

**A POLITICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE  
BRAZILIAN MILITARY DICTATORSHIP, 1964–85**

**1960**

- APRIL President Juscelino Kubitschek inaugurates the new capital of Brasília.
- OCTOBER Jânio Quadros is elected president.

**1961**

- AUGUST President Quadros abruptly resigns. After overcoming objections by the armed forces, Vice-President João Goulart of the Brazilian Labor Party assumes the presidency with diminished powers.

**1962**

- JUNE Students from the Catholic left form Ação Popular (Popular Action).
- JULY In White House meetings with advisers on Latin America, President Kennedy indicates that he would support a military overthrow of the Goulart government.
- OCTOBER During Brazilian congressional and gubernatorial elections, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) covertly channels money to candidates who oppose President Goulart.

**1963**

- SEPTEMBER The journalist and governor of the state of Guanabara (Greater Rio de Janeiro) Carlos Lacerda defends a coup d'état against President Goulart.

**1964**

- MARCH A massive demonstration in Rio de Janeiro supports Goulart's call for land reform and other progressive measures, while businessmen and the Catholic Church mobilize middle-class anticommunist sentiment against the leftwing program of the Goulart government.

- APRIL A rebellion of the armed forces overthrows the government of President Goulart. President Lyndon B. Johnson immediately recognizes the new regime.
- The military decrees an Institutional Act that expands the powers of the presidency and allows it to suspend the political rights of politicians.
- Marshall Humberto Castello Branco, a four-star general, is elected president by a purged Congress.
- JUNE A purged Congress extends President Castello Branco's term in office until March 15, 1967.

#### 1965

- OCTOBER Opposition candidates are elected as governors of the important states of Guanabara and Minas Gerais.
- Castello Branco issues Institutional Act No. 2 that dissolves the political parties, establishes an official pro-government party and an "opposition" party, and creates an indirect election process for the president, vice-president, and governors.

#### 1966

- OCTOBER The Congress elects four-star general Artur de Costa e Silva as the new president.
- NOVEMBER The former governor Carlos Lacerda organizes the Frente Ampla (Broad Front) in an attempt to unite ex-presidents Kubitschek, Quadros, and Goulart against the military regime.

#### 1967

- NOVEMBER Carlos Marighella, a former leader of the Brazilian Communist Party, initiates an urban guerrilla campaign against the military regime. During the next five years over a dozen armed struggle groups will operate in Brazil.

#### 1968

- MARCH The killing of high school student Edson Luís in Rio de Janeiro by police sparks a nationwide wave of student demonstrations against the military government.
- APRIL-JUNE The government outlaws Lacerda's Broad Front.

The military represses wildcat strikes by workers in Minas Gerais and São Paulo.

- OCTOBER Military police arrest 920 student representatives and leaders in a national meeting of the National Union of Students.
- DECEMBER President Costa e Silva decrees Institutional Act No. 5 that closes Congress, suspends *habeas corpus*, expands press censorship, and takes away the political rights of many politicians for ten years.

#### 1969

- MAY The military expels seventy prominent professors from the country's major universities for their alleged subversive activities.
- SEPTEMBER Two revolutionary organizations kidnap the U.S. ambassador. He is freed after the military releases and flies to Mexico fifteen student and political leaders, who had been tortured while incarcerated.
- OCTOBER President Costa e Silva, who suffered a stroke in September, is replaced by four-star general Emílio Médici.

#### 1970

- MARCH Pope Paul VI condemns the widespread torture of political prisoners in Brazil.
- APRIL The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) meeting in Washington, D.C., resolves to denounce torture in Brazil and calls on the U.S. government to cut off all economic and military aid to the dictatorship.
- MAY Marcos Arruda is arrested in São Paulo.
- JUNE The National Council of Churches and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops present a dossier about torture in Brazil to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States.

#### 1971

- FEBRUARY Marcos Arruda is released from prison.
- MAY Senator Frank Church of Idaho conducts Congressional hearings about U.S. aid and support to the Brazilian police.
- DECEMBER The Committee against Repression in Brazil (CARIB) organizes protests in Washington, D.C., against the official visit of President Médici to the Nixon White House.

## 1972

- SEPTEMBER Amnesty International releases a list naming four hundred Brazilian officials known to be involved in the torture of political prisoners.

## 1973

- JANUARY Several urban guerrilla organizations issue a statement in an article in the French newspaper *Le Monde* recognizing the failure of the guerrilla strategy to overthrow the military government.

## 1974

- JANUARY Four-star general Ernesto Geisel is indirectly elected president.  
NOVEMBER The Brazilian Democratic Movement, the opposition political party, trounces the official government party in Congressional elections.

## 1975

- OCTOBER The television journalist Vladimir Herzog is detained and killed in São Paulo while being questioned about alleged membership in the Brazilian Communist Party. Over 8,000 people defy government restrictions and join an ecumenical religious ceremony in his memory.

## 1976

- APRIL Students strike throughout the country.  
NOVEMBER The opposition political party makes major gains in municipal elections.

## 1977

- MAY In protest against the arrest of student activists in São Paulo, 80,000 students go on strike throughout the country  
SEPTEMBER The police invade the Catholic University of São Paulo and arrest 1,700 students.

## 1978

- MAY Metalworkers in Greater São Paulo organize a wildcat strike, defying the military's economic and labor policies.  
OCTOBER João Figueiredo is selected as the fifth general to assume the presidency.

## 1979

- AUGUST The Congress approves an amnesty bill freeing most political pris-

oners and allowing most exiles to return to Brazil, but the law absolves all torturers of criminal prosecution.

**1980**

NOVEMBER The Congress passes a law reintroducing the direct election of governors.

**1981**

APRIL A bomb being planted by rightwing army intelligence officers accidentally explodes outside the Rio Center, where a fundraising concert for the opposition is taking place.

**1982**

Opposition candidates win the country's most important governorships and a majority in Congress.

**1983**

FEBRUARY A nationwide campaign begins to demand direct presidential elections, mobilizing millions throughout the country over the subsequent year.

**1984**

APRIL Pro-dictatorship forces in Congress defeat a constitutional amendment to establish direct presidential elections.

**1985**

JANUARY A coalition of opposition forces and dissident sectors of the pro-government party support Tancredo Neves for president and José Sarney for vice-president. They win a majority in the electoral college.

MARCH Sarney, who had previously supported the military government, temporarily assumes the presidency when Neves falls ill.

On Inauguration Day, President Figueiredo avoids the swearing in ceremony and leaves the presidential palace through a side door, marking the end of military rule.

APRIL Sarney becomes president on the death of President Neves, becoming the first civilian to rule the country since April 1964.