

# Brazil News



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No. 35  
April 1994

Editorial

## **That All Men Are Created Equal**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

–Declaration of Independence, § II

Democracy – “government of the people, by the people, for the people,” to quote Abraham Lincoln, was not the brainchild of the writers of the Declaration of Independence. The ancient Greeks, the Romans, and much later the English and French, did test tube experiments in this field. However, it wasn’t until the American Revolution that the groundwork was laid for mass-produced democracy – that is, democracy for the masses, democracy for export.

The conviction of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, that the inhabitants of this new nation would be intelligent beings, qualified to govern themselves, shows unusual vision and courage.

This has had a profound effect on the American people. It has created a distinctive culture. It has produced individuals who believe that what they do makes a difference. It has placed a premium on honest labor and lent dignity to all professions. The man makes the profession, and not the profession the man, which after all is the acid test to find out if a country really believes that all men are created equal.

Let’s notice:

In our local town (and I suspect, in most third world country towns and cities) to be a garbage collector is a disgrace. It’s something that can be done with an IQ that has never made it up the basement stairs, it requires no education, no job references, no personal charm. In a few words, it’s what you do when you can’t do anything else.

## Brazil News

When I was staying with my dad in the US several years ago, I had the privilege of seeing the garbage truck stop in front of his house. Instead of a filthy, foul smelling truck, it was a tidy looking affair. Instead of four men trotting along behind, one up on top, and a driver up front (who considers it beneath his dignity to touch the stuff he collects), the driver of this truck jumped out, threw the garbage bags into the truck, hopped back into the cab, pulled up to the next residence, and repeated the operation.

This man seemed to be proud of the job he was doing. He may have owned the truck. Or he may have been working his way through college.

Grave diggers belong to the same caste as garbage collectors – with one advantage. Their job affords them the morbid pleasure of, at least for a few minutes while committing a casket to the earth, being in control of the situation, and with studied indifference, ignore the grieving superior caste.

We had a funeral here on the Colony several weeks ago. At the cemetery the pall bearers placed the casket over the open grave. After the committal service, four men stepped out of the crowd. One of them pushed a wheelbarrow full of mortar. They were dressed in suit pants and long sleeved shirts, like the rest of the mourners. In fact, they were mourners. Respectfully, quietly and efficiently, they sealed the vault and covered the grave, lending an added dignity to the occasion.

When I had my feed store in town, we had a Japanese girl working for us. Her parents had separated when she was very young. This incident left deep scars on her personality and she resented anything that might make her look inferior.

One of the unpleasant jobs in the store was to clean out the trays in the brooders where the chicks were kept. To compound the indignity of the job, the only place we had to clean the trays was out on the sidewalk. When I first asked the Japanese girl to help, she was reluctant. While never refusing, she certainly showed no enthusiasm for this particular aspect of her work, until . . .

Until one day when she was out on the sidewalk, sullenly performing her odoriferous task, something happened that changed her attitude, not only to this job, but to life in general. A young American couple, visiting the Colony, came to see the store. The lady, attractive and neatly dressed, watched the Japanese girl for a bit. Then she walked up to where she was working, knelt beside her on the sidewalk, picked up a spatula, and began to help. They didn't speak the same language. Even so this American taught her something the most fluent Portuguese speaker in Brazil could never have told her in words.

Folks, these are examples of what made America great. When picking up garbage is as important as harvesting wheat, when to cover a grave is a dignified task, and when to scoop chick droppings out of a tray on the sidewalk of the main avenue in town isn't something to be ashamed of, then truly it can be said that men and women have been created equal.

Equality is the mother of ingenuity.

A number of years ago a farm magazine told of a group of American farmers who went to Russia to get a first hand look at their communal farms. They discovered

they had to laboriously pick up their information piecemeal. In the shop they asked a mechanic what the horsepower of a tractor was. His curt reply was that he didn't know. His job was to change oil. He knew how many liters of oil a particular tractor took, and period. What was the point of knowing any more?

In the beginning days of our Colony, one of the American neighbors called me over to sew up a piglet that had been stepped on by its mother. He watched me closely as I sutured the gash.

Some time later he told me another piglet had suffered a similar accident. I asked him what he did about it. A bit embarrassed, he said, "Well, I went in and asked my wife for a needle and some thread. Then I sewed it up myself."

One man didn't have the curiosity of knowing how many horsepower the tractors he worked on daily had. The other, after seeing a minor surgery performed, decided he could do it too. One man wasn't born equal. The other was.

That all men are created equal.

To be created equal is one thing. To be born equal is another. The majority of earth's inhabitants have not been born equal. Yet I am positively amazed at how equality can be transferred. We have Brazilians living among us who have done a fabulous job of picking up the American ingenuity. They are men and women who believe that what they do can make a difference. They tear into a novel situation with the same stamina as an American. They admire the Americans, but are not cowered by them. They feel free to criticize – not as an inferior, but as an equal, as an American criticizes an American.

Those who have had the privilege of being born equal, when they go abroad or deal with foreigners, should always remember that equality can be transferred.

When we, as foreigners, find pleasure in sharing our equality, then we glorify our Creator by proving that indeed, all men are created equal.

Brasília

## **Brazil Is Changing**

Yes, Brazil is changing. And the changes aren't merely cosmetic. Especially three incidents have contributed to this change. The first two you are aware of, which are President Collor's impeachment and the congressional inquiry that resulted in the recommendation that 16 congressmen be removed from office for taking bribes.

The third incident occurred in Rio de Janeiro several weeks ago. To understand what we're talking about, a few explanations will be necessary.

In Brazil the lottery is legal. In fact, it's a real source of revenue for the government. But as with everything else, if something can be done legally, it can also be done illegally. So we have what is called the jogo do bicho.

In just a few words, the jogo do bicho is a lottery in which tickets bear the image of different bichos (animals). Since superstition and gambling go hand in hand, people

develop an affinity for a certain bicho (crocodile, goat, cat...) and consistently bet on it.

Because this multi-million dollar business is both illegal and totally out in the open, it's obvious that both the police and the judicial system are deliberately looking the other way.

Everyone knew it, but no one did anything about it. Until one day when a very courageous judge in Rio de Janeiro (a lady, who before had given a few bicheiros – those responsible for the jogo do bicho – stiff prison sentences) was approached in her chambers by three underground policemen who felt they had come up with the necessary evidence to incriminate the top brass.

The following day, armed with search warrants, police raided the office of Castor de Andrade's (the number one bicheiro) office. They returned with 60 record books and 166 diskettes.

Contrary to what normally happens in high echelons of underground organizations, the bicheiros made no effort to camouflage their records. Names and numbers were recorded exactly as they were, showing the exact degree of their sense of security.

A quick glance revealed at least 150 names of people being paid off to "look away." This list included both the governor and mayor of Rio de Janeiro, the leading candidate in the upcoming governor's election in Rio, three judges, twelve federal congressmen, seven state congressmen, three city commissioners, 25 delegados de polícia civil (sheriffs), seven businessmen, one hundred officials and soldiers of the Polícia Civil, and three journalists, besides Paulo Maluf, the mayor of São Paulo and one of the most well known politicians in Brazil, ex-president Fernando Collor, and Herbert de Souza, a revered philanthropist who supposedly used the money received to help the underprivileged.

The tidal waves caused by this revelation are bound to wash up a lot more debris before all is said and done. While it's doubtful that many of those involved will actually end up behind the bars, careers will be wrecked. It is an unmistakable signal being sent to those in power, as well as to those who would like to be in power, that the Faroeste (the Brazilianized form of Far West) is rapidly becoming history.

The three incidents mentioned here are having a very strong impact on the Brazilian government. Like has been mentioned before in this column, if Brazil actually manages to change, you'll be reading more and more about this enormous country in your papers. The potential is here. What we need is honesty. ▲

## The Real

The Real (pronounced "hay-ow" – ow as in owl.) the new currency which is to take the place of the Cruzeiro within several months, is rapidly becoming a reality through the URV, which is nothing more nor nothing less than a reference point tied to the dollar. Many prices are now quoted in URV's, which are unborn Reais (plural of Real – "hay-ice").

Businessmen are going to have to develop a new mentality, a new marketing strategy. Until now their principal argument when trying to sell a product was, “You better buy. Tomorrow the price is going up 20, 30, or even 50 percent.” So people would buy to take advantage of the old price (which was possibly only a week old).

Some businesses are adapting well. They are now stressing quality. In fact, some are even placing large ads in national magazines, suggesting that if you have any problem with their products, to call them toll free.

Once again I say, Brazil is changing. ▲

## A Brazilian Story

### The Winner

[We have already mentioned something about the lottery, so we'll let Mário de Moraes tell us a quick story about a fellow who won, plus another short story.]

Evaristo believed that some day he would be lucky. That is why he would buy a lottery ticket every week.

“You’re throwing your money away, Evaristo,” his wife complained.

“One of these days I’m going to be rich,” he retorted.

“That will happen the day that chickens have teeth.”

At this point Evaristo cut the conversation short, “Take care of your kitchen and everything will be fine.”

It was the very next day that Evaristo went to the lottery house to see if the last ticket he bought was a winner. The proprietor began shouting when he came in.

“You’ve won, Evaristo! You’ve won first place!”

At first he thought the man was leading him on. He got out his ticket and double checked the number. Then he checked again. And again. Sure enough! He was the winner!

Evaristo took out running down the street, yelling like he had gone crazy.

“I won! I won! People, I’m rich!”

That is how he came into the house, scaring poor Eulália, his wife, out of her wits.

Before she could even come to the conclusion that her husband had lost all of his marbles, he broke the news. Her first reaction, naturally, was to not say a word. When she finally realized it was true and wanted to congratulate him, he had already disappeared out the front door, wildly waving the lottery ticket for all to see. She ran after him, but could by no means keep up. The last she saw of him, he was headed in the direction of the local tavern.

Thinking that maybe her husband could stand a little bit of celebrating, she turned around and headed back to her kitchen.

It ended up not being just a “bit of celebrating.” Evaristo was beside himself. He invited all his friends to free drinks. In fact, they didn’t even have to be friends. Anyone who showed up got free drinks.

When finally two of his friends half carried him home, he could best be described as a jug of alcohol. His buddies helped Eulália put him to bed, while he muttered, “I’m . . . rich...rich... Your husband’s... rich . . .”

The sun was high when Evaristo finally awoke the following day. The first thing he said was, “The ticket! Woman! Where’s the ticket?”

With the help of his wife, Evaristo went over the house from top to bottom. They turned his trouser pockets inside out. They checked his shirt pockets. The ticket was nowhere.

The ticket was never found. During the party, the reason for the party was lost. ▲

## **The Pig and the Apple**

It all began one evening after a bunch of people had been invited over for supper. The lady of the house was just about shot after spending the whole day running around, trying to get things organized. Everything seemed to be in order. The table was set with the best china. The silverware was gleaming.

The main course was a small roasted pig. And it was exactly this pig that, indirectly, brought on what this story is about.

The maid was new on the job. The lady of the house called her aside and gave her instructions on how to serve the roasted pig on a large platter. She ended up by saying that she should serve it “with an apple in the mouth and a lettuce leaf in each ear.”

If the lady of the house hadn’t been so tired, she might have noticed the perplexed look on the maid’s face. But, not wanting to ask unnecessary questions, she went to the kitchen with the intention of carrying out orders to the best of her ability.

At exactly the right time, the maid came marching in, majestically carrying the roasted pig on a beautiful platter.

As all eyes turned toward the maid, the first reaction was total stunned silence. Next came muffled sounds of laughter when some of the guests could no longer contain themselves. Then came a roar of laughter, when even the most sedate lost control of their emotions.

What happened? The new maid misunderstood the instructions received. Unaware of what the problem was, she now stood before the guests, a tray with a roasted pig in her hands, an apple in her mouth and a leaf of lettuce in each of her ears. Not in the pig’s mouth and ears, as the lady of the house had hoped. ▲

## **This Month on the Colony**

### **A New Column**

Colony happenings that can’t be given the proper coverage in This & That will find their way into this column. We welcome articles written by people living on the Colony. For each article published, a two month extension will be given on the writer’s Brazil News subscription.

## The Final Chapter

Books are divided into chapters. So are our lives. But unlike in a book, where the author carefully writes and rewrites each chapter, paying special attention to the final chapter, nothing can be rewritten in our life. Furthermore, the final chapter usually is a fairly accurate mirror of what is contained in the previous chapters.

But not always.

Leila didn't have an easy life. She was not raised by her parents. Her adoptive parents separated, and once again she was forced to move, this time to live with her married sister.

In spite of all the good will shown by those who gave her a home, these were not pleasant chapters in her life.

In 1986 Leila became a member of the Church of God. That same year she married Jonathan Coblentz.

The security of a Christian home was good for Leila. It was the beginning of more pleasant chapters in Leila's life. But not as pleasant as was hoped for. What at times appeared to be lapses into the behavior of past chapters, turned out to be a physical problem, a brain tumor that maliciously tried to snuff out her new found happiness.

Surgery performed in Goiânia a couple of years ago gave her temporary relief. As symptoms returned, Leila sensed there wouldn't be many more chapters in her life. During our last revival meetings, with brothers Dewey and Isaac, she found grace to overcome the depressive effects of her physical problem. Thoroughly examining her life, she made sure everything was in order.

In spite of all she went through, Leila's life certainly wasn't a failure. She helped establish a home with three small children. But best of all was the final chapter of her book. Here she proved that He who was for her, was stronger than her enemy.

Her funeral was large. Frequently when we have a large crowd of people from town, there is considerable commotion with people walking in and out during the service.

Leila's funeral was different. Even with an overflowing crowd, there was absolute silence in the audience. There was an open door to preach the Word.

Yes, the final chapter of Leila's life was beautiful. There are those who believe that after the person is dead, there is opportunity to correct the mistakes made in life. Leila showed in a beautiful way that the time for that is before the book is closed. Not after.

The book has been closed. But life goes on for Jonathan and the three children. Remember them. ▲

## Terra da Prosperidade

Land of Prosperity. That's the name of the seed company I mentioned last month, that was putting on a demonstration here on the Colony.

This has an interesting cultural aspect to it.

We Americans are hesitant about going to field days and demonstrations of this type. The bait used by most companies to draw large crowds has become more important than what they have to offer. The bait is a big churrasco, washed down with plenty of beer. This, of course, creates a prime atmosphere for off-colored jokes and everything else that goes with this kind of gathering.

Terra da Prosperidade came up with an entirely different approach. I don't believe it was because they are any more religious than other companies, but rather because they realized that the bait normally used had become an end, and not a means to an end, in their field days. In other words, they weren't drawing potential customers.

Choosing the American Colony as the site for their activities gave them an excellent excuse for not serving alcoholic drinks. Furthermore, rather than an enormous crowd for one day, they spent a couple of weeks on the fazenda. Each day they had approximately 20 carefully selected farmers come in from different areas of the entire state of Goiás.

On the closing day, a general invitation was given on the Colony to anyone who hadn't been there yet. We as a family went. I was impressed by their organization. They had several months before planted corn and sorghum in small plots that resembled spokes in a wheel. In the place of the hub they had erected a round tent. As they described the characteristics of each variety of seed, those present were able to see exactly what they were talking about.

After the meeting, I talked to one of the men. He explained that the idea of small highly selected groups of farmers was a new idea and this was the first time they were trying it. The results were far better than they had even imagined they could be. In fact, he said, other companies were already after them to find out where they got their tents, etc. Hopefully they too will adopt this method.

Terra da Prosperidade's observations teach us some lessons. The first is that people unconsciously associate our financial success with our religion. The second is that consequently we are leaving a witness on our farms. The third, and most important lesson, is that we aren't admired because we are big, but just the opposite. Remember what VEJA magazine says, "One thing has become evident through all this. There is no place for the small operator on the cerrado. A farm under 750 acres is not economically feasible." Most of our farms are less than 300 acres.

The success of a large operation is attributed to the intelligence of the farmer. The success of a small operation is attributed to the religion of the farmer. Never should we get the idea that the larger our operation, the better our witness. Just the opposite is true.

May companies like Terra da Prosperidade truly prosper. May what they have learned on the American Colony be attributed to religion. ▲



## First Settler's Reunion

On Sunday afternoon of March, 20, a reunion was held at the Monte Alegre social hall for all those who moved to Brazil up to the end of 70. What brought it on was the fact that Harold & Emma Dirks and Dan & Clara Coblentz, both early settlers who later moved away, were here with us.

Twenty five years, the time the Colony has been in existence, is approximately one third of a lifetime. Thus those who came as small children are now in the young married couple category. Those who came as youth or young married couples, are now middle aged. Those who came as middle aged, are now senior citizens. Anyone who came as a senior citizen would, of course, no longer be living.

Different ones gave short talks on different subjects. Some of their observations:

**Dan Coblentz**, on the changes in both farming and building:

- The wood we used in building rafters, etc., was so hard we had to drill it before nailing.

- Years ago mortar had no cement in it. Only lime.

**Enos Miller**, on bridges and roads:

- To go to town in the beginning, we had to open between seven to 12 gates.

- The bridge over the Pirapitinga creek (now a modern highway bridge) was two narrow beams. A truck bringing out a load of gravel for building his house didn't want to risk crossing, so unloaded the gravel along side the road and returned to town.

- In the beginning we couldn't get lime locally. Finally when we could, the rock had to be hauled in from the quarry to a crusher in town, reloaded and brought out to the Colony.

- Since no local businesses sold fertilizer, everything had to be purchased in São Paulo and trucked in.

- A bad dip in the road that could be hard to get through when muddy. Jona Dyck didn't want to risk getting stuck, so he took a run at it with his pickup. He made it through the dip, but the 50 gallon barrel full of diesel sailed through the air and landed somewhere out in the grass. The place from then on was known as "Jona's Dip."

**John Penner**, on church services:

- The very first services were held out in the open.

**Emma Burns:**

- Since roads and bridges were so bad in the beginning, people went to town about once every two weeks, and then it was only the men who went.

**Harold Dirks:**

- How the first fazenda was chosen. Looking back there is no doubt that it was God who did the choosing.

- During one of the first nights spent camping out by the falls near what is now Daniel Kramer's, while looking for land, their bath towel disappeared during the night. They found out that the ants cut it up and hauled it off.

- The tremendous hospitality shown by Brazilians to the first Americans who were traveling in the countryside.

- The respect that children showed their parents.

**Edna Loewen**, on what she liked best in Brazil:

- Pete had told her before they came they would have to farm with oxen, wash their clothes in the river, etc. When she got here it was much better than she had expected.

**Jake Loewen:**

- It could take up to eight hours to drive the 130 miles between Goiânia and Rio Verde. The road was either a sea of mud or a cloud of dust.

**Luís Duarte:**

- The impression of, as a little boy, seeing the Dan Coblentz family living in a house with only walls and a roof. For a bedroom, Dan set up a tent inside the house.

•One day he heard some strange noises coming from the woods. He couldn't imagine what it was. That night he even had nightmares. The next day he found out the Americanos were clearing a roadway with a chain saw. To him it was a motorized ax.

•He was impressed by the fact that the Americans would drive past their place and smile.

•One day Bonnie and Les Dirks, Harold & Emma's children, stopped and wanted to know if he would like to study in the Colony school. With an embarrassed little laugh he tells how that he was so smart that after several months they expelled him from school.

•While living at Harold's, Eldon Penner decided he would like to marry Bonnie Dirks. Seeing some unusual activity, and putting two and two together, Luís went to school and spilled the beans.

•The time he shot a bird, dressed it, had it in the pressure cooker two days and it was still too tough to eat.

•The good meals he and Tony de Lima got while living with Harold & Emma Dirks. He claims they would eat until they couldn't hold anymore. Then after they had left the table, Emma would call, "Tony, come here." Not understanding English, Tony thought Emma was saying, "Tony, comer" (Tony, eat some more). Judging by Tony's looks today, he must have taken her seriously."

**Tony de Lima:**

•His impression of spending his first night at Harold's place on an air mattress. He felt like he was sleeping in water.

•What impressed him most was the perseverance of the Americans, how that everyone worked – not only the hired men.

**Charles Becker**, on the cultural aspect of the Colony:

•The problem of so many coming to a strange country, strange language, strange customs, at one time. Being from different backgrounds and congregations, this created much stress and at times our behavior became childish. Yet through it all, as we now look back, we can see God was present.

**João Souto:**

•Told of how he came out with his boss's tractor to work up the first land on the Colony.

•He remembered a song that Dan Coblentz led in church way back in the beginning.

The reunion was a success. It showed there is a very close bond between those who first shared the rigors of Brazil – whether they still live here or have returned to N America.

I have never heard anyone regret the fact that they pioneered here. It has been good for us. I wish everyone had the privilege once in their lifetime. ▲

## Literature

### **When Being Poor Hurts**

For almost 10 years we have been sending the Mensageiro, a bi-monthly publication similar to the Messenger, to readers all over Brazil free of charge. The Tract Board has been picking up the tab.

A number of months back it was decided that it would be better if subscriptions were sold, rather than handed out free. Our readers were notified of this decision and asked to subscribe.

We were aware that for some this would be difficult. Following is a letter that Stephen Kramer, the Gospel Tract superintendent in Brazil, gave me:

May the peace of God be with you.

Dear brethren in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am happy to be able to greet you in brotherly love.

I am very happy because you still sent me the January issue of the Mensageiro, which I no longer expected. When I got the subscription form and saw the price was ten dollars, my heart was pained because unfortunately I won't be able to receive this treasure in my house anymore. My children won't be able to listen to the beautiful stories in the Mensageirinho [the children's section], which they enjoy so much. When I told them I was reading these stories to them for the last time, they became very sad and hung their heads.

The reason I won't be able to subscribe is that I am a day laborer – a mason's helper. I make only one minimum wage [approximately 70 US dollars a month], but by God's grace I was able to buy a house on time [very likely cheap government housing] and the payments take up 30% of my salary. I have five children. Three are studying, one is four years old and the youngest is 3 months old. I have a hard time supplying all their needs. Beside paying for utilities, I put four dollars into the collection. After paying all this, I have to ask my folks for help. But unfortunately they're having hard times too. My dad had a heart attack. Three of his arteries are clogged and so he can't work much anymore. My mom is out of work too.

So I must tell you that unfortunately I won't be able to subscribe to your paper. I will miss it, but this is something that I must place in God's hands, so that His will, and not mine, be done.

I want to thank you for having sent me the Mensageiro during all these years. Forgive me for not having ever been able to pay anything. Even to buy a stamp to send a letter is difficult.

May God bless you for everything you have done. And I hope you can continue the work of evangelization through the Mensageiro.

Your brother in Christ,  
Francino Carlos de Carvalho

Realizing that not everyone would be able to pay for a subscription, the church has opened it up for anyone who might feel to help out in a situation like this. I don't doubt but what there are other Francinos among our readers. I hope all of them write us. Stephen tells me that for some, even to buy a stamp is almost an impossibility. Let's remember those who are so poor it hurts. ▲

## Language

### **Portuguese**

Of the Romance languages, Spanish is doubtlessly the most musical. French is classical. Italian is antiquated. But Portuguese is a vibrant, bouncy language, highly expressive. Full of subtle shades, the tone of voice, facial expression, and mood of the speaker, can make words say something entirely different than they appear to. Time and again these nuances trip up the foreigner, who takes what he hears at face value.

Portuguese is a bouncy language. New words are constantly being created. Nouns are verbalized. When prices began to be quoted in dollars, just that quick dólar could be used as dolarizar, literally to dollarize. Dolarização da economia – dollarization of the economy – became a common term.

The diminutive form of words, together with the inflection of the voice, can make a word bounce sky high or slither along on the ground. The word bom means good. Zinho is a diminutive suffix (ito in Spanish). So bonzinho would apparently mean “a little good.” But it rarely does. Depending on the circumstances and the inflection of the voice, to say that John is bonzinho, can mean he is a nice chap. It also can mean that you have to really watch him. If pronounced, bonziiiiinho, it means he is very, very shrewd.

The foreigner who hasn't mastered the subtleties of the Portuguese language will at times declare high and low that someone lied straight to his face, when really all that happened was that they took someone's words at face value, without understanding what was really meant.

There is a saying, “A little bit of learning is a dangerous thing.” Especially in the case of the Portuguese language, it could be said, “A little bit of Portuguese is a dangerous thing.” To not know Portuguese reasonably well has a tendency of giving the foreigner a sour taste toward not only the language, but also toward the people.

Portuguese is easy to learn, but hard to master. Why the difficulty?

The first obstacle we face is the fact that we consider English to be a superior language. If we could flip a switch and instantly convert Brazil to English, we would do so. This attitude takes away our incentive to master the language.

The second obstacle is failure to observe the linguistic golden rule: “As ye would that men speak unto you, so speak ye also to them likewise.” The truth of the matter is that if the magical switch could be flipped and Brazilians would all talk English – as well as we talk Portuguese – we’d soon be ready to pack our suitcases and leave. It simply drives us up a wall to have to listen to broken English for any length of time.

The third obstacle is that money talks. Our checkbook becomes our grammar book. It’s amazing how fast they roll out the red carpet in business places when they find out we speak Moneyguese.

It takes three generations to effortlessly learn a foreign language well. With an effort, it can be done in ten years. With a real effort it can be done in less. The question is: Can we afford to do it the effortless way? ▲

## Remembering Out Loud

### **Inflation & Bank Interest**

A number of us were standing around the other evening, when the subject of inflation and bank interest came up.

Way back when the first electrical line was put up all the way through the Colony, bank interest was 8% per year. Since the project would be financed in the Banco do Brasil on a 10-year loan, we became alarmed when it was announced that the rate was going up to 15% per year. We considered dropping the project.

It was with real misgivings that we decided to go ahead. Would we be able to make the payments? After all, 15% per year was mighty high interest.

Not only did interest go up. So did inflation. Much more than interest. Remember that this loan had no monetary correction on it, so as inflation edged up, it became easier and easier to make the payments.

Unfortunately I have no actual figures on this, but I remember that the first payment wasn’t half bad. The next one, a year later was a breeze. I think that quite a few of us, on about the fourth year, went in and paid off the remaining six years in a lump sum. It was such a small amount left it didn’t pay to fool with it.

One in the group, who let his loan run the full ten years, said the ninth payment was the equivalent of two bushels of beans and the last one was just a handful of beans. I doubt if we paid more than 25% of the original value of the loan

I have mentioned before that one of the biggest problems in getting rid of inflation is the fact that people make money on it and don’t want low inflation.

It was inflation that made this Colony. In our little circle different examples were

given of how tractors and combines were purchased and in the end just a fraction of the value was actually paid.

Then the day came that banks began charging monetary correction plus interest. So far as the farmer is concerned, his heyday was over. In fact, it was this very thing that broke a lot of farmers. When Collor took office, inflation was running at 80% per month. His freeze brought it down to zero, at least for a couple of months. The Banco do Brasil, however, charged the full 80% for the final month, when the freeze was already in effect. That means that the dollar value of the loans was almost doubled. It's no wonder many farmers went under. While no one went broke on the Colony because of this, several were very hard hit.

Recently Congress investigated this problem and came to the conclusion that the Banco do Brasil should repay farmers for the beating taken. If I'm not mistaken, that would come to over a hundred billion (that's right, "b" as in basket) dollars. Obviously this would break the bank, so everything is sort of hanging in mid-air. Farmers are hoping to get something out of it. I hope they don't get their hopes too high.

If the Americans made money on inflation by being entirely honest, what about those who were dishonest? They made fortunes. ▲

## Education

### **Field Trip to Goiânia**

[Rio Verdinho School students went on the field trip to Goiânia too. I didn't get their reports in time to include them in the last issue, so a few excerpts will be printed now.]

#### **Laurence Kramer:**

When the lady was done talking to us in there, she took us out to see where the train unloads. From there [the wheat] goes to some silos on the top of the building. Altogether the silos hold 14,000 tonnes of wheat. They get most of their wheat from Argentina, some from Canada, some from Germany, and some from Brazil. They store the wheat from different places separately so they can make the right mixture, because the wheat from different places is different.

#### **Angela Martin:**

The wheat is first inspected, treated, precleaned, then polished and sorted. Then it goes through a grinding process. Fourteen huge, extremely noisy grinders grind the wheat. Each time the flour goes through the grinder it is sifted in large sifters which shake very hard. If these shakers would all shake the same way at the same time, the building would collapse. When the flour is very fine and very white, it is ready for the packaging room.

#### **Laurence:**

There is one man in charge of the grinders and one man in charge of the sifters. Those two men are the only men in the factory that know what mixtures and what needs to be done with the flour.

**Angela:**

We saw where they loaded the farelo [bran], which is the hulls and broken kernels of wheat. A large electronic arm with a bunched up sleeve lowered and deposited farelo into the truck, moving forward as it filled. That was all of the mill. It produces 450 tonnes of flour a day and 8,000 a month.

**Laurence:**

After we were done watching the loading, we went over to the noodle factory. First we went to see where they washed out the molds. Right in the next room were the eggs being gotten ready for condensation. In that room it stank terrible and Jair held his nose all the while.

**Angela:**

In the main noodle factory, called the pastificio, curtains of spaghetti about 5 feet wide were coming out of a machine. Doubled up, each string of spaghetti was about two feet long. These curtains were hung over bars and went through a four to eight hour drying process. When they are dry, they are cut to about a foot of length and then packaged. We also saw curly noodles, balls of noodles, corkscrew noodles, and hollow noodles about as big around as my finger. We can truly say we saw “oodles of noodles.” [I liked that one. cb]

**Laurence:**

After they are packaged, there are ladies busy putting them in boxes. From there they are lowered down to the lower floor, where they are kept till they are sold.

**Angela:**

[During all this] we found out that Connie and Joan had a scary experience on the bus. While there, a man forced his way into the bus, saying he was a worker. They called the bus driver. He made the man get out of the little restroom where he was hiding at the back of the bus. He said the man had escaped from an insane asylum. ▲

## **This & That**

Our health department has been vaccinating in rural areas against Yellow Fever. On March 21 most of the Monte Alegre Congregation gathered in the church social hall to be vaccinated. Due to the big crowd, Joan Unruh, Charlene Souto, Johanna Schmidt and Faith helped give the shots. Approximately 200 were immunized.

Several weeks later they went to the Rio Verdinho Congregation. Because of problems they have run into with the air guns, they now use disposable syringes. Children from both schools visited the Terra da Prosperidade stand on the 25th. Saturday, the 26th, Terra da prosperidade invited those who hadn't had a chance to see their stand, to come take a look and stay for a churrasco. It was really good. The churrasco.

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

Wayland & Rita Loewen and children, Robson Gold and Jair Costa spent several days in Mato Grosso visiting the Leo Dirks family. They went fishing.

Ministers Mark Loewen and Cláudio Silva spent several days in Goiânia helping finish up their revival meetings.

Bert & Ada Coblentz arrived from the States on the 27th, because of their daughter-in-law Leila's illness. They are staying 30 days.

On the 28th, kindergarten classes began in the Monte Alegre school. Keleda Loewen, the teacher, has ten students. The Rio Verdinho school reportedly has three students.

On the evening of April 1 we had Good Friday services in the Monte Alegre church. The Daniel Holdeman family spent the Easter weekend at the Mirassol, São Paulo mission, where their niece, Paula Schultz, is teaching school.

There is a bad flu (as if some flus are good) making its rounds here on the Colony. It's victims usually spend approximately 10 days between the shoe scraper and the sidewalk (really down and under).

We've had a number of meetings to try and decide how to take care of our roads. Until now, about the only thing we are pretty well agreed on is that good roads are better than bad roads. The big problem is that in the first meeting held, someone came up with the bright idea that instead of having a road committee, we should have a conservation committee. In the vote there must have been a misunderstanding, because what we ended up with was a conversation committee. Maybe we should forget about roads and begin looking into helicopters, huh?

Dean & Esther Lou Miner and Stan & Mary Schultz spent the April 10 weekend in Uberlândia, visiting our sister Alice, who lives there.

On the 10th, Stanley & Kathy Holdeman took Corinne Isaac to Goiânia to pick up her ID card. They then spent the weekend at the Pirenópolis mission.

Mark & Glenda Loewen are getting guardianship for Samuel, a homeless orphan boy from town.

Phil & Alfreda Martin are adopting a two year old girl.

On the 15th, the Rio Verdinho School had an open house so that the parents could see the student's science projects. It had to do with electricity. (How about a report for the next Brazil News?)

The dedication of the new mission church was held in Pirenópolis on April 17.

Different ones from the Colony went.

No cute babies showed up in the last 30 days.

Soybean harvest is in full swing. It's positively amazing the amount of trucks, pickups, cars and tractors that use the main road here in front of the Centro de Literatura where we work.

Rosella Yoder is back in the States, where she plans to have sale so that she can move back to Brazil. She has kept her permanent visa up from when she and Ura lived here before. Her son James stayed here. He is working out his permanent visa from this end.

Leonard & Moselly Koepl and dau. Joan are spending six weeks here. We always enjoy having them here.



## Brazil News

The Colony men got together and built up the section of the road between the highway and João Souto's place. It was an experiment to see how much it will cost us to build up a kilometer of road.

Lester & Sharon Holdeman will be spending three or four months in the city of Fortaleza, in the Northeast. There have been no missionaries there for quite some time, so they will try and help the one sister we have there and see if there is other interest.

Karla Holdeman is spending mornings in the Monte Alegre school, helping Miss Isaac with her work.

Ileen Koehn is doing the janitor work in the Centro de Literatura.