrow.

Tue – April 14

Dan Coblentz and Charlie cut down a palm tree and hollowed it out for a bica at Charlie's place.

Wed – April 15

Hoeing in the garden and planting more things is almost a daily chore. We sure do need the fresh vegetables. Charlie and Miriam set a trout line in the river. The only thing they caught was a turtle.

Thu – April 16

A beautiful morning: blackbirds singing, doves cooing, and parrots screeching. How they like to eat the rice out of our field. Regina Miller got her toe chopped with an ax. Clara brought her to Charlie for stitches. Faith made a special supper for Timothy's 10th birthday. The men got back from Brasília, where they were working on getting land titles.

Fri – April 17

A number of the men, plus Clara Miller and Mary, went to town to get the new school desks we had made. Jonathan Coblentz cut his foot with the chain saw. Charlie had to sew it up.

Sat – April 18

Daniel Kramer, Charlie, Harold Dirks, and Denton went to town to see about the maps for the fazenda, which we need to get titles. Charlie got the school books. The girls and Bonnie Dirks painted the walls in the building which will be both church and school.

Sun – April 26

The Dan Coblentz family brought 11 year Luís Duarte with them to church. He lives

by the river on the way to town. [Yes, this is the same Luís – Walt Redger’s hired man – that you sometimes read about in this little paper.] In the afternoon Charlie and some of the young folks went with Dans to take Luís home. They visited with his folks for a while. ▲

Remembering Out Loud

The Car Door

Quite a few years back when Alfred Koehn from Wisconsin was buying land here in Brazil, he wanted to buy a little piece that jutted into the land he already owned. The owner was wanting to sell.

Since Alfred didn’t live here and I had power-of-attorney for him, I ended up learning to know the seller quite well. Just a word on him.

Lico – pronounced Lee-ko – is what they call him.

Lico is positively one of the homeliest human beings I have ever seen. Overweight, stooped, unshaven, sloppy, awkward, you would take him for the town idiot.

But looks can be deceiving. Lico and I have a close friendship – a mutual friendship. He isn’t poor. He obviously isn’t dumb. He has a large fazenda and operates a lime plant.

After the deal was made with Lico, Alfred sent money from the US to pay for the place. As happened so many times back in those days, the forwarding bank would lose the money. To find it would be one awful fight. After a week, two weeks, or maybe a month, they would suddenly cough up the money. (The amount of People in the Banco do Brasil in Brasília trying to find out why their money hadn’t come in would indicate these international banks played this game with quite a few people. In a show of piety, we will refrain from saying they were using that money all the while.)

Because of his money not coming through, Lico made quite a few trips to my place. I can still see him coming down the hill in his old rattletrap car that matched him to a tee. He would coast to a stop, turn in his seat and untie the rope that held his door shut.

Even though he was needing the money badly, never once was he nasty about things. I could feel he trusted me when I said we were doing our best to find his money. We would talk a while. Then he would get back into the car, tie the door shut, start the engine and go roaring and sputtering up the hill.

Lico’s money finally did come. I get the impression that his attitude was, “I knew I could trust those people.”

The years went by. One day in town I saw an old rattletrap car go by. I noticed the driver’s door was tied shut with a rope. I looked to see who the driver was, and lo! it was my old buddy Lico. I believe it wasn’t the same car as he used to drive to my place, but it could have been. And there sat the same old Lico, totally unchanged.

More years went by. Just recently again in town I noticed a car going by on the street.

The door was tied shut with a heavy piece of electrical wire. Could it be...? Yes it was. There behind the wheel of a dilapidated old car sat dear old Lico, older, but otherwise unchanged.

I told you about the coffee grower from Minas Gerais who by all appearances was an honest man, but turned out to be an A-1 crook. Now I'm telling you about a man whose looks will throw you for a real loop, but folks, he's a man for whom I have a great respect.

I'm proud of Lico. Used to be he tied his car door shut with a rope. Now he uses electrical wire. This tells me he's not against progress. In fact, when electrical cars become a reality, ol' Lico may just have an edge over the rest of us. ▲

A New Corral

Jorge, the one whose experience was published in this little paper, has been building corrals here on the Colony for different ones.

The lumber he has been using is called aroeira. Brazilians say that an aroeira corral never needs to be replaced. There is a lot of truth to that. In a tropical climate where posts can rot out in three or four years, the life of aroeira posts can be calculated almost in generations. They are at their very best in water, which is why they are used for making bridges. In water this wood is like steel, or better, for it doesn't rust.

So much for the aroeira. When we had been in Brazil just a short time, we decided to build a corral. We went out to the woods to find some good straight lumber. Imagine our elation when we found our woods full of long, straight poles, thirty to fifty feet long.

We cut the lumber we needed, hauled it home, and began work. Once again we were on cloud nine when we found the wood peeled like a charm. All it took was to tap one end with an ax to loosen it. Then grasping the loose end, one could remove that section of bark from one end to the other of the log. Underneath was the most beautiful white lumber.

We built our corral. It was a snap. The green lumber was soft and could easily be cut or shaped with an ax.

What a corral!

We were proud of our beautiful pindaiba – that's what the wood is called – corral. We showed it to visitors.

Finally one day one of them, I believe it was Manoel Norberto, the fellow we bought the place from, worked up the courage to tell us: "That's not very good lumber for a corral. It won't last over six months."

We were too polite to tell him we didn't believe him. That was one time politeness paid off. Within six months Manoel's prophecy had come true. About all you had to do to hear a cracking sound was lean against the corral.

We've been talking about how looks can be deceiving. Aroeira is an interesting

wood. It is full of large worm holes. Just to look at it, you would get the impression it's no good. The pindaiba, on the other hand, doesn't have a flaw in it. The good looking wood lasts six months and the worm eaten wood more than sixty years.

So pindaiba wood is worthless? No way. For years Brazilians (and some of us Americans too) used pindaibas for making rafters. But there was one requirement. For the wood to last, the trees had to be cut in the decrease of the moon. Cut any other time, termites would soon be busy at work.

What's the scientific explanation for this? I don't know. In fact, who knows, it may all be imagination. I do know that pindaibas that aren't cut in the decrease of the moon have a tremendous lot of sap in them. When placed on a roof, it sometimes almost runs out. This doesn't happen when cut in the decrease of the moon.

I'm not superstitious by nature, but I did used to always try to cut pindaibas in the decrease of the moon.

A bunch of baloney? Maybe so, but since I'm not all that adverse to baloney, I'll keep on recommending that pindaibas be cut in the decrease of the moon.

Just don't make a pindaiba corral. Use aroeira. ▲

This & That

Back from from the US: Jesse Loewens, Velda Loewen, Glenn Hibners, Jake Loewens, Duane Holdemans, Lester Holdemans, Staven Schmidts.

Lester and Sharon Holdeman have informed me that the Boeing they were flying on did not flap its wings over the Colony. So what? It sure did make a good story while it lasted.

Mark & Glenda Loewen have moved into their new house. On Sunday, the 22nd, they had two surprise showers. The first was when people from both congregations showed up for a house warming. The second was when it started raining outside – something unusual for August.

August 13, 1993 is an important date in Colony history. On this day Chris & Anita Stoltzfus had the cutest, sweetest, most lovely little boy. I wish all of you good readers could see him. The name: Orlando Charles.

The Paul Yoder family returned from a trip to the Northeast, where they visited the missions, saw the Amazon River, etc.

Different ones went to Pirenópolis to help on the construction of their new church building.

They had a wedding in the Rio Verdinho Congregation. The groom told me several times to be very careful about what I published in Brazil News about the wedding (which of course precludes repeating what his mother-in-law has to say about him). We will report only absolute facts. The groom's name: Franklin LeRoy Mininger, son of Richard & Edith Mininger. The bride's name: Doreen Ruth Koehn, daughter of Veril & Ileen Koehn. They were married on August 15, 1993. It was a nice...oops!

Brazil News

That would be my personal opinion and not necessarily facts. It was a wedding. You would think that with a three month dry season, Edna Loewen wouldn't decide to put a new roof on her house the exact day that it rains. Anyway, her house now has a new roof. Carman Loewen has dug wells for Daniel Holdeman and Frances Schultz.

Glenn & Elizabeth Hibner and Daniel & Anna Kramer had a new granddaughter on August 15.

Ask them if you want to know if Elnora Beth is cute. The parents: John & Sheila Kramer. Jair & Connie da Costa, Bill & Gracie Miller, Divino & Corina Cândido, paid the Dirks family a visit in Vinagre. About a week later Paul & Shirley Koepl also headed out that way for a short visit.

Arlen & Carol Friesen finished their Portuguese classes with Paulo David. On August 2, with their two children, they left for the mission in the Northeast. They will be taking Arlo & Priscilla's place in Acaraú.

It's tomato canning season. On a farm near the Colony, tomatoes are raised industrially and shipped to Goiânia. That's where the ladies are getting their tomatoes.

Mark & Glenda Loewen drove to Acaraú in their pickup to help Arlos move back to Rio Verde. They visited several mission posts.

Ben Giesbrecht's book *Keeping the Faith*, was translated and proofread by our local proofreading committee. However, due to the nature of the book, the many foreign geographical names, quotations from ancient writings, etc., only 30 books were published in a pre-edition run. The proofreading committee, as well as Paulo David, Cláudio Silva, and Luís Fernandes from Goiânia, gave the book one more going over. Then on Saturday, August 28, in an afternoon and evening meeting in the Monte Alegre school, the book was given a final touch-up. The book *Studying the Gospel* was also given a final going over. Both books are now ready to be published.

We have been publishing *Worth Dying For* in installments in our *Mensageiro*. By the time you read this, it should be done. We hope to have it in print in book form in several months.

Rio Verdinho School began classes on August 31. The teachers are: Maxine Loewen (English), Katrina Schultz (Portuguese), and Laura Martin (aide).

We now have the Thompson Chain Reference Bible printed in Portuguese. Best of all, it is printed in the Contemporânea version of the Bible, which is our official version for church use.

We at the Monte Alegre Congregation have chosen for our coming revival ministers, Isaac Akinyombo from Nigeria and Linwood Koehn from the US. The editor of *Brazil News* is very happy with this selection.

August 31 was road day. Different ones got together to rebuild the road going to Adejenes Lima's place. He is a grandson to Aristote Mesquita, from whom Loewens and Hibners bought their places some years back. Both Adejenes and his wife Aparecida belong to church.

As a means of raising much needed revenue, the government is now charging a 0.25% tax on all checks. There is a possibility the Supreme Court will declare this tax unconstitutional.