

# Brazil News

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Editorial

## **When Nature Is Violated**

Last month's editorial was imagination. This one isn't. Especially those who were annoyed by the scenario of what might happen if time continues, should read on and try to decide if facts are more pleasant than fantasy.

When God created man He knew that not everyone would serve Him. He knew that nations, indeed entire continents, would live godless lives. He knew that His people would always constitute a very small part of the total global population.

He also knew that the tendency of the godless masses would be to become barbaric and uncontrollable. Man would become increasingly diabolic, destroying others and finally himself.

To safeguard against this, God created humanity with certain instincts. If followed, they provide the minimum requirements for survival. Violated, they set the stage for anarchy and destruction.

The forces of nature are powerful. During the centuries since creation, they have repeatedly shown their worth. In peoples and nations where there was little or no knowledge of God, nature was able to maintain at least a semblance of order. Obviously there were abuses and aberrations, but without a doubt, nature has triumphed through the ages.

Today however, this is not the case. Nature is being violated.

Talking about men having long hair, Paul asks, "Doth not even nature itself teach you?" Nature teaches us many other things. It teaches women the art of motherhood. It teaches the necessity of some kind of wedlock. It teaches men that they should provide for their families. It teaches tribes and nations that there must be some form of government. It teaches society that crime must be punished.

God is in nature, but nature is not God. Therefore nature is limited in what it can do.

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A Christian is influenced by the laws of nature. But he is governed by the laws of God. People who abandon God are governed by the laws of the powers of darkness. Were it not for the laws of nature, they – as well as others who have never known the Lord – would soon relapse into savagery.

The Christian finds his happiness in the Lord. The world also offers happiness, in the form of pleasure. This may be a strange thought, but man is limited in how much pleasure he can absorb. When he breaks the sin barrier, the sonic boom heard are the laws of nature being violated.

One dramatic example would be the extremely high rate of unnatural deaths in the show industry, which includes suicides, overdoses of drugs, aids – all deaths that violate the laws of nature.

Why would someone who has access to everything that money can buy and that the flesh can lust for, take his own life? Why would he be on drugs?

Because man can take only so much sin. This obviously differs from one individual to another. It's as though each person had a fuse box. Some have 20 amp. fuses, some 30 amps, some 40 amps.... No matter what the amperage, once the limit is exceeded, the fuse will blow.

When someone walks into a restaurant and begins firing away, killing several dozen people, the press screams murder. When Elvis Presley takes his life with an overdose of drugs, millions wail. When it is learned that Rock Hudson is dying of aids, people gasp. But these are individual cases. They are blown fuses.

Sin has existed since Adam and Eve fell. It's doubtful that any new basic sins are coming into existence. What has changed – and that is what this article is about – is the availability of sin. The world today is like a thronging third-world marketplace, where vendors loudly and forcefully hawk their wares, grabbing the arms of potential buyers, trying to drag them into their booths. Never before in the history of mankind has sin been as readily available as today.

Let's look at a few facts:

>Transportation – Have you ever stopped to think of how many sins and crimes have some sort of transportation involved? As you read your papers, notice this factor.

>Mass production – We take the assembly line for granted. But historically, it is yet an infant. The ability to rapidly, efficiently and economically reproduce any and everything imaginable, is having a far greater impact on the proliferation of sin than we can even imagine. Study this just a bit and see what kind of conclusion you reach.

>Science and technology – Dedicated scientists placed man on the moon a number of times, and brought him back to the earth. Equally dedicated scientists are employed by the devil in his workshop. One of their greatest achievements has been the creation of virtual situations. Broken down, this means the artificial creation of a real life situation. Why do children spend hours glued to a joystick, forgetting even about eating, as they race down the Indy 500? Because in this world of fantasy they are able to achieve what they never could in real life. In short, science and technology are specializing in placing man in an artificial environment

where he is master. The ramifications of this go much farther than any of us imagine.

>Virtual prostitution – We take Hollywood for granted. After all it's been around longer than most of us.

What is Hollywood? What is the show business? If you answer that it is an industry that creates movies, you have flunked the test. That is only the tip of the iceberg. Possibly at no time in the history of the world has Satan showed his colors more clearly than in Hollywood. To say that he is the chairman of the board of this multi-billion dollar industry is not an exaggeration. He is, in fact, the sole owner. Everyone else involved are his employees. In all justice, it must be admitted that he has come up with some real talent.

Again, what is Hollywood? It is an industry that specializes in creating virtual situations. Very few people – if any – are able to watch a movie in a detached way. A movie is carefully tailored to draw the viewer into its plot. And what is the plot in these movies? If Satan is the director of the board, we can safely conclude that the plot is to kill, steal, and destroy – kill character, steal virtue and destroy all that is good.

Obviously this can't be done in one big bang, so the chairman of the board came up with some excellent marketing strategy. Let's notice:

The first movies produced were the silent Charlie Chaplin type of down to earth humor. People loved it. Right along with this came the romances. Considering all, we might be tempted to call them good. Boy meets girl, a courtship full of obstacles, but that finally ends at the altar, where they are married, and live happily ever after as husband and wife. Once again, people loved it. There was one basic problem, though. In real life the majority of the people had to settle for less beautiful wives and less handsome husbands than those seen in the movies.

Then came more complex plots. Man meets woman. Love at first sight. But a problem. She is already married. Now what? People aren't quite ready for wholesale divorces, so by going through a complicated plot, the woman's husband is accidentally killed in a train wreck. They get married and live happily ever after.

The public is conditioned for stronger stuff. Adultery and murder become the accepted norm. The original boy-meets-girl plot is ditched. Marriage is no longer the interesting part of the movie. That isn't how people live happily ever after.

Movies now move into the realm of virtual prostitution. The plot is merely a sequence of events in which every imaginable kind of immorality is simulated. Actresses now play the harlot (for that is what they are) to millions – tens of millions – of viewers over the face of the globe. During the time spent viewing (and later mentally reviewing) the movie, especially men become part of the plot.

Sin is progressive. Nowhere is this more evident than in Hollywood. Next came the explicit movies. Even that gets old.

That's right. And now is where the chairman of the board is able to smugly congratulate himself. The stage is set for a new type of movie that the world itself would have rejected a short time back. This has been a gigantic stride forward. To be able to produce a movie for the general public with a plot that centers around homosexuals, was no small feat.

That's where we are now. What next? No one can outguess the chairman of the board, but the tendency will be toward increased violence and subjects that two or three decades ago even the most sinful men and women abhorred. Flesh itself is being violated.

Now, let's go back to the thought of a fuse box. Man was not created with a fuse capable of taking all that we have been describing. Remember, for Satan's plan to work, man doesn't have to actually commit these sins. All he has to do is watch them on TV, on home video, read about them in magazines and books. He becomes a virtual actor in the plots.

But since sin is progressive, something new will constantly have to be produced. What will it be?

Nature is being violated. I am alarmed by the fact that we aren't more alarmed. Yes, yes, we say, we can see things are getting bad. No. They aren't getting bad. They are bad. The stage is set. Events from here on out will happen in rapid succession. Nature has been violated and as fuses are blown, man acts without restraint.

For those of you who were offended by last month's editorial, I apologize. I don't believe I made it bad enough. ▲

## Politics & Economy

### **Change Without a Pacote**

Apacote is a package. Ever since our inflation went out of control during the Middle East petroleum crisis some 15 years ago, the Brazilian government has resorted to pacotes in an attempt to get things straightened up. These pacotes were invariably shrouded in great secrecy. The basic element in most of them was an over-the-board freeze of wages, services, and products.

The simplistic reasoning behind it was that our inflation over here is inertial. In other words, an inflation that feeds on itself, sort of like a big flywheel that keeps going because of momentum. If the flywheel could be stopped, inflation would immediately drop to near zero.

I don't remember anymore how many freezes we've had. One morning we would wake up and find out that everything was frozen. The president's popularity would soar.

But, if according to theory, our inflation was inertial, then once the flywheel was released, it shouldn't start up anymore. It didn't take very long, though, to discover, that the shaft was still turning, even if the flywheel wasn't. A black-market would soon develop and the only way to acquire products was with under-the-counter inflated prices.

In spite of all the bad people have to say about president Itamar, I'm dumb enough to think he is doing a good job under the circumstances. For one thing, he has made it very plain there will be no pacotes. At the same time, he is pulling one of the slickest

political maneuvers I have ever witnessed. He is dolarizando (dollarizing) our economy. What that means is that more and more prices are quoted in dollars. To make this work, it was necessary to have only one exchange rate. The way it was, we had the three rates: the commercial, the parallel and the tourist dollar. The parallel exchange, the most used, had the additional problem of changing from city to city.

So what did the president do? He leaked out word that for what he had in mind, there could be only one exchange rate. Just that quick the parallel exchange – approximately 12% - 15% above the commercial – stagnated, until the commercial caught up with it. Even though we still technically have three exchanges, for all practical purposes we have only one. Some took a beating through this (even I took a 15% reduction in wages, as I was paid on the parallel), but so far as the country is concerned, it is a good thing. Why was this a sharp maneuver? Because he managed it without a presidential decree or congressional approval.

When President Itamar took office, he was openly against selling off state owned industry. In the year that he has been in office, he has totally changed his idea. Now he wants to sell it all off. By doing it he could pay off the US\$80 billion internal debt, plus save billions yearly by not having to inject public money to keep these industries afloat. Obviously this again shows tremendously good political sense.

Finally – and I believe this is his biggest challenge – he must close up income tax loopholes and strike hard on tax evasion.

If he can manage all this, many will tip their hats to President Itamar.

### **Constitutional Revision**

Our constitution is going to be revised. It appears that some of the original distortions will be removed. Congress has a beautiful opportunity to put Brazil on the right track. If they do, you'll be seeing quite a little about this South American country in the news. Keep tuned in. ▲

### **Colonization**

### **New Interest**

New interest is being shown in the Sorriso, Mato Grosso area – where the Kramers bought land some time ago. Those going out for a visit are coming back with some really good reports.

I understand that the land is very flat. Some – folks who aren't excited about the move – say the land is tremendously sandy. Others – supporters – say the sand is no problem. Really, the important thing isn't how much sand there is, but what kind of crops our people can raise there. That, of course, has not been proven, but everything indicates it is good farm ground.

I believe the area is good. Furthermore, I believe that right now it is an excellent

investment – with one reservation. And until this is cleared up, I personally wouldn't invest a dime there.

That is the legal aspect of the land. Mato Grosso doesn't have exactly the best reputation when it comes to honesty in their judicial system. As civilization moves in, I'm sure it is improving a lot. Even so, it is an area where great caution should be used to make sure everything is in order.

When the Rio Verde area was settled, it was standard procedure to have a reliable lawyer (Dr. Jerônimo) check everything out before a deal was closed. He would then draw up the contract and payment would be made. In all the land purchased here, never did we lose any.

An additional problem in Mato Grosso, that we didn't have here, is that of professional squatters. These are people who don't have the slightest interest in farming the land. Rather, with the backing of possibly the Catholic church, leftist lawyers, and other agitators, tracts of land are located where the owner is absent. The people move on, build a shack to live in, work up a symbolic plot of land, and claim the land is theirs. To get rid of them can be a real pain in the neck.

I think that everyone who has bought land in Mato Grosso – from both areas – should hire a good lawyer here from Rio Verde, in whom they have full confidence, and have him check the titles out. In the long run, I believe it would be a mighty good investment. ▲

## A Brazilian Story

### **Prayers for a Departed Soul**

Especially in the past, professional killers took their job very seriously, even with a religious zeal. I am inclined to believe that Mário de Moraes tells this story just the way it is. Needless to say, most professional killers – pistoleiros – are anything but religious. When captured, the law shows no mercy.

A compadre is a godfather. The term has a dual usage in which the child's father calls the godfather "compadre", and vice-versa. Godmother is "comadre."

This took place in the state of Paraíba.

The political leader in one of the towns was unhappy with his opponent, who never missed a chance to denounce him publicly. Because of his violent nature, and also because of his political strength, he wasn't the kind of man one would mess around with. One misstep and he would find himself without a job.

So it was that when it worked out to make a trip to the state of Ceará [where we have several missions], things began to take shape.

Being a long ways from his hometown, would give the coronel a good alibi for what he was planning. He looked up his compadre, who had a profound knowledge of how to deal with this type of problems, and asked for his advise.

“I’m needing to get rid of that \_\_\_\_\_ Belizário for once and for all. What is your advice?”

“Compadre, there is just one way. A couple of well placed slugs of lead and he will never again criticize you.”

“I have thought about that, but I don’t know of anyone who would take on the job.”

“Compadre, if you like, I’ll take care of things for you. It’s really a coincidence, but there happens to be a professional killer in town. He has a lot of experience....”

“Do you know him?”

“I don’t know him personally, but Eleutério, a very trustworthy friend of mine, hired him once to dispatch a fellow who had no business being around anymore.”

“I authorize you to go ahead with the project. I’ll pay ten contos [a currency used in Brazil many years ago. I have no idea what the value would be] in advance and another ten when the good-for-nothing has been buried. There’s just one thing though, I want the job to be done on Saturday or Sunday when I’ll be in Fortaleza. That way, even though some will suspect that I’m the one, they won’t be able to prove a thing.”

“Compadre, I’ll take care of everything.”

From there he went directly to Eleutério’s house. Two of a kind, Eleutério promised to introduce him to the killer. He went on to explain that the killer for hire had a very strange habit:

“He has killed more people than you can shake a stick at, but you would think he is an altar boy. I have never seen anyone that likes to go to church like he does.”

It was in church that they found the man. When the coronel’s compadre saw him, he could hardly believe his eyes. The man looked like he was at least 60 years old. Seeing he was about to back out, Eleutério explained, “Don’t let his age throw you for a loop. Actually, it is an advantage.”

They made their deal, completely ignoring the fact that they were in a church. The sexagenarian pocketed the ten contos and carefully put away the photo of Belizário that he would need to identify the victim. He promised the coronel that the coming Saturday his adversary would go out of circulation.

But Eleutério was unaware of what was about to happen.

On the Saturday appointed for the gruesome job, his wife told him something that completely upset things:

“Yesterday the strangest thing happened. Belizário, who is the coronel’s political enemy, and knowing you don’t like him either, came over and offered to get Dona Guiomar into a hospital in João Pessoa.”

Dona Guiomar was Eleutério’s mother. She had a serious lung disorder. Even though her son was a coronel, he hadn’t been able to get her into a better hospital where she would get the proper treatment. The poor woman was slowly withering away.

Eleutério’s heart was stirred by what he heard. Here he had helped plan the death of the man who wanted to help his mother. His wife had no idea why he turned a deathly pale and headed out of the door in the direction of the church.

As he rushed into the church, he saw the professional killer kneeling in one of the benches, praying as he held his rosary.

“Oh thank God, I found you! I came to call off the deal you made with the coronel.”

The killer stopped praying, looked at him solemnly, and said, “Now it’s too late. I’m praying for the late Belizário’s soul.” ▲

## Linguistics

### A Parable of Three Plates

#### Plate #1

A man slep...uh, he makes...uh, what you call?...uh, ting go up, up, for walk for heavy. Man good, ting go up leetle. Man very good, ting go up, up, more. Man he geev money for...uh, man no money, ting go up, up, more, more. Much years, ting...uh, no more see. Man, he tink, go clods, up, up, for...uh, heavy. Man...ah, deed. Man tink he go...uh, ting for heavy. Man heer talk...uh, how say? pardeez: He come in uder place, he...uh, how say? stealer. June ten, one.

Man go down. Ting down. Man... uh, no slep more. Talk, if he want save, no can to be good. Man look more way. Look Jeez Cris.

Stop! Do not reread. What was the speaker trying to say? Were you inspired? Were you fed? Continue reading.

#### Plate #2

A man tink when sleep he make... uh, how you say? step ground for heaven. When make good ting, step go up – maybe two step. When make very good ting, step go up, up. When give big money for poor, step go very up. One day, no can see. Very years, man tink step at clods, at heaven. When man dead, tink go step to heaven. Man heaven talk: Man go in other road, he rubber. John ten, one.

Man go down. He not slep more. He say if want silvaton, look other road. To be good not go heaven. He look other road, Jesus Christ.

Stop again! Did it start to make sense? Were you fed? Continue reading.

#### Plate #3

A man dream he make ladder. It goes earth to heaven. When he do a good work, ladder go up one, two feet. When he do very good work, it go up more. When he give much money to poor, it go up again more. One day cannot see ladder more. He think ladder go in clouds in heaven. He think when he die he go up ladder to heaven. But he hear voice from pardice: If man go in other way, he robber. John ten, one.



He come down ladder and sleep no more. He say, if he want salvation, he cannot enter with good works. Only way is Jesus Christ.

OK, this time you got the idea. Now read it the way it really is:

A man dreamt that he built a ladder from earth to heaven, and when he did a good deed – up went his ladder a few feet. When he did a very good deed his ladder went higher and when he gave away a large sum of money to the poor, up it went further still. By and by it went out of sight, and as years rolled on, it went up, he thought, past the clouds, clear into heaven. When he died he thought he would step off his ladder into heaven, but he heard a voice roll out of paradise: “He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber” (John 10:1).

Down he came, ladder and all, and he awoke. He said, if he wanted to get salvation he must get it in another way than by good deeds, and he took the other way, which is by Jesus Christ.

I immensely admire the missionary who is willing to get up in front of a little group of hungry souls and do his best. Many times his best is a plate #1 meal. Since many of his listeners are illiterate or semi-illiterate, with little imagination, they understand, at the most five percent of what he’s saying. It’s amazing how the Holy Spirit multiplies the loaves and the fishes and the listeners are filled.

But the Lord fed the hungry through multiplication only twice. That isn’t the standard way of feeding people. Likewise the missionary should never think that just because the Lord blessed plate #1 in the beginning, that it can be made standard fare. It doesn’t work very long.

Plate #2 is better than plate #1 – but not much. A good listener begins to get the drift of what is being said, but that’s about it. The missionary who is serving #2 meals to his hearers should not get discouraged. It’s a very definite step in the learning process. But it better be a short one.

Plate #3 is a different story. Listeners now understand at least seventy percent of what is being said. Unfortunately, it’s entirely too easy for missionaries and interpreters to at this point set up a restaurant that serves only #3 meals. Why unfortunately? Can’t the Lord fill in the thirty percent? He can. And does when the speaker has reached his linguistic limit.

But what if he hasn’t?

Reread plate #3 and the following text. Really, there is a big difference, isn’t there? If Sunday after Sunday you all you got was a #3 meal, would you be fed? Would you be satisfied on a long term basis? Would it be easy to stay home from church?

I’ll answer for you. NO! You would not be satisfied. How do I know? Simple. Pay attention to the following dialogue:

Foreigner (speaking English): You speak Engleesh?

American: Yes, I speak English.

Foreigner: I so glad! I study Engleesh in school, but thees first time I can speak to real American. Where you leeve?

American: I live here.

Foreigner: Oh yes! You leeve here, but in America, where you leeve?

American (switching to local language): Luk, I spek [Spanish, Portuguese, you name it]. I life in Kansas, close Wichita, in middle of United States...

What has happened? An American becomes frantic if he has to listen to broken English for more than fifteen seconds. So he switches to the local language, even though he can't speak it as well as the foreigner speaks English.

I have seen this time and time again. To my shame I must admit I have done the same thing. It's something that comes totally natural to us – so natural we don't even realize we are doing it. In fact, we sincerely feel we are doing our interlocutor a favor by switching to his language.

If we admittedly have trouble listening to someone who speaks broken English, should we expect someone to listen to our #3 speaking?

Once again, and I want this to be very clear, if #2 or #3 is the best you can do, more power to you. I admire your willingness to do your best. But...BUT, if you could do better but simply don't have the gumption to apply yourself, if you are serving #3 plates to your listeners, when you could do better, wake up. Read the Golden Rule. Is it fair to make others listen to what we would be unwilling to listen to?

One of the more negative aspects of the American Colony in Brazil is the #3 restaurant we have set up. Portuguese is our second language. Even in most of our blended marriages (Brazilian/American), the children seldom learn Portuguese as a first language. They speak good English, but in most cases can't even have a decent conversation with Brazilian relatives who don't speak English.

Some lament the fact that our English is becoming perverted. It's amazing how many Portuguese words we mix in. That means that one of these days we will speak neither decent English nor Portuguese. But we will have a fabulous local language. At least we will enjoy the food.

Americans, think again. If foreigners are our equals – really our equals – then perhaps they deserve more than they are getting. ▲

## Remembering Out Loud

### **A Model Couple**

I have a lot of beautiful memories of people I learned to know back in the days when I had my store. One couple in their middle twenties (at that time) that I especially remember was a psychiatrist, Dr. Wagner de Souza, and his wife, Donata, a school teacher.

When walking down the street, they were the type of couple that would turn heads.

Both very fair, she a blond, their principal attribute was not their looks, but their very courteous, gentle personality.

But in Dr. Souza's case, what really got my attention was his dog. I think that anyone who works with pets unconsciously judges the owner by the animal. Once again an A plus for Dr. Souza. His dog was a large, attractive German Shepherd.

Let me inject here that I detest German Shepherds, Dobermen, and most other large pedigree dogs. The reason is simple. Unless the owner spends time with the dog, they many times become violent and unmanageable, where the owner himself is unable to handle them.

Dr. Souza's dog was the exception to the rule. That German Shepherd was a canine image of the owner. I can still see the doctor with his hand lightly resting on the dog's head, soothingly speaking to it while I examined it. There was no growling or trying to get away. The same was true when an injection was given.

I remember one time when Dr. Souza was taking his dog back to the car. The street was wet. Before the dog got back into the car, the owner lifted up his legs one by one and with his hand wiped the excess water off of its paws. Then the dog jumped into the car.

They were the model couple in more ways than one. Young, good-looking, well educated and well set financially.

Several days ago Faith was reading the Goiânia paper when she suddenly asked, "Was that psychiatrist's name that used to come to the store Wagner de Souza?"

"Yes," I said.

"It says here that his wife shot and killed him last night."

There it was on the front page of the O Popular, together with their photos. I read:

**Médico assassinado a tiros pela mulher.**

It went on to tell how that while in Rio Verde, he had gotten into the habit of beating up on his wife. They moved to Goiânia about three years ago. Apparently things kept getting worse. Finally one night they began arguing around midnight. At 3:40 that morning she got his revolver and shot him.

All I can say is, don't judge a man by the way he treats his dog.

That's right. Back in the forties, in Germany, there was another case of a dog named Blondie that was very close to its master. In spite of an extremely busy schedule and great responsibility, the owner would find time to take his dog for a walk and give it special attention.

The owner? Adolf Hitler, directly or indirectly responsible for the death of at least 50 million men, women, and children. ▲

**Some time later...**

Dr. Marat de Souza A brother to the Dr. Wagner de Souza whom we just got done describing, also a psychiatrist, also dead.

Dr. Marat, as he was known in Rio Verde, is a household word. To say, "You need to go see Dr. Marat," is equivalent to, "You're crazy in the head."

Even though he founded the psychiatric clinic in Rio Verde, he himself, and his wife, had the reputation of being crazy. It is said that he and his wife would travel the 140 miles to Goiânia on a powerful cycle in one hour and 15 minutes. That would take an average speed of nearly 110 m.p.h.

Approximately ten years ago, Dr. Marat and two of his friends died in a fiery automobile accident a little ways out of town. After that his wife became famous for her drug use and handing out spray paint cans to youngsters to fill the town up with graffiti. The last word I have about her is that she had some kind of accident that affected her head and she is totally off the rocker.

Ironically, I many times thought of how different Dr. Souza was from his brother Dr. Marat.

Once again it goes to prove that what appears to be happiness in the world, many times is anything but that. Or as they say here, not everything that shines is gold.

## **The Doctor or the Gardener?**

While we're talking about doctors, I'll tell one that Dr. Vicente, our family doctor for the last 24 years told Faith and me the other day.

This happened quite a few years ago, in the little town of Mineiros (near the Mato Grosso border). A salesman for medical supplies was visiting all the doctors in that town. It happened that one of the doctors had his office right in his residence. The salesman asked instructions how to get there. He was told, but then a word of warning was added:

“You want to be on the lookout for Doctor Silva’s (that’s what we’ll call him) gardener. He’s a Negro and loves to put on he’s the doctor. Don’t let him take you for a ride.”

Mineiros was a small town and soon the salesman found the place he was looking for. Sure enough, the gardener was working in the front yard.

He greeted the gardener, “Boa tarde.”

“Boa tarde.”

“I’d like to speak to Dr. Silva, por favor.”

“Please come in and sit down in the waiting room and wait for just a moment.”

The salesman went in and sat down. Soon the door of the doctor’s office opened. There stood the same Negro, now smartly dressed in white. “Please come in.”

Forewarned, forearmed. This was one salesman who wasn’t going to get hooked by the pseudo-doctor. “Listen here pal, I’m up on your tricks. I came here to talk to the doctor, not to the gardener.”

“Sir, I am the doctor. Please come in.”

“No way! Go play your tricks on others. I want to see the doctor, OK!”

Seeing that discussion was useless, the gardener had to get out the class photo of his graduating class in medical school, as well as other documents, to prove that he was the doctor.

Suddenly the salesman realized what had happened. He had been tricked. Not by the gardener, but by the doctors who fed him the line about the gardener/doctor, and who at that moment were probably chuckling as they went about their work.

The salesman began apologizing to the doctor. But he would have none of it. A good sport, he explained that this wasn't the first time his buddies pulled this stunt on him. ▲

## **Alaor from the Banco do Brasil**

I do my banking in the Banco Nacional. Adriana, one of the girls who work there, is the one who usually helps me with my banking. She said her folks, who live in Goiânia would be spending their vacation with her, so I invited them over for supper one night.

When they drove up, lo if I didn't know her dad. When we first came to Rio Verde he worked in the Banco do Brasil. A few years later he was transferred to another agency and finally landed up in Goiânia.

We had a mighty interesting evening. During the conversation, I discovered that Alaor, who presently works in the Banco do Brasil in Rio Verde, was Adriana's uncle. They told a story about him. A couple of weeks later he stopped by at our place to ask directions to another fazenda. I asked him about the story. He retold it:

“Ya that really happened. I was working as a teller upstairs where we didn't have much business. When we had to leave for some reason, there was no one to take our place, so our window would remain closed until we got back.

“One day when there was no one in line, I decided to go have a quick cup of coffee. When I got back there were a half dozen in line waiting for the teller to get back. I didn't know any of them, so I got the bright idea to get into line with the rest of the customers instead of taking my place behind the window.

“It didn't take long until I got a real earful from one of the customers about the teller who wasn't doing his job...”

“What did he say?” I asked.

“Really it wouldn't be proper to repeat the things he said about me. Let's just say he called me a clown and worse...”

With a wry laugh he continued, “I didn't know my little joke would backfire like this. I knew I had to get back to work, so I got out of the line, went around the end of the counter and took my place as the teller.”

“And what happened when it came the man's turn who called you a clown?” I asked.

“He was terribly embarrassed, but I told him not to worry, that I had brought that on myself.”

Then he told another little story. It happens that English is Alaor's hobby. He does quite well, considering all. I believe he thinks so too. Anyway, he had to go out to the Russian Colony beyond Montividiu one day on bank business. Only the man's wife was

at home and she spoke lamentable Portuguese. Some of these Russians speak English, so he switched languages.

He was able to get his business accomplished. Hoping for a little pat on the back, before leaving, he asked the woman, “What do you think of my English?”

Alas, the pat came too low and too swift. “It looks to me like both of us have a long way to go.” ▲

## **The Cursed Bullet**

I was in the doctor’s office one day when Manoel Norberto – the man from whom we bought the first fazenda – came in with his bodyguard, who had accidentally shot himself in leg or hand, I don’t remember which. It wasn’t anything serious and the doctor told them it would be OK.

But something was bothering them yet. Finally Manoel, after considerable squirming around, got enough courage to ask the question, “Doctor, are you sure everything will be OK? Uh, you see, we had the bullets in this revolver cursed so that they would do more good?”

I don’t know if the doctor’s hearty laugh set them at ease or not. ▲

## **This & That**

On September 1, the Arlo Hibner family returned from the Acaraú, Ceará mission, where they spent two years. Mark Loewens went out in their pickup to help them move back. Arlen & Carol Friesen are taking their place.

The Tim Burns and Carlos Becker families, together with Emma Burns, went to Vinagre, Mato Grosso to pay Leo Dirkses a visit.

Daniel & Anna Kramer returned from the US. While there they read in the Brazil News about people going to the States flying over the Colony, seeing mirrors flashing, etc. They came to the conclusion that the editor of this little paper needed to go see Dr. Marat. Anyway, coming back from the US, one of the flight attendants wanted to know if they were from the American Colony in Goiás that they fly over. She told of a blond couple that not too long before had flown with them and pointed out the Colony. I hope to some day meet that flight attendant and thank her for restoring my credibility.

Corinne Isaac from Canada arrived on September 2 to teach in the Monte Alegre School. She and Valéria Gold are living in Caleb Holdeman’s house while they spend a year(s) in the US.

On September 6 the Monte Alegre Congregation had a grocery shower for the teachers and the returning missionaries.

The Monte Alegre School began classes on September 8.

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The Portuguese teachers are:

Cláudia G. Neves Upper grades

Valéria Gold Lower grades

Luciene Rosa Aide

The English teachers are:

Veleda Loewen Grades 6-8

Sylvia Becker Grades 4-5

Corinne Isaac Grades 1-3

September 8-12 the Monte Alegre Congregation had a mini-series of revival meetings. Ministers Richard Mininger and Dean Mininger from the Rio Verdinho Congregation and Cláudio Silva from the Rio Verde Congregation brought the messages. The meetings were well attended.

Edna Loewen had a garage sale at her place on Saturday, the 18th. It started at 7:00 in the morning – a good way to keep the crowd down.

The Phil Martin family returned from spending some time in N America.

Walt and Alberta Redger are here for a short stay.

The first and last rains of the rainy season normally are violent ones, accompanied by a lot of wind and lightning. This year was no exception. In both Rio Verde and Goiânia a number of houses were blown down. At least two people were killed. Unfortunately, we Americans here don't believe in disaster work. Instead of taking the opportunity of leaving a witness, we pretend nothing has happened.

On September 26 we had another blended wedding. Dave, Daniel & Anna Kramer's son, to Marta, Moacir Rosa's niece. They served delicious pasteis (too good to describe) with hot sauce, and pie. A mighty fine wedding.

The Leo Dirks family from Vinagre was out for the wedding and to do some business. The Burns and Dirks families had one big churrasco (too good to describe).

The new literature center is coming along beautifully. The masons should be done by the end of this month. Hopefully by Christmas we should be installed in our new quarters. To have the publication work in the same building as the tract work will certainly be helpful.

When we first moved to Brazil, Homer Unruh, sagaciously prophesied that someday we would have electricity on the Colony and that a paved road would be going through in the vicinity. As usual he was right (Ya, Hazel?). What he didn't prophesy were the high tension transmission lines that would run right through the Colony. A number of years ago one was built. Now the towers are up for a second one. It appears that the wires will be strung up sometime this month. The lines are a nuisance for the farmers, but it sure does make the Colony look 20th century.

Our daylight saving time will begin on October 17 and go to February 17. That information may be useful for knowing what time to make international calls.

The technicians from Telegoiás, our phone company, have been working on our rural phone system. I can't speak for others, but mine certainly is working better.

Cellular phone service will go into operation in Goiânia in October. The next step is

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rural cellular phone service, which is a base unit to be used on the fazendas. Since it is stationary and will always access the same tower, the rates are considerably cheaper than the mobile phone. In Brasília they had a Renac rural phone system like ours. When cellular phones came in, they asked the people if they would like to change over. No way! So what Telegoiás finally did was offer them cellular phones for free (the base units run around US\$3,500 right now) if they would permit them to shut down the other system. This they accepted. The engineers at Telegoiás hinted that they will be making us the same offer before too long. The phones will be more expensive to operate, but they certainly will give us better service.

The state government, together with our local mayor, is negotiating a deal with the Chinese. They want to set up an assembly line here in town to assemble John Deere tractors made in China. Talking about one happy bunch of Mennonites, you'll see them here if the deal actually materializes. Those tractors will be US technology, produced in China, assembled in Brazil, operated by Americans and Russians in the middle of South America.

You've probably been reading in the papers about some massacres here in Brazil, crime in Rio, etc. That irks the Brazilian press to no end, so they are retaliating by giving Miami some terrific coverage. Whenever another tourist is assassinated, it comes out the next day in the Goiânia paper, and I suspect most major papers, including VEJA.