

Leticia Pinheiro graduated in Social Sciences from the Fluminense Federal University (1980), got her Master's Degree in International Relations from the Institute of International Relations of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio (1988) and her Doctorate in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (1995). She was the Executive Secretary of the Brazilian Political Science Association (2006-2008) and co-editor of the Brazilian Political Science Review from 2006 to 2012. In 2012, she was a Visiting Research Associate with the Latin American Studies department of Oxford University. She is an expert in Brazilian Foreign Policy, working mainly with the decision-making process, South-South cooperation, democracy and foreign policy. Besides chapters of books and several articles published in national and international magazines on Brazilian Foreign Policy, she published, in 2004, the book *Política Externa Brasileira, 1889-2002*, through Jorge Zahar Editores. Since 1997 she has been an Assistant Professor at the Institute of International Relations of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio, where she coordinates the *Agendas e Atores de Política Externa* Research Network (<http://agendasdepoliticaexterna.com.br/>).

This work seeks to provide an explanation for the contents of three foreign policy decisions implemented under the government of General Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979). It does so by analyzing the decision-making process which led Brazil: 1) to abstain in the Meetings of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers for voting the lifting of sanctions against Cuba; 2) to restore diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China; and 3) to recognize Angola's MPLA government. The central hypothesis of the work is that, although the doctrine of the regime (National Security Doctrine/NSD) has shaped the general conduct of the government, it is not enough to explain the changes in the main lines of foreign policy. It is necessary to analyze the decision-making arena where those changes were indeed defined. The first part of the work reviews the literature on Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime and presents the perspective of analysis. Then the origins and contents of the NSD, in particular its external components, are presented. In addition, it describes the general structure of the decision-making arena under Geisel's government, and the main aspects of the foreign policy implemented during this administration. The following three chapters then seek to reconstruct the decision-making process aiming to retrieve from the analysis of the bargains among the bureaucratic role-players, the meaningful elements of the decision contents. The conclusion then claims that it was President Geisel's leadership, along with his Foreign Minister, which was able to oust the "ideological frontiers" precept from the core of the NSD, in spite of its admitted importance during the Cuban case. Furthermore it disputes the premise which states that the existence of a given ultimate consensus among the decision-makers based on the Doctrine is able to explain, on domestic grounds, the foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism". It does so by maintaining that the way whereby a new consensus around foreign policy was developed within the decision-making arena is, in itself, a crucial element in understanding the decision contents.



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FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING  
UNDER THE GEISEL GOVERNMENT



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Three exemplary decisions implemented under the government of General Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979) are examined in this book: 1) the abstention in the voting of the lifting of sanctions against Cuba during the Meetings of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers; 2) the resumption of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China; and 3) the recognition of Angola's independence under the MPLA government. It argues that it was President Geisel, along with his Foreign Minister, who was able to oust the "ideological frontiers" precept from the core of the National Security Doctrine, in spite of its importance as a guideline for the military regime. In so doing the book disputes the thesis that the Doctrine is able to explain, on domestic grounds, the foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism". It does so by maintaining that the way whereby a new consensus around foreign policy was built within the decision-making arena is, in itself, a crucial element in understanding the decision contents.



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FUNDAÇÃO ALEXANDRE DE GUSMÃO

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**FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING  
UNDER THE GEISEL GOVERNMENT**  
THE PRESIDENT, THE MILITARY  
AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

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LETICIA PINHEIRO

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UNDER THE GEISEL GOVERNMENT**  
THE PRESIDENT, THE MILITARY  
AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY



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To Nicolai and Stefan, with love, in exchange  
for the years I couldn't share their smiles.

And to Tariq, whose smile has been my  
inspiration since he was born.





*“Where secrecy exists in diplomacy it lies in the process of negotiation and this type of secrecy is common to many professional or political activities. (...) Any negotiation attempting to bring two sides together, reconcile differing interests or resolve disputes accept that there has to be a stage of dialogue, understandings and misunderstandings which must be protected from third party observation and interjection so as to avoid the pressure from outside interests on the issue which might detrimentally influence the debate. Diplomatic activity is essentially a negotiation activity.”*

Azeredo da Silveira,  
“O Brasil e a Nova Ordem Internacional”, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 18 (69/72), p. 8.



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Last, but not least, I would like to thank to John Jardine, who was of great help in making my words sound more English.

## FOREWORD

At the end of last year I received an invitation from Ambassador José Vicente Pimentel, President of the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation of the Ministry of External Relations, to publish my doctorate thesis, which I defended in 1995 at the International Relations Department of the London School of Economics. My initial reaction was a mix of joy and caution. I was joyful for the opportunity to publicize more widely a reflection on such an important period in Brazilian foreign policy; and cautious for recognising that, having been written approximately 18 years ago and with very limited access to sources, much of what I analysed and the manner in which I carried out this analysis may have already been reconsidered or even become obsolete. After all, today we can not only rely on a wider and more diversified variety of concepts and theories seeking to interpret the States' foreign policy, but also on new research sources on Brazilian foreign policy, in light of the new access to information law, the liberation of the consultation of private archives, the publication of testimonies from key figures from that period, etc. In view of this situation

and of the growth of the field of International Relations in Brazil, many colleagues from my generation and younger ones have been publishing their reflections on the period addressed by this work and on related periods, bringing new interpretations to the debate. Given that no substantive changes to this manuscript were to be made – either for complementing it or dialoguing with more recent works –, what would be the purpose, if any, of the publication of this work?

While pondering the matter, I realised that there is, on the part of some colleagues in the field, an interest in reflecting about the process of formation, expansion and institutionalisation of International Relations in Brazil, as well as the field of studies on Brazilian Foreign Policy in particular, a movement in which I participate. Well, this work, along with additional research from the same period, represents a particular branch of the consolidation of the field. At a time when there were no International Relations post-graduate programmes at a doctoral level in the country, students interested in the field sought specific education in the area overseas – especially in the United States and Europe –, supported by Brazilian sponsoring agencies. In my case, the goal was to supplement my graduation as a Master in International Relations by the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio (PUC-Rio) and the position of researcher in the Centre for the Research and Documentation of Contemporary Brazilian History (CPDOC/FGV), where I had had the wonderful opportunity to work with Professor Gerson Moura and with Monica Hirst, and where I learned much of what I know today about Brazilian foreign policy. It was thus, in the search for tools in the subarea of Foreign Policy Analysis that would help me explore the impact of the decision-making process on the contents of policies implemented during the authoritarian military regime, that I began my doctorate and wrote the following thesis, under the guidance of Professor Christopher J. Hill.

Despite any occasional personal merits, what led me to accept and, once again, welcome the publication of this work was what it helps to illustrate regarding the development of the reflection on Brazilian foreign policy, along with other works from the same period. In other words, this work, as well as other works from the period, is part of an attempt (and a successful one, in my opinion) to reflect on the levels of autonomy that characterised the country's international behaviour during the period, in spite of its scarce power resources and a highly hierarchized international system with strong asymmetries. In addition, the fact that it was intended for the understanding of the foreign policy of a regime that had already fallen made it necessary to circumvent the difficulties in accessing sources, creating alternatives which may still be of great use to this day. In fact, my option was to counterbalance this shortcoming by creating as many sources as possible by conducting interviews. In addition, I tried to cross-check the data with one or more sources, besides the then still unpublished articles and interviews. This is the case, for example, of the works by Luiz Augusto Souto Maior (“O Pragmatismo Responsável”) and Gelson Fonseca Jr. (“Mundos Diversos, Argumentos Afins: notas sobre aspectos doutrinários da Política Externa Independente e do Pragmatismo Responsável”), which would only come to be published in 1996<sup>1</sup>. In the same way, the reference to the testimony of Ambassador Vasco Leitão da Cunha (“Diplomacia em Alto-Mar – depoimento ao CPDOC”), then in press, to be published in 1994<sup>2</sup>, as well as the references to the interviews conducted by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst with Minister Azeredo da Silveira in 1979, which would come

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1 GUILHON DE ALBUQUERQUE, José A. (org.), *Sessenta anos de política externa brasileira: 1930-1990, crescimento, modernização e política externa*. São Paulo: Cultura Editores Associados, 1996.

2 CUNHA, Vasco Leitão da. *Diplomacia em alto-mar: depoimento ao CPDOC*. Rio de Janeiro: FGV: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 1994.

to be organised and published in 2010<sup>3</sup>; lastly, the reference to the interview with President Ernesto Geisel, conducted by Maria Celina S. D'Araujo and Celso Castro in 1994, which I have been permitted to consult and which was also published by Fundação Getúlio Vargas Publisher in 1997.

I would also like to clarify one more thing, and despite escaping a purely academic scope, its omission might generate some sort of anachronism. I would like to register that, in addition to any occasional corrections of typing errors on the body of the work, I have allowed myself to make one single inclusion: a dedication. Thus, I have added a new dedication to the previous one, this time to my son Tariq; if at the time of the writing of this work he had not yet been born, I am now immensely proud to dedicate to him this publication.

And lastly, a final mention. Despite still focusing my research on the process of formulation and implementation of Brazilian foreign policy, I am currently dedicated to discussing, among other factors, the growing plurality of the actors and the intensification of the politicisation of this public policy, both phenomena highly related to the re-democratisation of the Brazilian regime. This information, which could be perceived as a safeguard on a change of area of interest, actually illustrates, from my point of view, the persistence, if not the coherence between the times when I dedicated myself to analysing the explanatory potential of the decision making process for foreign policy implemented by an authoritative regime and today, when I analyse contemporary foreign policy and its relation with the democratic regime. In so doing I underline my concern in considering the subarea of Foreign Policy Analysis, its concepts and analytical tools as facilitation and even an invitation to democratic activity. By emphasising what

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3 Spektor, Matias Azeredo da Silveira: um depoimento. Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2010.



I said in the conclusion of this work, that “If then we think about Latin American countries where new experiments with democracy are being made, the importance of emphasizing the possibilities of action within the decision making arena, which I have intended to demonstrate throughout this work, takes on a double political meaning. On one hand, it raises the need to be attentive to remaining authoritarian procedures which can overrule democratic chosen aims; on the other, and this actually complements the first point, it strengthens the requirement for enlarging the decision making arena with respect to foreign policy”, I acknowledge and reaffirm my convictions that the tools of Foreign Policy Analysis allow us not only to broaden the scope of analytical interpretation of foreign policy – past and present – but equally the possibilities of democratic participation in its formulation today.

Rio, July 2013.



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Head of the Air Force Staff.....	1973-1975
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Minister of Army .....	1974-1977



## **PREFACE: THE POLITICS OF THE RESPONSIBLE PRAGMATISM**

How do domestic factors impact on foreign policy making? Does foreign policy possess unique characteristics that set it apart from other public policies? What sort of public policy is foreign policy? These questions, which pertain to the subfield of foreign policy analysis, recently established as an analytical field within the discipline of International Relations, constitute a relevant issue in foreign policy research in democratic contexts. But to what extent could one discuss the political dimension of foreign policy in an authoritarian context? This is precisely the analytical framework of Leticia Pinheiro's Ph. D. thesis, defended in 1994 at the London School of Economics, in England. Its publication could not be more appropriate at the present time.

After all, the study focuses on the foreign policy of General Geisel's government, which, by its military nature, would be treated as a unitary actor. To the contrary, that is not the author's analytical approach. For her, an authoritarian political regime cannot be treated analytically as a monolith, and we should not assume domestic consensus regarding governmental policies.

Despite relative impermeability of the inner circle of power to society demands and inputs, one cannot, a priori, assume consensus within the governmental decision-making arena, no matter how narrowly defined the decision circle is. Better yet, the alleged consensus in the decision process should be treated as a hypothesis, that is to say, it must be subject to the empirical scrutiny of the researcher. Her argument is that consensus, when it exists, is the result of an internal process of persuasion between domestic actors, a process which grows in complexity the larger the distance between the preferences of the main agent of the decision, in this case the President, and the general opinion of the members of the decision-making arena.

This last term has no previous institutional definition, since the decision-making unit is informal, made up of the actors the President considers relevant to consult in the decision-making process. Thus, the reconstruction of the decision-making process is a complex task for the researcher. This is one of the merits of Leticia's work. Citing yet unpublished sources, as well as countless interviews with several participants of the Pragmatism decision-making unit, the author masterfully reconstructs the decisions chosen to prove her hypothesis.

In the literature of International Relations, the model of the unitary actor is associated with the realist theory in which the state is seen as a monolithic block, with no internal divisions and responding only to external opportunities. In this ontology of the state there is no society or politics, only the national interest, to which only the state, or its maximum representative, holds access. In the case of several analyses of the foreign policy of the Brazilian military regime, a role similar to the systemic constraints would be played by the National Security Doctrine, seen as the faithful representation of the ideal military model of cohesive foreign policy. This is another myth the author helps deconstruct,

the Doctrine is not the origin of foreign policy, but many times the latter is justified in the terms of the former, aiming at its legitimization within the internal public, that is, the military.

From a theoretical viewpoint, the perspective adopted by Leticia Pinheiro treats the different levels of analysis, starting from the most systemic and moving through domestic constraints – political regime and bureaucracy –, as different filters which narrow the parameters for foreign policy choices and decisions. However, the choice and content of the final decision are not predetermined by these layers of constraints, but depend on the decision-making process. In the 70s, the international system underwent significant changes that directly affected the Geisel government project for Brazil's global projection. First of all, the duplication of oil prices had an immediate impact on the balance of trade, in view of Brazil's strong dependence on imported oil, particularly from the Middle-East. Furthermore, in the political sphere, the ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the NPT, in the late 1960s, was defined as the ultimate moment of the “freezing of the world power”, in the words of Ambassador Araújo Castro. However, the 1970s also set the stage for the China-US rapprochement, both driven by the same balance of power motivation and, for the first time, crossing the ideological frontiers of the Cold War. The very NPT was the outcome of US-USSR rapprochement in the field of non-proliferation.

The two main actors of the “responsible pragmatism” foreign policy, General Geisel and Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira, had undergone previous international experiences that would lead them to a particular reading of the situation. The former, as President of Petrobrás, and the latter, as leader of the G77 – the main political arena for the mobilization and performance of Third World countries at the multilateral level – both were aware of the distance separating the orientation of the foreign policy of

the previous military governments from the new opportunities opened in the international system. In fact, practically all important international decisions in multilateral organizations, Brazil voted with the minority, because “it practiced a Cold War policy”.<sup>1</sup> This awareness of the country’s international “isolation”, due to the alignment with the West, was shared by the President and his Foreign Minister.

Although conditions for foreign policy modernization exist, change in foreign policy were materialized through the actions of those two actors, in which the Foreign Minister helped produce the arguments to be used by the President in convincing the other participants of the decision-making circle. In justifying “controversial diplomatic recognitions”, such as China, for instance, the economic argument was used broadly. If the international system was being transformed and boundaries were being crossed, Brazil could not give up the economic and commercial benefits yielded by the establishment of new partnerships, even with countries outside the West.

The case studies chosen by the author all fall within the same ideological camp, that is, they involve key-countries in the Socialist bloc: Cuba, China and Angola. That is a correct methodological choice, because those were the cases that could have falsified her hypothesis of the existence of relative autonomy between the President’s preferences and those stated in the National Security Doctrine. However, in all three cases the preferences of the President and his foreign minister prevailed, and that was so because of the decision-making process, conducted by the President, in which political negotiation, persuasion and some manipulation of the information available were fundamental.

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1 Interview with Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg, by Monica Hirst and Maria Regina Soares de Lima, Brasília, 18 August, 2002.



Of all cases, the recognition of Angola in 1975 is the most significant for Pinheiro's argument. In this episode, Brazil was involuntarily placed at the center of a typical Cold War crisis, with the resumption of the civil war in Angola and the presence of Cuban troops in the conflict. The latter would have been unacceptable to the regime had it been known *ex-ante* by the Brazilian military. The manner in which Geisel manipulated the information of the Cuban presence in Angola is exemplary of the author's hypothesis that the way in which decisions are made impacts on their content. After all, as she points out, Geisel and Silveira "deliberately played down" the information of the Cuban presence "in order to stick to their wish to recognize Angolan independence" (p. 251). Another aspect to be observed is to what extent "they misperceived the impact of this fact on the more conservative members of the government" (*idem*). Despite being loaded with internal tensions and heavy civilian and military criticism, Geisel and Silveira managed to reverse the previous Brazilian policy of support for Portuguese colonialism and made a 180-degree turnaround in Brazilian traditional African policy. In a later statement, Azeredo da Silveira considered that reversal a remarkable accomplishment, "a sort of miracle". A miracle obtained with much negotiation, persuasion and even some pressure, leading Ambassador Ítalo Zappa to declare that "to practice diplomacy outside is quite easy; the difficulty is to enforce it within the country".<sup>2</sup>

In addition to argue that the decision-making process has substantial effects on foreign policy choices, Leticia Pinheiro's thesis has also the merit to emphasize the dimension of agency in foreign policy, a dimension which is practically absent in all systemic constraints explanations, an approach commonly used by

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2 Ítalo Zappa, speech delivered for the Rio Branco Institute graduates on 29 May, 1991, mimeo, p. 2, quoted on page 265 of Leticia Pinheiro's work.

several analyses of the foreign policy of the military governments. The same deficiency applies to those explanations based on the impact of the National Security Doctrine and the implicit consensus within the military. Systemic explanations eventually accept, implicitly or explicitly, that foreign policy choices respond to “national interests”, a polysemic concept that harbors a great variety of dimensions. To the contrary, from the analysis of the decision-making process, the author can answer in a clear manner the question of how the “national interests” were defined, how they were implemented and what they actually meant (p. 275). Hers is a pioneer work in the Brazilian literature, analyzing the foreign policy decision-making process and, in particular, of an authoritarian government, much more opaque to scrutiny by society and by the foreign policy scholars.

Also to be mentioned, is the book’s contribution to the study of foreign policy innovation. What are the conditions for foreign policy innovation given the latter traditional resilience to change? The first of them is quite clear, and it is the object of her final observation that to make changes, “political, administrative and personal resistance” must be overcome. Another condition that also emerges along the rich narrative of the cases studied is the enormous synergy between President Geisel and Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira. Both, due to their respective previous international experience, were convinced that foreign policy should change to take benefit from a changing international scenario. This attunement worked as a stimulus to innovate an anachronistic foreign policy orientation and was certainly one of the factors that strengthened Azeredo da Silveira’s position in face of the criticism of the military establishment and the conservative elites toward their bolder decisions in foreign policy. It is impossible not to refer to current times to understand the changes in foreign policy during the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his foreign

minister, Celso Amorim. Their partnership also exhibited the same synergy and the same presidential legitimization was crucial for all innovations in foreign policy that eventually had critical domestic repercussion. In the case of Brazil, the strong foreign ministers, those who could guide foreign policy to new directions, were those who also could count on the synergy and support of the presidency.

Finally, one very important issue of the book is the relation between foreign and domestic policy. In the context of the Cold War, in which belonging to one of the political-ideological camp necessarily tied the domestic and international realms, pragmatism was based on the idea that the projection of Brazilian “national interests” should have priority over ideological affinities. Such delinking was expressed by President Geisel in his extolling of “non-alignment within the Western world”.<sup>3</sup> The awareness of the artificial nature of the division between the two worlds and of the fact that it only benefitted its creators was crucial to overcome that separation. On the other hand, the same pragmatism in foreign policy reversed the external-internal link to favor Geisel’s domestic political projects. Thus, the modernization of foreign policy was seen by Geisel as instrumental and complementary to his project for political opening. Moreover, as well-put by Pinheiro, Geisel acted in the inner circle of power with the necessary caution so that the more daring gestures of his foreign policy did not mobilize the opposition of the more hard-liner military sectors, which indeed came to take place, but with Geisel’s victory and the continuation of the political opening. The domestic political negotiation was thus fundamental for ensuring the pragmatism of the government’s foreign policy. As it occurs today in a context

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3 For some of those considerations, see HIRST, Monica and LIMA, Maria Regina Soares de. “O Legado do Pragmatismo Responsável”, mimeo, 2010.

of consolidated democracy, the politicization of foreign policy was used by the military opposition in their conflict with Geisel and his allies. The big difference is that this politicization was restricted to the inner core of power with few and controlled repercussions in society.

Letícia Pinheiro is one of the most competent internationalists of her generation, having been a student and, in some cases afterwards, a partner of some of the “founders” of the field of International Relations in Brazil, such as Hélio Jaguaribe, Celso Lafer, Gerson Moura, Monica Hirst, Tullo Vigevani, Sonia Camargo, Gelson Fonseca Jr and myself, besides many others. First at CPDOC/FGV and then at the Institute of International Relations of PUC-Rio, she had and still has a fundamental role in the institutionalization of the subfield of foreign policy analysis in Brazil. FUNAG’s publication of her work allows for its popularization beyond the area’s experts and greatly enriches the Brazilian literature on foreign policy.

It is a special satisfaction for me to have been invited to write this Preface, due to our long-standing warm friendship, intellectual exchange and academic partnership. I am also immensely pleased with the publication of the first academic work to make extensive use, as a primary research source, of the long interview conducted by Monica Hirst and myself with Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira, in seemingly endless and extremely rich sessions in his apartment in Rio de Janeiro, right after the end of the Geisel government in May 1979. The records of the interview are currently stored at CPDOC/FGV.

*Maria Regina Soares de Lima*

IESP/UERJ

Rio de Janeiro, August 2013

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to study Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime taking into account the variables that shape the decision contents. I shall firstly outline the arguments that comprise the level-of-analysis debate<sup>4</sup>. My purpose is to work within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy) proceeding “bottom-up”, that is, to account for the behavior of the state in terms of the behavior of its constituent bureaucracies. Moreover, the work seeks to *explain* some aspects of Brazilian foreign policy under the government of General Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979) instead of *understanding them*.

Previous analyses appraised the subject either within the first debate (international system vs. nation state), or within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy) both proceeding

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4 SINGER, J. D. “The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations” in Klaus Knorr & Sidney V. (Eds.) *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 77-92 and HOLLIS, Martin & SMITH, Steve. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 9.

“top-down”, that is, either accounting for the behavior of the state in terms of the behavior of the international system, or accounting for the behavior of the bureaucracy in terms of the behavior of the nation state<sup>5</sup>.

To clarify this debate, the following figure presents the three layers of the level-of-analysis problem, and the six ways which the argument can follow:

Level of analysis: first debate	International system top down ↓ vs. ↑ bottom up
Level of analysis: second debate	Nation state ↓ vs. ↑
Level of analysis: third debate	Bureaucracy ↓ vs. ↑ Individual

Source: Reproduced from HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

5 In contrast to what used to be the main tendency until the 80s, recent attempts to analyze the Latin American foreign policy within the second debate proceeding “bottom-up” must be noted. Amongst them, the study by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst about the relationship between Brazil and Argentina, and Brazil and the United States is an example of the increasing importance the analysts have been giving to the opening of the “box” to explain the policy contents. Notwithstanding its merits, however, this study does not contemplate the period of the military regime. See HIRST, Monica & LIMA, Maria Regina Soares de. “Crisis y Toma de Decisión Brasileña: El Programa de Integración Argentina-Brasil y las Negociaciones sobre la Informática con Estados Unidos” in RUSSEL, Roberto (org.) *Política Exterior y Toma de Decisiones en América Latina*. Buenos Aires, RIAL/Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1990 pp. 61-110. For a good panorama of how the decision-making approach was gradually being employed for explaining the Latin American in general, and the Brazilian foreign policy in particular, see MUÑOZ, Heraldo & TULCHIN, Joseph S. *A América Latina e a Política Mundial*. São Paulo, Editora Convívio, 1984 and RUSSELL, Roberto. (ed.) *Política Exterior y Toma de Decisiones en América Latina*. Buenos Aires, Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1990. It is worth noting, however, the remaining shortage of studies concerned with the third debate (bureaucracy vs. individual) proceeding “bottom-up”, as pointed by Muñoz. MUNOZ, Heraldo. “El Estudio de las Políticas Exteriores Latinoamericanas: temas y enfoques dominantes” in WHILHELMY, M. (ed.). *La Formación de la Política Exterior - los países desarrollados y América Latina*. Buenos Aires, RIAL/Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1987, pp. 287-315, p. 311. Nevertheless, those recent analyses added a good deal of improvement to the area, particularly with regards to Latin America, as once suggested by Edy Kaufman. KAUFMAN, E. “Latin America” in C. Clapham (ed.). *Foreign Policy Making in Developing States: a comparative approach*, London, Saxon House, 1977, pp. 131-164, pp. 158-159.

The studies that have explained Brazil's foreign affairs concerning the opportunities and constraints dictated by the international system (first debate) can be classified in different categories, varying from an orthodox systemic perspective to a less conventional one. The distinctions between them can be detected in the emphasis upon Brazil's capabilities to behave in a more or less constrained way by the international system.

The basis of the argument embraced by the supporters of a traditional systemic approach<sup>6</sup>, is found in their view of Brazil (the unit) as primarily reactive to the international system. From their vantage point, Brazilian international conduct should be explained by its insertion within the international division of labor, where the opportunities of benefiting from the system's advantages and, indeed, of having a more salient role in the international system were dependent upon the country's predisposition to act as a "sub-imperial" actor in the regional arena, e.g., to safeguard US interests in the continent, where Brazilian presence would gradually increase. Its shortcomings have been labeled the "sub-imperialist expansionist" or "privileged dependence" approach<sup>7</sup> and have already been shown elsewhere<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, it is worth underlining its main weakness.

I do not dispute the role played by the international system in influencing the behavior of the nation states. Indeed, by referring throughout this work to the international scene within which the

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6 Amongst others, see MARINI, Rui Mauro. "Brazilian Sub-imperialism", *Monthly Review*, February 23, 1972, pp. 14-24. VAYRYNEN, Raimo. "Economic and Military Position of the Regional Power Centers". *Journal of Peace Research*, 16, no. 4, 1979, pp. 349-369.

7 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt University, August 1986, p. 9.

8 For a critical review of this perspective of analysis, see LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. *Idem*, pp. 12-19 and pp. 30-31 and Antonio Carlos P. "La Montée en Puissance du Brésil: Concepts et Réalités". *Revue Française de Science Politique*, v. 30, no. 2, April 1980, pp. 328-355.

decisions under investigation were taken, my aim is to retrieve its influence on the units' behavior. However, the advocates of the approach mentioned above, who have explained Brazilian international behavior based on the Dependency Theory<sup>9</sup>, did not take enough from their own premise which states that a country like Brazil has some leeway in its regional sphere of influence<sup>10</sup>. In other words, while at the same time they admit the existence of some latitude for the unit's conduct, they do not consider this fact as an actual source of autonomous behavior<sup>11</sup>. Conversely they regard the unit demeanor as no more than the reproduction of the system's interests at the regional level. As a result, they postulate that Brazilian international policy was defined by the country's automatic alignment to the hub of the system – the United States. It has been demonstrated, however, that during the first military government (Castello Branco, 1964-1967) Brazilian support for alleged US anti-Communist policies (Santo Domingo, 1965) was an indigenous aspiration from the ruling elite toward the domestic legitimization of the military regime, in addition to an answer to the US demand<sup>12</sup>. Likewise, the divergence of interest between Brazil and the United States in the subsequent administrations (Costa e Silva,

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9 Note that despite being an important basis for thinking about the states' international conduct, Dependency Theory cannot be seen as a theoretical approach for Foreign Policy Analysis. KLAVEREN, Alberto v. "Análise das Políticas Externas Latinoamericanas: perspectivas teóricas" in H. Munõz. & Joseph S. Tulchin. *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-20, pp. 7-8.

10 As one of the supporters of this perspective has put it: "It is not a question of passively accepting North American power (*although the actual correlation of forces often leads to that result*), but rather of collaborating actively with imperialist expansion, assuming in this expansion the position of a key nation". MARINI, Rui M. "Brazilian 'Interdependence' and Imperialist Integration". *Monthly Review*, December 17, 1965, pp. 10-29, p. 22. Emphasis added.

11 Note that I am referring solely to the analysts who have examined the Brazilian case. A different perspective can be found in the analyses about other countries made by scholars equally identified with the Dependency Theory. For comments about their works, see KLAVEREN, A. *Op cit.*, pp. 7-10.

12 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & CHEIBUB, Zairo B. *Relações Internacionais e Política Externa Brasileira: debate intelectual e produção acadêmica*, Rio de Janeiro, Convênio MRE/IUPERJ, February 1983, paper, pp. 132-133.



1967-1969 and Garrastazú Médici, 1969-1974), such as the refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Nuclear Treaty, the claim for a 200-mile limit for territorial waters, etc.<sup>13</sup>, seems to confirm the view that, notwithstanding the power of the system, the units have indeed their own and, sometimes, conflicting interests.

In a less orthodox perspective, there are those analysts who have explained Brazilian international conduct from the mid-60s to the early 80s by emphasizing the opportunities created by the détente and by the loss of US hegemony in the international arena, towards a more autonomous and prominent behavior from the Third World countries<sup>14</sup>. In contrast to the supporters of the “sub-imperialist expansionist” perspective mentioned above, who usually overstate the international system constraints over peripheral countries like Brazil, the attempt made by the advocates of the so called “emerging power” approach to taking into account the opportunities of the system should be welcome. Nonetheless, the positive aspects of their appraisals are also responsible for the shortcomings. By overemphasizing the country’s internal capabilities such as economic development, military strength and the elite’s aspiration to major power status, they have made “straight-line projections from the present to the future, assuming implicitly that the favorable political and economic trends of the mid-1970s would continue”<sup>15</sup>.

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13 MARTINS, Carlos E. “A Evolução da Política Externa Brasileira na Década de 64-74”. *Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 12, Apr./May/Jun. 1975, pp. 55-98, pp. 68-91.

14 Among others, BAILEY, Norman A. & SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil’s Foreign Policy: A Case Study in Upward Mobility” in *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, v. 4, 27, Spring 1974, pp. 3-25. PERRY, W. *Contemporary Brazilian Foreign Policy: the international strategy of an emerging power*, London, Foreign Policy Papers, v. 2, no. 6, Beverly Hills, Sage Publ., 1976. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. *Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1976. SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazil’s Candidacy for Major Power Status: Short-Term Problems and Long-Term Optimism” in *Intellect*, 105, June 1977, pp. 400-405.

15 BOND, Robert D. “Brazil’s Relations with the Northern Tier Countries of South America” in Wayne A. S. (Ed.) *Brazil in the International System: the rise of a middle power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1981, pp. 123-141, p. 134.

In this sense, we should welcome the analysis made by Lima about Brazil's chief economic objectives in international affairs since the early 1970s – access to foreign markets and energy supply<sup>16</sup>. Based on the Collective Goods approach, she developed a framework of analysis that sought to encompass the likely pattern of international behavior of semi-peripheral countries<sup>17</sup>. Thus, by taking into account both the opportunities and constraints dictated by the international system, and the latitude for autonomous behavior from the nation state, she concluded that Brazil followed distinct strategies regarding different issues, due to the international regime's characteristics, but also due to Brazil's specific power resources and due to constraints at the domestic level<sup>18</sup>. In so doing, Lima achieved the objective of taking into account both the power of the international system and the so called national interests. However, by assuming the latter's existence, but excluding herself from its scrutiny, she left a lacuna to be fulfilled.

Moving on to the analyses made within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy), I shall firstly stress the difficulty of straightforwardly ascertaining if they have opted for proceeding “bottom-up” or “top-down”. Indeed several analysts have accounted for the role played by the units in the formulation of foreign policy<sup>19</sup>. In so doing they advocate different hypotheses

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16 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu”. *Op. cit.*

17 *Idem*, p. 36.

18 *Idem*, p. 60.

19 Besides others that will be mentioned throughout this chapter, see GRANDI, Jorge Alberto. *Regime Militaire et Politique Extérieure du Brésil: l'Accord de Cooperation Nucleaire Germano-Brésilien du 1975*. Ph.D. Thesis, Paris, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, 1985. FONTAINE, Roger W. *The Foreign Policy Making Process in Brazil*. Ph.D. Thesis, The John Hopkins University, 1970. ROLAND, Ely. “La Formulación e Instrumentación de la Política Exterior del Brasil (1964-1985)” in *Secuencia*, no. 7, January-April 1987, pp. 157-172. RUDOLPH, James D. “Government and Politics”. NYROP, R. (Ed.) *Brazil - a country study*, Washington, Department of Army, 1983, pp. 233-288.

about which decision units should be seen as the ultimate decision makers and with regard to which issue, the most recurrent being the President, the National Security Council (NSC) and the Foreign Ministry (Itamaraty)<sup>20</sup>. Notwithstanding having pointed to a plurality of, even to a dispute<sup>21</sup> between the decision units within the decision making arena, those analysts seem not to have made the most of this fact in the explanation of foreign policy contents<sup>22</sup>. Therefore it is common to come across with conclusions which emphasize the collaboration as opposed to the antagonism between the decision units; or even the domination of one unit over the others to explain the foreign policy implemented, without actually scrutinizing the consequences of the pattern of decision making for the final decision contents<sup>23</sup>. As a matter

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- 20 Amongst others, see BARROS, Alexandre de S. C. "A Formulação e Implementação da Política Externa Brasileira: o Itamaraty e os Novos Atores" and H. Muñoz & J. Tulchin, (eds). *Op. cit.*, pp. 29-42. CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Autoritarismo e Democracia na Argentina e no Brasil - uma década de política exterior (1973-1984)*, São Paulo, Ed. Convívio, 1988. CHEIBUB, Zairo B. *Diplomacia, Diplomatas e Política Externa: aspectos do processo de institucionalização do Itamaraty*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IUPERJ, Junho 1984. GÓES, Walder de. *O Brasil do General Geisel - estudo do processo de tomada de decisão no regime militar burocrático*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1978, pp. 37-38. HIRST, M. *Pesos e Medidas da Política Externa Brasileira*. IV Reunião Anual de Centros Membros do RIAL, Universidad Simón Bolívar, October 4-6, 1982, paper. SARAIVA, M. Gomes de. *A Opção Europeia nos Marcos do Pragmatismo Responsável - a política externa brasileira para os países europeus de 1974 a 1979*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IRI/PUC, May 1990. SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazil's Foreign Policy: more actors and expanding agendas" in Elizabeth G. Ferris & J. Lincoln (eds.). *The Dynamics of Latin American Foreign Policies*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1984, pp. 101-123.
- 21 MYIAMOTO, S. *Geopolítica e Política Externa Brasileira*, Águas de São Pedro, São Paulo, VII Encontro da ANPOCS, October 26-28, 1983, paper, p. 18. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, pp. 154-155.
- 22 I shall not disregard those analysts who have attempted to associate decision units to issue areas in a more systematic way, as opposed to those who have not succeeded in doing so. However, in spite of their effort to explain the reasons why some issues are more likely to be handled by certain units, they have failed to explain the actual consequences derived from this association for the policy contents. FERRIS, Elizabeth G. "Toward a Theory for the Comparative Analysis of Latin American Foreign Policy" in Elizabeth G. Ferris & Jeannete L. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 269-284, pp. 278-284. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, 1976, pp. 149-164.
- 23 HIRST, Monica. *Tempos e Contratempos da Política Externa Brasileira*, Rio de Janeiro, IRI/PUC-RJ & CIDE-México, October 1983, paper. LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & MOURA, G. "A Trajetória do Pragmatismo - uma análise da política externa brasileira". *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, v. 25,

of fact, there are those who advocate that, in reality, these disputes have not substantially altered the main characteristics of foreign policy<sup>24</sup>. However, an important exception must be noted. In his study on the Geisel government, Walder de Góes points to the importance of what he has named as “ritualization process”. According to him “ritualization” means the practice of consulting certain agencies or actors about a decision that, in general, has already been made. Notwithstanding the fact that this practice is a ritual which aims to legitimize a certain decision, he adds that “the ritualization does not only give form; it also gives content because it produces an explanation, it creates a mechanism that is able to adjust interests”<sup>25</sup>. Unfortunately, however, Góes do not go any further. As a result, in addition to the inadequacy of the category employed – after all if “ritualization” really involves taking different interests into account, then it is more than a sole ritual –, Góes does not explore the consequences of his statement for the explanation of the policy contents.

I claim that the main reason why those analysts do not correlate different decision units with the policy contents, is the belief shared by most of them in the existence of an ultimate consensus among decision makers regarding foreign policy during

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no. 3, 1982, pp. 349-363. SARAIVA, M. Gomes de. *Op. cit.* SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power”. *Op. cit.*, p. 152. By way of example, it is worth mentioning that even among those who have referred to the military period – though not exactly analyzed it –, based on a clear-cut decision making approach, there is a tendency to make the importance of the process for the explanation of the policy contents rather relative. For instance, despite taking into account the quarrels within the Brazilian state and the differences among the decision makers regarding the handling of some issues, Russell concludes that “those quarrels (...) ended up as successfully ‘encapsulated’ by the president and the diplomatic organization”. RUSSELL, R. (ed.) “Política Exterior y Toma de Decisiones en América Latina”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 259-260. Translated by the author.

24 PEIXOTO, Antonio C. “Política Externa e Sucessão Presidencial: nada ou quase nada vai mudar”. *Brasil - Perspectivas Internacionais*, year I, no. 3, Sep./Oct. 1984, pp. 1-4, p. 2.

25 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 33. Translated by the author.

the whole military regime<sup>26</sup>. This supposed consensus, therefore, seems to reduce – if not to eliminate – the need for analyzing the process of policy making as a substantive source of information. By way of example, Oliveiros Ferreira has claimed that Brazilian foreign policy implemented from Castello Branco to Geisel (1964-1974) had the same origin, source and goals. These were, respectively, the military class, the National Security Council reports and the development of a National Power which could make Brazil one of the greatest powers in the international system<sup>27</sup>.

By so doing, they did not take into account the process of consensus building which, then, turns into the so called national interest. Moreover, they seem to depart from the assumption that the units – the decision makers – adjust their views about foreign policy in response to the demands of the system – the nation state. As a result, even when they do regard the units' contribution to the change in the pattern of Brazilian foreign policy – after all it is hard to imagine changes within the system without changes within and between the units<sup>28</sup> –, they do so by assuming that the decision makers were compelled to behave towards the change in ways shaped by the demands of the nation state, assigning to the latter a national interest embodied by the National Security Doctrine, in a typical “top-down” approach.

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26 SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazil’s Foreign Policy: more actors and expanding agendas”. *Op. cit.*, p. 102. Andrew James Hurrell claims a slightly different view, saying that the consensus was regarding a more assertive and independent foreign policy. Yet, I ascertain that the consensus over more assertiveness and independence does not necessarily mean consensus over its means and limits. HURRELL, Andrew J. *The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil’s Role in the International System (1964-1985)*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1986, pp. 205-206.

27 FERREIRA, Oliveiros S. “Política Externa a serviço de uma ideia messiânica”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, March 31, 1974, p. 29. Quoted by Carlos Estevam M. *Op. cit.*, p. 55. Translated by the author.

28 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

Thus, although they were classified as advocates of the decision making approach<sup>29</sup>, those analysts actually reproduced the mechanics of the ideology, to the extent that they embrace the same rationale as that of the National Security Doctrine, which, through the generality of its concepts – national interest, national power, security and development, etc. – is able to explain any attitude taken by the government. In other words, those analysts were trapped by the regime’s doctrine, which, through its quite flexible concepts, led them to believe that they could indeed explain any state of affairs, almost in the same way as the National Security Doctrine (NSD) supporters use them to do so. By way of example, Saraiva concluded in her thesis that “although sometimes contradictory in its attitudes, the foreign policy implemented during the period [Geisel] (...) was coherent with the aims based on the ‘national interests’”<sup>30</sup>.

Conversely, I maintain that the process of pulling and hauling involving the different units within the decision arena must be investigated in order to ascertain what ends up being seen as the expression of the NSD premises, rather than adopting the latter as an instrument of analysis. As Arnold Wolfers put it, “when political formulas such as ‘national interest’ (...) gain popularity, they need to be scrutinized with particular care. They may not mean the same thing to different people. They may not have any precise meaning at all. Thus, while appearing to offer guidance and a basis for broad consensus, they may be permitting everyone to label whatever policy he favors with an attractive and possibly deceptive name”<sup>31</sup>.

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29 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & CHEIBUB, Zairo B. *Op. cit.*, pp. 144-146 and H. Muñoz. *Op. cit.*, p. 306.

30 SARAIVA, M. Gomes de. *Op. cit.*, p. 90. Translated by the author.

31 WOLFERS, A. “National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol”. *Political Science Quarterly*, December 1952, pp. 481-502, p. 481, quoted by Fred A. S. “The Concept of National Interest”. *Orbis*, v. 21, no. 1, Spring 1977, pp. 121-138, p. 127.

Therefore, it is not enough to claim that Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime was based on the precepts of the NSD as the expression of the national interest<sup>32</sup>. Certainly the military regime pursued goals which would presumably contemplate the interests of the state. The question is by whom they were defined, how they were pursued, and what they meant. I claim that the only possible way to ascertain this is by examining the acts of political choice through a decision making analysis. Hence I place myself on the opposite side of those who, by denying the need of scrutinizing the foreign policy making processes, state that “if the international behavior of nations can be attributed primarily to their position in the international system, or to national attributes, or to other nations’ behavior toward them, we have narrowed the scope of the variables which must be analyzed. Moreover, if the greater percentage of the variation in foreign policy behavior is attributable to such systemic or attribute factors, why look at the actors who actually make foreign policy?”<sup>33</sup> On the contrary, I claim that the option for the first level of analysis (international system vs. nation state), or for the second level (nation state x bureaucracy) both proceeding “top-down” are insufficient in the explanation of foreign policy contents particularly for accounting cases when a foreign policy shift has been implemented, as it happened under the Geisel government. Indeed, the political and economic conditions inherited by Geisel from his predecessor

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32 From the book by Charles A. Beard to the more recent works, the question of how much – or how less – the concept of National Interest can be useful for Foreign Policy Analysis has been deeply discussed. For a review of the theoretical standing of the concept, see ROSENAU, James N. “National Interest” in SILLS, David (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, v. II, The Macmillan Co & The Free Press, 1968, pp. 34-40. It is also worth looking at Frankel’s work. FRANKEL, J. *The National Interest*, London, Macmillan, 1970.

33 HERMANN, M. & HERMANN, Charles F. “A look inside the ‘black box’: building on a decade of research” in G. Hoppole (ed.). *Bio-Politics, Political Psychology and International Politics*, London, Frances Pinter, 1982, pp. 1-36, p. 2.

and the ongoing international situation were responsible for a great deal of innovation in Brazilian domestic and foreign policy. Nevertheless, the achievement of most of those changes was very much dependent on the process of decision making. As mentioned by Monica Hirst, “the implementation of the foreign policy of the Geisel administration became caught up in the rearrangement of the forces within the structure of power. It was a project – she continues – that looked like both cause and effect of that rearrangement, to the extent that it formed part of the group of policies that, when carried out, intensified the level of tensions within military circles themselves”<sup>34</sup>. As a result, the removal of the hard-liners from the power structure, still according to Hirst, led to the increase of support for and legitimacy of the “pragmatic” foreign policy, as long as it allowed the reformulation of political-strategic concepts whose achievement was dependent on the enlargement of the ideological flexibility of the regime<sup>35</sup>. In addition to that, I maintain that even before the stage of implementation, the adjustment of interests around the main NSD premises has happened within the intra-bureaucratic quarrels of the decision making process.

Indeed, “to effect a change in governmental foreign policy, agents must act on the governmental decision process. The decision making process itself can obstruct or facilitate change”<sup>36</sup>. After all, to quote Steve Smith, “purely functional explanations are bound to be suspect, unless they include a causal contribution from the

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34 HIRST, M. “Transição Democrática e Política Externa: a experiência do Brasil” in Heraldo Muñoz & Joseph S. Tulchin. *Op. cit.*, pp. 207-218, p. 209. Translated by the author.

35 HIRST, Monica. & RUSSELL, Roberto. “Democracia y Política Exterior: los casos de Argentina y Brasil”. *Documentos y Informes de Investigación*, Buenos Aires, FLACSO, no. 55, August 1987, p. 29. Translated by the author.

36 HERMANN, Charles F. “Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy”. *International Studies Quarterly*, March 1990, 34, 3, pp. 3-21, p. 13.



units”<sup>37</sup>. In this sense, as much as Geisel’s style of governing and a new process of decision making contributed to the strength of the presidential authority and to the restoration of military hierarchy and cohesion, they also helped to implement significant changes in Brazilian domestic and foreign policy content. Therefore, my aim is to precede “bottom-up” within the second debate, by looking inside the “black box”.

Hence, I regard the nation state as the system, and the bureaucracy – a concept which I shall discuss later on – as the unit. However, I do not dispute that the system *does* enable and constrain. In fact, although I sympathize with the assumption which states that one must choose one level of analysis as opposed to the others<sup>38</sup>, I also believe that they are all-inclusive. As stated by Yurdusev, “whatever analytical distinction or choice may be made, in fact, these categories are not mutually exclusive, but interconnected. One may conduct an analysis of only one of them, but at the cost of having to operate within its limits. An analysis of one of them, without paying attention to the others, is not wrong, but it is incomplete”<sup>39</sup>. In other words, by choosing to analyze Brazilian foreign policy within the second debate proceeding “bottom-up”, e.g., by deciding to open the “box”, I am implying that systems are not all-determining, notwithstanding the fact that the units do not choose in a vacuum either<sup>40</sup>.

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37 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

38 As Singer put it, “The problem is really not one of deciding which level is most valuable to the discipline as a whole and demanding that it be adhered to from now unto eternity. Rather, it is one of realizing that there is this preliminary conceptual issue and that it must be temporarily resolved prior to any given research undertaking. (...) We may utilize one level here and another there but we cannot afford to shift our orientation in the midst of a study”. SINGER, J. D. *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

39 YURDUSEV, A.N. “‘Level of Analysis’ and ‘Unit of Analysis’: A Case for Distinction”. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, v. 22, no. 1, 1993, pp. 77-88, p. 83.

40 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 146.

I must stress that I am not going to use the concept of bureaucracy as it has been done by those who espouse the Bureaucratic Model. Amongst other reasons, because I do not share the view which claims that “where you stand depends on where you sit”<sup>41</sup>. Otherwise I will work with the notion of *role-players* as it has been formulated by Hollis and Smith<sup>42</sup>. As they put it, “role involves judgment and skill, but at the same time it involves a notion of a structure within which roles operate”<sup>43</sup>. In addition, the category of role-player “relates reasons to structure and allows for flexibility and judgment in the playing of the role: in so doing – they continue – we bring the individual back in without reducing our explanations of foreign policy to the individual as the unit of analysis”<sup>44</sup>. Indeed, although I do not intend to work on the level of the Individuals, I do accept their ability to have a powerful role within the bureaucracy. So, restricting myself to the second debate, bureaucratic role-players shall be seen as the units, within the nation state as the system.

It is evident that most of what has been said above accounts for the importance being placed on the decision making approach. Therefore, it seems unnecessary to expand further on that matter; however a few words about the chief elements involved with this approach are required.

Forty years ago Richard Snyder, H. Bruck and Burton Sapin<sup>45</sup> pointed to the importance of understanding the way whereby the

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41 ALLISON, Graham T. *Essence of Decision - Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1971, p. 176.

42 For more details of what they had developed from the reworking of both the Rational and the Bureaucratic Models, see HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 143-170.

43 *Idem*, p. 168.

44 *Idem, ibidem*.

45 SNYDER, Richard C., BRUCK, H. W. & SAPIN, B. “Decision Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics”. *Foreign Policy Analysis Project Series*, no. 3, Princeton, New Jersey, 1954.

decisions are made in order to explain foreign policy outcomes. Or in Rosenau's words that "foreign policy action is a product of decisions, and the way decisions are made may substantially affect their contents"<sup>46</sup>. Since then several authors have questioned the heuristic capabilities of the approach<sup>47</sup>, as well as others have developed them<sup>48</sup>. Among the former, the main criticisms are related to the explanatory power of the framework and/or the feasibility of scrutinizing the so called "black box"<sup>49</sup>. As Morse put it, "no matter how much analysis is brought to bear on processes they can tell us very little about policies themselves and can hardly explain them"<sup>50</sup>. In addition, there are also those who point to the need for identifying which variables the analysts should take into account in their study, in order to not be overwhelmed by the multitude of them<sup>51</sup>. This question is likely to have been raised by the massive quantity of determinants that are able to influence the

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46 ROSENAU, James N. (Ed.) *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, New York, The Free Press, 1969, p. 169.

47 Just to mention some of them, J. E. Dougherty & PFALTZGRAFF, R. L. *Contending Theories of International Relations*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1971. McCLOSKI, H. "Concerning strategies for a science of international politics" in Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and B. Sapin. (eds.) *Foreign Policy Decision Making - an approach to the study of international politics*, New York, Free Press, 1962, pp. 186-205. ROSENAU, James N. "The Premises and Promises of Decision Making Analysis" in J. C. Charlesworth (Ed.). *Contemporary Political Analysis*, New York, Free Press, 1967, pp. 189-211.

48 In addition to the paradigmatic work by Graham T. Allison, examples of this approach's development can be found in Brian P. White. WHITE, Brian P. "Decision Making Analysis" in T. Taylor (ed.). *Approaches and Theory in International Relations*, London, Longman, 1978, pp. 141-164. Since then, however, many other scholars have worked on the model so as to improve it. For an updated overview, see CLARKE, Michael & WHITE, Brian. *Understanding Foreign Policy - the Foreign Policy Systems Approach*, London, Edward Elgar, 1989.

49 MORSE, Edward L. "Defining Foreign Policy for Comparative Analysis: A Research Note", mimeo, Princeton, New Jersey, June 1971, quoted by CARLNAES, Walter. *Ideology and Foreign Policy: Problems of Comparative Conceptualization*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986, pp. 57-58.

50 *Idem*, p. 57.

51 BRECHER, M., STEINBERG, B. & STEIN, J. "A Framework for research on foreign policy behavior" in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. XIII, no. 1, March 1969, pp. 75-101, p. 78.

decision makers, presented by Snyder et al.'s model<sup>52</sup>. Hence they say that it is necessary to qualify the question of why policy makers choose what they choose by asking "which kind of explanatory variables are most potent in accounting for decision maker's choice?"<sup>53</sup> However, this gave rise to a wide list of dependent variables and demanded a comparative exercise of them. Last but not least, it led the analysts to ask if the same variables could be equally powerful in the explanation of any sort of decision, at any time, and anywhere. In so doing, the task of reducing the scope of analysis was added to by the requirement of having to determine the most adequate variables, as well as the latter's hierarchical order.

Perhaps the best attempt to solve this problem is the search for a classification of the issues as it has been done by the issue area advocates<sup>54</sup>. From a quite simple typology like the one suggested by

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52 According to Brecher et al., some examples of these variables are: "actors, perceptions, values, motivation, spheres of competence, etc.". BRECHER, M. Et al. *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

53 HERMANN, Charles F. & PEACOCK, Gregory. "The Evolution and Future of Theoretical Research in the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy" in Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley Jr. and James N. Rosenau (eds.). *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1987, pp. 13-32, p. 24.

54 From the pioneering work by Theodore Lowi to the most recent attempts, there are several options about how to work on this matter. See LOWI, Theodore J. "American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies and Political Theory". *World Politics*, July 16, 1964, pp. 677-715. LOWI, Theodore J. "Making Democracy safe for the world: national politics and foreign policy" in J. Rosenau N. (Ed.) *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy*, New York, The Free Press, 1967, pp. 295-331. BREWER, Thomas L. "Issue and Context Variations in Foreign Policy" in *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, March 1973, pp. 89-114. GEORGE, Alexander L. "Case Studies and Theory Development: the method of structured, focused comparison" in P. G. Lauren (Ed.). *Diplomacy: new approaches in History, Theory and Policy*, New York, The Free Press, 1979, pp. 43-68. ROSENAU, James N. "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy" in R. Barry F. (Ed.) *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics*, Evanston, Northwestern Press, 1966, pp. 27-92. ZIMMERMAN, W. "Issue Area and Foreign Policy Process: a research note in search of a general theory" in *American Political Science Review*, v. 67, no. 4, December 1973, pp. 1204-1212. For a useful overview of the subject see, for instance, Mathew E. "Issue Area and Foreign Policy revisited". *International Organization*, v. 43, no. 1, Winter 1989, pp. 147-171 and POTTER, William. "Issue Area and Foreign Policy Analysis". *International Organization*, 34, Summer 1980, pp. 405-427. As for applications of the typology see William W. *The Foreign Policy Process in Britain*, London, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1976. FERRIS, Elizabeth G. & LINCOLN, J. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*

Theodore Lowi to a highly complex one like William Zimmerman's or even Rosenau's, the objective was "to accommodate issue-generated differences without permitting their multitude to overwhelm analysis and reduce it to a fragmented and idiographic enterprise"<sup>55</sup>. In other words, all of them were attentive to the need to avoid the assertion that "it all depends on the issue"<sup>56</sup>. Nevertheless, though apparently conscious of the need to avoid the extreme relativism stressed by the assertion that "from now on all would depend on the criterion of clustering the issues", they were criticized by having made other mistakes. According to Cohen and Harris, for instance, either they start to build typologies which became less useful for the purpose of hypothesis generation the more simplified for operational purposes they attempted to be; or to create a process-related classification, instead of a problem-related one<sup>57</sup>.

In so far as my aim is to retrieve from the decision making process the elements which can help me to explain how certain decisions were taken and to what extent the process can account for their contents, I shall firstly identify who were the decision makers. Following Snyder et al., "*only* those who are government officials are to be viewed as decision-makers or actors. In other words, no private citizen – no matter how powerful – can be a member of the analytical unit *unless* he temporarily holds a federal office"<sup>58</sup>. So, I regard the decision units as the actor or group of

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pp. 269-284 and for the Brazilian case in particular, see SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*

55 ROSENAU, J.N. "Foreign Policy as an Issue Area" in James N. R. (Ed.) *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy*, New York, The Free Press, 1967, pp. 11-51, p. 15.

56 *Idem*, p. 12.

57 COHEN, F. & HARRIS, S. "Foreign Policy" in Fred I. Greenstein & Nelson W. Polsby. (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science: Macro-Political Theory*, v. 6, Addison, Wesley Publ. Co, 1975, pp. 381-437, pp. 397-398.

58 SNYDER, Richard C. Et al. *Op. cit.*, p. 99. Bold in the original.

actors who have the authority to solely formulate or to formulate and to implement the decisions which will be viewed as the actions of the state<sup>59</sup>. In so doing, I am assuming that states are indeed the most important, although not necessarily the only actors in international politics. Nevertheless, I do not take the view that they should be analyzed as monolithic actors. In other words, although I am taking a “state-centric” assumption, I am not taking a “state-as-actor” one<sup>60</sup>.

In addition to the identification of the decision units, a crucial aspect has to be faced, e.g., the question concerning the feasibility of isolating from the process of policy formulation the very moment when a decision was taken. This question has been treated from different standpoints in the relevant literature. Among the several and, even, conflicting views, there is at least one widespread, although not predominant belief, e.g., the purposeful, but not necessarily rational, character of a decision<sup>61</sup>. For those, a decision represents a choice among two or more alternatives, by whatever kind of process it has been made. Whether they are identifiable, and whether the process is divisible, that has been methodologically and even semantically discussed.

Michael Brecher is perhaps the best example of one who believes in the possibility of pointing to the exact moment at which a decision is taken. According to him “a decision is an explicit act of choice, which can be located precisely in time and space. It has definable sources within a setting”. Therefore, he continues, “it can be described and explained: that is, it is researchable. Moreover,

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59 *Idem, ibidem.*

60 WHITE, Brian P. *Op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

61 A decisive exception is, nevertheless, those who point to the non-decisional factors. BACHRACH, P. & BARATZ, M. S. “Decisions and Non-Decisions: an analytical framework”. *American Political Science Review*, 57 (3), pp. 632-642.

consequences can be identified”<sup>62</sup>. In addition he sees the process of decision making as being constituted by different stages or, in his words, by three systemic phases – input, process, and output. Thereby he starts with what he calls the relevant pre-decisional events, proceeding to the decisive inputs<sup>63</sup>; then he examines the decisional stages, leading to the selection of a certain option and finally to the implementation of the decision<sup>64</sup>.

Though less sure about the straightforward possibility of researching the decisions, Hermann and her associates also believe that a decision is indeed a precise moment in the policy making process. As they put it, “in the life of every organization, actual points of decision do occur, although not always in a fashion visible to all who have participated in the process. Certainly key decisions and those who make them are constrained by available inputs and the subsequent implementation may lead to distortion, but nonetheless choice points do occur with some regularity”<sup>65</sup>. Nevertheless they do not seem to be particularly concerned with the division of the process.

However, as mentioned earlier, there are other analysts who take quite different positions on this subject. For instance, there are those who think that the decision is, in itself, a complex process of policy formulation, and as such it must be analyzed. That is the view of William Wallace, for instance, who stresses that “the process of policy making is less one of a series of discrete and identifiable decisions than of a continuous flow of policy,

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62 BRECHER, Michael. *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, London, Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 2.

63 The former constituted of “occurrences which impinge upon the decisional setting” and the latter the “direct environmental stimuli or pressures leading to a decision”. *Idem*, p. 5 and 8.

64 *Idem*, p. 8.

65 HERMANN, Margareth; HERMANN, Charles F. & HAGAN, Joe D. “How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy Behavior” in Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley Jr. and James N. R. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 309-336, p. 310.

in which successive messages received about the international environment, the interpretation given to the information received, the preconceptions of those responsible for policy, their assessment of possible alternatives in terms of their competing and often incompatible objectives, and the organizational context within which they make policy all combine to shape the direction of that flow”<sup>66</sup>. Thus, as Michael Clarke puts it, “to say that foreign policy processes are about ‘making decisions’ does not say very much. We still need to understand the flow of actions and procedures of which those decisions form a part – and often only an indirect part”<sup>67</sup>. In so doing, contrary to Brecher, Wallace does not exactly fragment the process of decision making; rather he dilutes it into a stream of actions. As a result, though not denying the existence of a particular moment in which a decision has been made, Wallace does not seem to attribute any explanatory power to the possibility of singling it out, or even to actually selecting it from the other moments.

Finally, there is Carlsnaes and his definition of policy as actions<sup>68</sup>. According to him although foreign policy can – and perhaps must – be viewed as a result of purposeful behaviors, it does not necessarily mean that these actions are susceptible to this singling out<sup>69</sup>. Explicit in his disagreement with Brecher, Carlsnaes says that decisions are observable only by those who take part in its formulation. Therefore, he stresses, “those decisions which in actual fact are open and thus systematically researchable are precisely those which bear the imprint of ‘policies’”. Thus, in so far

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66 WALLACE, W. *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

67 CLARKE, Michael. “The Foreign Policy System: A Framework for Analysis” in M. Clarke & Brian P. W. *Op. cit.*, pp. 27-59, p. 52.

68 CARLSNAES, W. *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-70.

69 *Idem*, p. 31.



as policies necessarily imply decisions (but not vice versa), and in so far as the only systematically researchable decisions are those which are contained in the substance of policies, – he continues – I feel that we have to reject Brecher’s unit of analysis as a practicable option”<sup>70</sup>.

Having reviewed some views concerning this question, I would like to address my own. The exact moment at which *the* choice turns into the decision to be implemented is not easily identified, be it due either to the secrecy of the arena, or to the possible fragmentation of the process. Hence the alternative of trying to distinguish the several moments gone through by the decision makers seems to be the most appropriate for the purpose of analysis. In doing so the analyst is more prone to approaching the rationale of the process, insofar as the course of the decision making illustrates the relative importance of each particular moment for the different actors involved. Thereby I am supposing that the process is divisible. In so doing, I agree with Janis when he says that “when people adopt a new course of action they usually go through more than two distinctive stages”, e.g., more than solely “the period preceding the announcement of the decision and the period that follows it”<sup>71</sup>. Thereby, I intend to identify the decision units present in the Brazilian process of foreign policy making regarding certain issues, by examining the several stages a decision goes through until its final implementation. In so doing, I intend to provide myself with the tools for contesting the premise which considers the state under a military regime as a single agent responding to its situation according to a given ideology. Moreover, through this method of analysis my aim is to retrieve the variables

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70 *Idem*, p. 58.

71 JANIS, Irving L. & MANN, L. *Decision Making - a psychological analysis of conflict, choice, and commitment*, New York, The Free Press, 1977, p. 171.

and correlations able to explain Brazilian foreign policy under the Geisel government.

I am supposing the existence of all or only some of the possible identifiable phases: 1) defining the problem; 2) identifying alternatives; 3) weighing alternatives; 4) deciding; 5) deliberating about commitment; 6) adhering despite negative feedback; and 7) implementing<sup>72</sup>. In addition, I shall stress that it is not likely that certain decisions proceed in a linear fashion. Rather the process by which a decision is finally taken “may involve a great deal of fluctuation back and forth”<sup>73</sup>.

By employing this model of analysis, I intend to explain rather than describe the reality. Or, to put it in another way, “unlike paradigms, models are not all inclusive and should not be expected to explain every governmental output”<sup>74</sup>. Therefore, I claim that the option of explaining the very process of decision making by such a logical procedure does not mean that the process was logical in itself. My aim is to make use of the model as a way to retrieve from the reality its meaningful elements, not to make anyone believe that the reality is identical to the model. As Kenneth Waltz pointed out, “if we could directly apprehend the world that interests us, we would have no need for theory. (...) A theory, while related to the world about which explanations are wanted, always remains distinct from that world. Theories are not descriptions of the real world; they are instruments that we design in order to

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72 Besides the stages identified by Kellerman, I am also working with other two suggested by Janis – deliberating about commitment and adhering despite negative feedback. This addition is due to the importance I ascribe to the latter in order to better explain the complex process of policy making. KELLERMAN, Barbara. “Allison Redux: Three more decision-making models.” *Polity*, 15 (3), 1983, pp. 351-367 and Janis, Irving. & MANN, L. *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

73 JANIS, Irving L. & MANN, L. *Op. cit.*, p. 178.

74 FREEDMAN, Laurence. “Logics, Politics and Foreign Policy Processes: a critique of the bureaucratic politics model”. *International Affairs*, v. 52, no. 3, July 1976, pp. 434-449, p. 436.

apprehend some part of it. 'Reality' will therefore be congruent neither with a theory nor with the model that may represent it. Because this is ill understood by a number of political scientists, further discussion is required. 'Model' is used in two principal ways. In one sense, a model represents a theory. In another sense, a model pictures reality while simplifying it, say, through omission or through reduction of scale. If such a model departs too far from reality, it becomes useless. A model airplane should look like a real airplane. Explanatory power, however, is gained by moving away from 'reality', not by staying close to it. A full description would be of least explanatory power; an elegant theory, of most"<sup>75</sup>. In so doing, I agree with Singer saying that my "concern is not so much with accuracy of description as with validity of explanation"<sup>76</sup>.

Before tackling the final aspect of the problem, that is, my option for *explaining* rather than for *understanding* the process of decision making under the Geisel government, another point has to be faced. That is if the bureaucratic perspective, which has become the privileged approach for the study of the North American foreign policy system<sup>77</sup>, is suitable for explaining the realities of "less developed countries", Third World countries, or any other similar term. There are a couple of analysts who have faced this question<sup>78</sup>. Most of them, however, seem to follow Allison and

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75 WALTZ, Kenneth N. "Theory of International Relations". F. Greenstein & N. Polsby, (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science: Macro-Political Theory*, v. 8, Addison, Wesley Publ. Co, 1975, pp. 1-15, pp. 8-9.

76 SINGER, J. D. *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

77 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

78 For a broader view about the state of the art of the studies of Third World foreign policies, see KORANY, B. "The Take-Off of Third World Studies? The Case of Foreign Policy". *World Politics*, v. XXXV, no. 3, April 1983, pp. 465-487. KORANY, Bahgat. "Foreign Policy Decision-Making Theory and the Third World" in Bahgat K. (Ed.) *How Foreign Policy Decisions are made in the Third World - a comparative analysis*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1986, pp. 39-60.

Halperin, assuming that their framework was applicable to the behavior of most modern governments in industrialized nations<sup>79</sup>.

Perhaps the main point to be dealt with in assessing this question is regarding the level of political institutionalization of the state. In this sense, although there can be restrictions to the use of Allison's Organizational Model<sup>80</sup> for Third World countries due to the alleged low degree of complexity of their organizational hierarchies<sup>81</sup>, that is not applicable to the Brazilian case, particularly when talking about foreign policy. Indeed, in Brazil the chief organization officially in charge of this area – the Foreign Ministry – was characterized by all four aspects that characterize a highly institutionalized unit, as described by Huntington, e.g., complexity, coherence, autonomy and adaptability<sup>82</sup>. I will return to these aspects in the following chapter.

Likewise, I dismiss the critiques about the applicability of the "Bargaining Model"<sup>83</sup> as far as Brazil is concerned, considering the latter as a Third World country, since the prerequisites also accepted as the necessary basis for a so called bargaining situation – autonomous, coherent governmental organizations below the actors<sup>84</sup> – are not missing in the Brazilian case, as stated above. Antithetically, the other elements required for this kind of

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79 ALLISON, Graham T. & HALPERIN, Morton H. "Bureaucratic Politics: a paradigm and some policy implications" in Raymond Tanter & Richard U. (Eds.) *Theory and Policy in International Relations*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1972, pp. 40-79. MIGDAL, Joel S. "Internal Structure and External Behavior: Explaining Foreign Policies of Third World States". *International Relations*, v. 5, May 1974, pp. 510-525. WEINSTEIN, Franklin B. "The Uses of Foreign Policy in Indonesia - An Approach to the Analysis of Foreign Policy in the Less Developed Countries". *World Politics*, v. XXIV, no. 3, April 1972, pp. 356-381.

80 ALLISON, Graham T. *Op. cit.*, pp. 67-100.

81 MIGDAL, Joel S. *Op. cit.*, p. 515.

82 HUNTINGTON, S. *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968.

83 ALLISON, Graham T. *Op. cit.*, pp. 144-184.

84 MIGDAL, Joel S. *Op. cit.*, p. 518.

procedure, such as strong personalities and leadership qualities, are very much in evidence. Perhaps the main mistake made by Migdal, who strongly opposes the application of the “Bargaining Model” to Third World countries, was the acceptance of a “flaw” variable in his designation of Third World countries – that of the degree of political institutionalization<sup>85</sup>. Moreover, to have put all Latin American, African and Asian countries (with the exception of the Russia and Japan) under the umbrella term of Third World countries, based on the mentioned “flaw” variable without undergoing a comparative analysis of those countries’ characteristics, despite having said that he was aware of this drawback<sup>86</sup>. As a matter of fact, there seems to be a general tendency to overlook conceivable differences between “less developed countries”, “developing countries”, “less modernized states”, “Third World countries”, and so on, which sometimes allows, and perhaps even encourages the use of the decision making approach in the explanation of their foreign policies<sup>87</sup>. As argued by van Klaveren, in addition to the fact that some Latin American foreign bureaucracies are relatively complex, “they include highly differentiated and specialized groups, each endowed with their own perceptions and interests. [And] (...) even in those cases where only one sector of the bureaucracy seems to hold sway in important issues, this group need not necessarily be monolithic”<sup>88</sup>.

Finally, regarding the debate as to whether international relations should be scientifically *explained* or interpretatively *understood*, I opt for the former. The main reason for such a choice,

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85 *Idem*, p. 510.

86 *Idem*, p. 516.

87 HILL, Christopher J. “Theories of foreign policy making for the developing countries” in CLAPHAM, C. (ed.). *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-16.

88 KLAVEREN, Alberto v. *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

e.g., for looking for the constituent variables and correlations which compose the decision making process, rather than for the decision maker's perceptions, ideas, etc., is due to my belief that, broadly speaking, by choosing the view from inside (*understanding*) one makes the units appear to have more freedom of manoeuvre than they actually have, and therefore ignores the role of external variables<sup>89</sup>. Moreover, in accordance with Smith, "focusing on the insider view overemphasizes the realm of choice and underemphasizes the realm of constraint. Even when there seems to be choice, remember that the language and concepts an actor uses are themselves socially constructed. In essence, then, – he continues – I believe that reality is a social construct: it is in this sense that I see perceptions and understanding as largely determined, and why I see Understanding as secondary and not fundamental"<sup>90</sup>. That seems to be particularly significant for cases when, notwithstanding the strength of the regime ideology, and the outstanding personal leadership of the president and the salient presence of the foreign minister, another point has to be taken into account. That is the still significant military bureaucracy and the highly bureaucratic diplomatic agency, which were quite a shield against an over-personalized political process, as was the case during Geisel's government.

To put it in more usual Foreign Policy Analysis terms, I do not intend to work on the cognitive aspect of the decision making process. It was Snyder and his associates who firstly suggested that the main factor by which one is able to explain the behavior of the decision maker is through the knowledge of their perceptions. As they put it, "the key explanation of why the state behaves the way it does lies in the way its decision-makers define their situation.

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89 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, p. 204.

90 *Idem*, p. 206.

The *definition of the situation* is built around the projected action as well as the reasons for the action”<sup>91</sup>. By so doing the configuration of any decision is, in the final analysis, shaped by the perceptions of the decision makers regarding the situation as a whole. Moreover everyone who embraces the cognitive perspective agrees – with minor or even major distinctions regarding the meaning of perceptions, motivations, values, belief systems, etc. – about the ultimate importance of this realm in order to explain the actions or decisions made in a certain polity. In so doing my main criticisms are, obviously, not concerned with the relevance of such an approach. Indeed, the explanatory power of the cognitive perspectives in the realm of decision making seems to have been absolutely proved. Moreover because, as John Steinbruner has put it, “presumably there is no one who would seriously contest that the human brain is the ultimate locus of decision making”<sup>92</sup>. The problem, however, is indeed the tendency to reduce the decision making analysis to the realm of perceptions, foreign policy analysis turning into a study of the structure of thought – entailing the cultural, ideological and even psychoanalytical aspects – of the decision makers. In so doing, I argue that, though the cognitive aspect of the decision making process possesses a strong explanatory power, it is neither enough nor exclusive of others’ perspectives. As Michael Clarke puts it, “no one type of issue, not even a crisis, can be satisfactorily characterized by one perspective of policy making”<sup>93</sup>.

Indeed, notwithstanding avoiding the extremely complex debate about the alleged incompatibility between the *explaining*

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91 SNYDER, Richard C. Et al. *Op. cit.*, p. 65. Bold in the original.

92 STEINBRUNER, John D. *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1974, p. 9 quoted by W. Carlsnaes. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

93 CLARKE, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

and *understanding* perspectives<sup>94</sup>, I argue that there are not always two stories to tell, as put by Hollis and Smith<sup>95</sup>. Rather, there are moments when the outside explanation does not necessarily lead the analyst to a complete appraisal of the phenomenon. In other words, although the scientific approach (*explaining*) allows the analyst to generalize by giving a structural account, there are moments when only with the help of the hermeneutic view (*understanding*) it is possible to tell the whole story. Indeed, although the proponents of this debate might not agree, I suspect that the category of bureaucratic role-player could be a step towards the solution of this contend, since it takes into account both the structure which the actor belongs to and the latter's ability to ponder. In so doing, at same time there is some leeway for the analyst to make generalizations, each case imposes its own limits.

The first part of work is made up of two chapters, besides this Introduction. The first sets out and discusses the origins and contents of the NSD, in particular its external components, so as to assess why the doctrine has been considered as the main explanation for Brazilian foreign policy contents. In addition, it aims to describe the general structure of the decision making arena under Geisel's government. The second chapter outlines the main aspects of the foreign policy implemented during the Geisel administration.

The second part of the work is made up of three chapters in which I analyze crucial decisions taken during Geisel's government. The third chapter examines Brazil's decision to abstain in the XV and XVI Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers (November 1974 and July 1975) for the lifting of sanctions against Cuba. In this Chapter I claim that thanks to

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94 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 196-216.

95 *Idem*, p. 211.



Geisel and to Foreign Minister Silveira a milder position towards the Castro regime adopted to avoid damaging the Inter-American System was, later on, reaffirmed without too much harm being done to those who strongly opposed the normalization of the Brazil-Cuba relationship. Following this, the final two chapters aim to explain that the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (August 14, 1974), and the recognition of Angola's MPLA government (December 11, 1975) were actually feasible thanks to the way in which they were carried out. Hence, my aim is to retrieve from the decision making process the meaningful elements for explaining the decision contents. Moreover, to ascertain that the process whereby changes occur in foreign policy includes, in addition to the interplay of international forces and the dominant regime's doctrine, the decision makers' action, a view which I consider fundamental in the analysis of other similar cases.

The aforementioned decisions reach the heart of the debate undertaken in this work, since they are related to Communism, an ideology totally opposed to the conservative Brazilian military doctrine of the time. As a result they fit my aim of scrutinizing the role of the decision making process in relation to the attempts to make the NSD compatible with a less ideological foreign policy. Moreover, all of the decisions assembled different categories of problems (economic, political and strategic), they belonged to the South-South axis, and they called for a prompt response from the government due to their new profile within the international system – the changing hemispheric attitudes towards Cuba's continued exclusion from the Inter-American System; the new opportunities created by the end of the Cultural Revolution in the People's Republic of China; and the swift evolution of African decolonization<sup>96</sup>.

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96 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, p.65.

Methodological reasons were also responsible for my choice to examine this particular period and the three decisions cited above. The obstacles placed in the way of gaining access to privileged sources so as to perform an analysis of the decision making process, led me to choose a period of history sufficiently explored in the literature. In this respect, amongst all the military governments, Geisel's administration is the one that has received the most detailed investigation, especially regarding the area of foreign policy. There are several reasons for this. The most significant being the fact that, during the military regime, this period can be seen as a turning point in Brazilian foreign policy history – regardless of the fact that it is indeed possible to identify the origins of some policies in the previous government. Besides, due to the political liberalization sought by the government, there was a softening in censorship which resulted in an increase in the quantity and quality of the available information. Even so, due to the inaccessibility of private and public archives<sup>97</sup>, my option was to counterbalance this shortcoming by creating as many sources as possible by conducting interviews. In addition, I tried to cross check the data with one or more other sources. The main contribution of this work, therefore, must be seen not in the originality of the sources, although several times they were indeed so, but rather in the strength of the argument. Thus, although the access to more information could be helpful in supporting my hypotheses, I believe that it would not distort the main lines of my argument.

Finally my conclusion disputes the premise which states that the existence of a given ultimate consensus based on the

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97 In addition to the non-existence of private archives comprising foreign issues of this period open to consultation, the public ones are ruled by the determination that only the documents produced more than 30 years ago are declassifiable, and only those considered not harmful to the national security. LAFER, C. "Diplomacia e Transparência: o arquivo do Itamaraty". *Acervo - Revista do Arquivo Nacional*, vs. 4/5, no. 2, Jul./Dec. 1989 & Jan./Jun. 1990, pp. 35-43, pp. 40-41.

NSD, is able to explain, on domestic grounds, the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”. It does so by maintaining that the way in which a new consensus around the foreign policy was built within the decision making arena is, in itself, a crucial element in understanding the decision contents. Hence, it claims that it was the *foreign policy executive*<sup>98</sup>, e.g., President Geisel and Foreign Minister Silveira’s partnership, which was characterized by an intense proximity and by a relative detachment from the external variables, that was able to oust the “ideological frontiers” precept from the core of the NSD, in spite of its admitted importance during the Cuban case.

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98 This term was coined by Christopher Hill to explain the partnership between British Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries from October 1938 to June 1941. HILL, Christopher J. *Cabinet Decisions on Foreign Policy - the British Experience - October 1938/June 1941*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991.



## 2. FOREIGN POLICY AND THE MILITARY REGIME IN BRAZIL – DOCTRINES AND ACTORS

It might be correct to say that to explain the foreign policy contents of a military regime it is necessary to look at its doctrine, since the latter is responsible for making certain issues relevant to the regime. And moreover, as Parakala suggests, “the identification of the salient foreign (and the related domestic) policy issues for each military regime can be achieved, and the specific nature of the impact of the military regime on the conduct of the policy can be satisfactorily understood by examining the evolution of civil-military relations and the security doctrines developed and adopted by the armed forces (...)”<sup>99</sup>.

Unquestionably the very existence of the National Security Doctrine (NSD) *per se* did not hamper Geisel’s government in its divergence from the usual foreign policy stance, towards a more pragmatic one in response to the political and economic

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99 PARAKALA, Prabhakar. *Military Regimes, Security Doctrines and Foreign Policy: Brazil, Indonesia and Ghana*. Ph.D. Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, 1991, p. 24.

conditions inherited from the former government, and to the current international situation – both responsible for a great deal of innovation in Brazilian foreign policy<sup>100</sup>. Nevertheless, this should not lead us to believe that it is possible to explain the contents of the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism” implemented during his government by the external components of the NSD<sup>101</sup>. In my view, to say that a certain doctrine has shaped the policy contents is to start at the end of the process instead of at the beginning. It is still necessary to explain how it happened. In other words, how a supposed consensus, epitomized by the NSD, was actually built.

As an ideological framework, a doctrine has its inward dynamism. “New information, new interests can add or subtract from values and beliefs as well as change the certainty or intensity with which each is held”<sup>102</sup>. In so doing, the doctrine’s applicability to reality can be explained looking at the way these new elements

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100 I shall expand on both aspects in the following chapter.

101 As a matter of fact, despite its merits, this is the most serious shortcoming in Parakala’s work. Notwithstanding having said that the civil-military relations were a point to be taken into account, he says very little which is meaningful about this relationship. Perhaps due to his aim to demonstrate the importance of the military doctrine in the understanding of the foreign policy contents, he opted for highlighting the evidence that the low profile civilian actors had on foreign policy-making. In doing so, however, Parakala almost ignores the role played by the diplomats in this matter. For instance, when talking about Ambassador João Augusto de Araújo Castro, one of the most important ideologues of Brazilian foreign policy, he describes him as just an “unofficial but influential opinion”. PARAKALA, P. *Op. cit.*, p. 115. However, as it has been explained by several scholars, the Foreign Ministry and its members have been a fundamental source of foreign policy in Brazilian history. For an account of Araújo Castro main ideas, see AMADO, Rodrigo (ed.) *Araújo Castro*, Brasília, Ed. UnB, 1982. Likewise, it is worth quoting William Selcher, as one amongst others who advocates that the NSD is enough to explain foreign policy decisions. In his words, “This doctrine conditions the leadership’s view of the world and its definition of the domestic and international interests and priorities of Brazil. Although the doctrine is not accepted by all politically relevant groups, its application by those holding power is so thorough that acquaintance with its origins, contents, diffusion, and impact on society is central to an understanding of civilian-military relations and the formulation of policy in Brazil today”. SELCHER, Wayne A. “The National Security Doctrine and Policies of Brazilian Government” in *Parameters - Journal of the US Army War College*, v. II, no. 1 (1977), pp. 10-24, p. 10.

102 LEVI, Werner. “Ideology, Interests and Foreign Policy”. *International Studies Quarterly*, 14, no. 1, March 1970, pp. 1-31, p. 13.

was incorporated. In so far as talking about different interests is the same as talking about different actors advocating them, the process of decision making is a key element to be taken into account.

For the decision making process I do not mean the formal *structure* of the decision making arena as the latter has been established to work. Rather, I intend to examine the way in which foreign policy expressed a different view of the NSD, by retrieving from the *process* of decision making the elements that, at the end of the day, made the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism” feasible. In other words, I will not work with the standardized decision making arena, but rather with the actual management of the process<sup>103</sup>.

I shall firstly expand on the origins and contents of the NSD, with particular regard to its external components. Then the reasons why it has been considered as the main explanatory tool for foreign policy contents will be indicated. Then having shown that the NSD was also affected by different interests, I will show the actual process of decision making under the Geisel government, where those interests were spelled out. By way of conclusion, I shall point to the possible association between the process of decision making and the final outcome of this foreign policy.

## 2.1. The Military and the National Security Doctrine

In the history of Brazil’s military regime, talking about the insertion of the military class into politics is the same as talking about the role of the NSD on policy contents. Indeed, the military presence in the Brazil’s political system after the 1964 takeover<sup>104</sup>

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103 An Appendix at the end of this chapter shows a diagram of the formal and the actual foreign policy making process under the Geisel government.

104 For an account about the military presence in the Brazilian political history, see CARVALHO, José Murilo. “Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil (1930-1945)”. *Hispanic American Historical Review*, v. 62,

was singularly based on how the military intended to assume and to retain control of the state which had been formulated within the spirit of the NSD<sup>105</sup>. Hence, the military's "old professionalism" of territorial defense and political neutrality was replaced by the "new professionalism of internal security and national development"<sup>106</sup>.

The origins of the NSD, which encompasses the "new professionalism", date back to the end of World War II and, moreover, to the beginning of the Cold War. Indeed the Doctrine's main principles were closely associated with US security policy for the continent, which had been readapted from a defense strategy to protect Latin America against the Axis' threats, to a major anti-Communist defense project, later reinforced by the perceived peril represented by the Cuban Revolution (1959)<sup>107</sup>. From then on, the emphasis on the external threat to Latin American political stability was shifted to the internal sphere, turning counterinsurgency into the main defense strategy. In addition, the idea of internal defense became closely related to national development, an aspect which was supposed to "win the hearts and minds of the people"<sup>108</sup>.

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no. 2, 1982, pp. 193-223. COELHO, Edmundo C. *Em Busca da Identidade - o exército e a política na sociedade brasileira*, Rio de Janeiro, Forense Universitária, 1976. COMBLIN, J. *El poder militar en América Latina*, Salamanca, Ediciones Sigueme, 1978, particularly pp. 180-181. JOHNSON, John J. *The Military and Society in Latin America*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1964, particularly Chapter VII "The Political Role of the Brazilian Military", pp. 177-223. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. *The Political System of Brazil - emergence of a "modernizing" authoritarian regime (1964-1970)*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1971, pp. 37-72. STEPAN, Alfred. "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion" in Abraham F. L. & J. S. Samuel F. (Eds.) *Armies and Politics in Latin America*, New York and London, Holmes and Meier, 1986, pp. 134-150.

105 For a critical assessment of this view, see MARKOFF, John & BARETTTA, Silvio R. Duncan. "Professional Ideology and Military Activism in Brazil - Critique of a Thesis of Alfred Stepan". *Comparative Politics*, v. 17, no. 2, January 1985, pp. 175-191.

106 STEPAN, A. "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion". *Op. cit.*, p. 134.

107 CHILD, Jack. *Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: quarrels among neighbors*, New York, Praeger, 1985, p. 68.

108 *Idem*, p. 69.



Therefore the scope of internal security encompassed all social, economic and political aspects of life.

In spite of the influence of US security policy on the NSD postulates, we should not forget the indigenous components in the development of this new military doctrine. The historical search of the Brazilian military class for an identity as an institution which could in itself unite and impose discipline and hierarchy has also to be taken into account<sup>109</sup>. Furthermore the influences of Brazilian authoritarian thought<sup>110</sup>, particularly regarding the belief in the lack of abilities of the civilian elites to run the country, must also be considered<sup>111</sup>. Both aspects contributed to the formulation of a doctrine which, to the extent that it belittled the civilian capabilities, gave the military class a national task which united them around a unique aim, as well as to differentiate them from the rest of the society. As Alfred Stepan states, “instead of the gap between the military and political spheres widening, the new professionalism led to a belief that there was a fundamental interrelationship between the two spheres, with the military playing a key role in interpreting and dealing with domestic political problems owing to its greater technical and professional skills in handling internal security issues”<sup>112</sup>. Henceforth, a doctrine which could justify, and

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109 COELHO, Edmundo C. *Op. cit.*, pp. 163-167.

110 Developed during the last decades of the nineteenth century and first mid of this century, through historical and sociological essays, the major characteristic of this line of thought was the search for the intensification of the central public power. Amongst others, its chief representatives were Alberto Torres, Oliveira Vianna, Azevedo Amaral and Francisco Campos. For a general account, see LAMOUNIER, Bolívar. “Formação de um Pensamento Político Autoritário na Primeira República. Uma interpretação” in Boris F. (Ed.) *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira; O Brasil Republicano; Sociedade e Instituições (1889-1930)*, Tomo III, v. 2, Rio de Janeiro, Difel, 1977, pp. 343-374 and MEDEIROS, Jarbas. *Ideologia Autoritária no Brasil (1930-1945)*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. da Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1978.

111 COMBLIM, Joseph. *Op. cit.*, p. 153 and OLIVEIRA, Eliézer R. de. *As Forças Armadas: política e ideologia no Brasil (1964-1969)*, Petrópolis, Vozes, 1976, pp. 35-38.

112 STEPAN, A. “The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion”. *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

stimulate military interventionism in civilian affairs was not only desirable, but also necessary from the military vantage point.

To sum up, the NSD can be seen as the result of three main variables: 1) the innate military need for a strong ideology; 2) the influences of Brazilian authoritarian thought, both added by; and 3) the North-American concept of “security”, as it was developed after the end of the World War II.

Although the expansion of military participation in politics was based, among other reasons, on their mistrust of civilian capabilities to run the country effectively, it does not mean that the military planned to ban civilians totally from Brazilian political life. In reality, one of their aims was to prepare civilians for this task according to their own doctrine<sup>113</sup> as the role played by the Higher War College (Escola Superior de Guerra/ESG) shows.

Based on the model of US National War College and with US military assistance, the College was established by Law nº 785 on August 20, 1949, following the Presidential Decree nº 25,075 on October 22, 1948, which recommended its creation. Initially the School was intended to help overcome the lack of military skills and experience in the Brazilian military class made evident to the officers of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (Força Expedicionária Brasileira/ FEB) who fought with the Allies in Italy in World War II. Subsequently the ESG's main objective became the formulation of a “national strategy that effectively coordinated the country's military, industrial and bureaucratic sectors”<sup>114</sup>, and the preparation of “civilians and the military to perform executive and advisory functions especially in those agencies responsible for the formulation, development, planning, and execution of the policies of national security”<sup>115</sup>.

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113 *Idem*, p. 140.

114 PARAKALA, P. *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

115 Decree no. 53,080, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1963. BOBBIO, Pedro V. (Org.) *Lex 1963*, Tomo XXVIII, São Paulo, Lex Ed. Ltda., 1963, pp. 1541-1555.

Directly subordinate to the General Staff of the Armed Forces (Estado Maior das Forças Armadas/EMFA) and to the president, ESG was – and still is – headed by a military director (chosen every two years from high ranking officials of one of the three armed forces) and assisted by one representative from each of the four military ministries and one from the Foreign Ministry. As a means of fulfilling the ESG's objective of civilian indoctrination, the civilian elites – of politics, banking, communication, industry and education areas – have always made up a substantial part of ESG classes. As for the maintenance of its influence over the students, the Alumni Association (Associação dos Diplomados da Escola Superior de Guerra/ADESG) played an important role. Through its conferences and periodicals, the ESG's ideology was reinforced in the years to come. Hence, by those means the ESG intended to build “a military-civilian network that institutionalized and disseminated the Doctrine of National Security and Development”<sup>116</sup>.

### 2.1.1. The NSD's main external premises

Formulated by the Higher War College<sup>117</sup>, the NSD elected the opposition between Western and Eastern blocks as its most important external aspect. For, according to the Doctrine's geopolitical features<sup>118</sup>, Brazil's geographical position determined

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116 ALVES, Maria Helena M. *State and Opposition in Military Brazil*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1985, p. 14. For an account about ESG and NSD see OLIVEIRA, Eliézer. *Op. cit.*, particularly Chapter I, pp. 19-55 and for an overview of the structure of ESG courses see ADERARDO, Wanda M. C. *A Escola Superior de Guerra: um estudo de currículos e programas*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IUPERJ, 1978.

117 In addition to the Higher War College, the Army Command and General Staff School (Escola de Comando e Estado Maior do Exército/ECEME) was also responsible for the building up of the doctrine. The importance of ESG in this process was by far the most significant. KEEFE, Eugene. “National Security”, Chapter 5. *Brazil - a country study*, pp. 289-334. Department of Army, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1983, p. 300.

118 For an overview of the Geopolitics influence on the Latin American military thought see CHILD, John. “Pensamento Geopolítico Latino-Americano”. *A Defesa Nacional*, no. 690, Jul./Aug. 1980, pp. 55-79. MYIAMOTO, Shiguenoli. *Militares e Geopolítica na América Latina*, São Paulo, Fevereiro 1987, mimeo, pp. 21-38.

the country's allegiance to the Western block<sup>119</sup>. Indeed, the main concepts of Geopolitics, which were a strong basis for the Doctrine, gave “firm support to the bipolarity thesis and the Nation's adhesion to the anti-Communist fight within the notion of national security”<sup>120</sup>. As put by the first military president post-1964, Marshall Castello Branco (1964-1967), “the current Brazilian situation coincides with the wishes for Continental peace, and with the collective security precepts, the latter so much a US responsibility”<sup>121</sup>.

It was also from the East-West antagonism that notions regarding economic development and state planning stemmed from. According to one of the Doctrine advocates, “In the present day characterized by two rival blocks (...) *every political activity* is, directly or indirectly, related to *national security* (in such a way) that any economic, cultural or social development plan for the country, cannot be formulated without taking into account the multiple and, sometimes, rigorous obligations imposed by the *National Security* premises”<sup>122</sup>. Indeed, the notion of development fostered by the Doctrine was closely associated with the idea of security. In Castello Branco's words, “The inter-relationship between development and security leads on the one hand to the security level being determined by the degree of economic growth; and on the other, to the (belief that) economic development cannot be attained without a minimum of security”<sup>123</sup>.

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119 SILVA, Goubery do Couto e. *Geopolítica do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria José Olympio Editora, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1967, pp. 95-138.

120 COMBLIN, J. *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

121 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Departamento de Administração. *A Diplomacia da Revolução Brasileira*, Brasília, Divisão de Documentação, Seção de Publicações, 1964, p. 11. Translated by the author.

122 Quoted from an internal document of ESG. TÁVORA, Juarez. “A Segurança Nacional, a Política e a Estratégia: conceituação e inter-relações”, ESG, A-01-53, p. 13. Bold in the original. Translated by the author.

123 Quoted by COMBLIN, J. *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

The concept of “ideological frontiers” as opposed to “territorial frontiers” was another basic concept of the NSD. Indeed, by pointing to the existence of an ideological border separating the pro-Capitalist and the pro-Communist countries, the “ideological frontiers” concept “represented an essential component of the [military] regime’s legitimizing ideology, once the ‘revolution of 1964’ was justified by its makers as a defensive reaction against the ‘international communist aggression’”<sup>124</sup>. The dispatch of Brazilian troops to Santo Domingo (1965), and the support for the creation of a permanent Inter-American Force were part of the same rationale, which claimed the political stability of Latin American continent against the International Communist Movement<sup>125</sup>. In so doing the principles of self-determination and non-intervention became subordinate to the premise of collective security in the hemisphere.

In addition, the counterinsurgency theory also became part of Brazilian military dogma. In fact, the “revolutionary warfare” concept is a basic point to be highlighted. As a type of non-classical warfare, the “revolutionary warfare” is described by the Doctrine as: “a conflict normally internal, that is stimulated and aided materially or psychologically from outside the nation, generally inspired by an ideology. It attempts to gain state power by progressive control of the nation”<sup>126</sup>.

Having looked at some basic concepts of the NSD, I shall now discuss the reasons why the Doctrine has been taken as the ultimate rationale for explaining the military regime’s foreign policy.

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124 LIMA, Maria Regina Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, August 1986, p. 16.

125 MOURA, Gerson. “Brasil-Cuba: enfim, o reatamento”. *Brasil - Perspectivas Internacionais*, year II, no. 10, Apr./Jun. 1986, PUC/RJ, pp. 1-4, p. 1.

126 MANUAL BÁSICO DA ESG. Estado Maior das Forças Armadas, ESG, Departamento de Estudos, 1976, pp. 78-79, as quoted by ALVES, Maria Helena M. *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

### 2.1.2. The “deification” of the NSD

There seems no doubt that the foreign policy decisions taken during Castello Branco’s government were closely related to the general lines of the NSD and its geopolitical aspects. One of the most important representatives of the military associated with the Higher War College, and one of the main ideologues of NSD, Castello Branco advocated the idea that Brazilian development had to be pursued through the country’s security, which in its turn had to be established by a strong anti-Communist policy. The document which best characterizes the pattern of foreign policy then implemented, is Castello Branco’s speech at the Rio Branco Institute graduation ceremony in July 1964<sup>127</sup>. There the notion of an “Independent Foreign Policy” was rejected, the concept of neutralism was deeply criticized, and the alleged “adulterated” idea of nationalism, which was said to be an obstacle to foreign investments, was abandoned<sup>128</sup>. Moreover, the Cold War became the chief influence on Brazil’s orientation towards international affairs. As a result the automatic alignment to the United States, which had been the foreign policy’s mainstream from the mid-1940s to the late 1950s, was reincorporated into Brazilian foreign policy.

However, despite the several alterations made to this general pattern of foreign policy in the following governments, and in particular under Geisel’s government, a direct association of the ESG and the NSD original premises with the foreign policy of the military regime continued to be made by many people. There

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127 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Departamento de Administração. *Op. cit.*

128 *Idem.* For an overview of the “Independent Foreign Policy” implemented between 1961 and 1964 under the government of Jânio Quadros (1961) and João Goulart (1961-1964), see Keith L. S. *Brazil’s Independent Foreign Policy (1961-1964): Background, Tenets, Linkage to Domestic Policy and Aftermath.* Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University, 1973.

are two main reasons behind this association: on the one hand, General Golbery do Couto e Silva's ascent within the decision making hierarchy; on the other, the "deification" of the NSD. It is to these aspects that I now turn to.

Regarding the first reason, I claim that the Brazilian domestic and foreign policy association to the NSD is, in largely measure, a result of Golbery's presence in the decision making arena<sup>129</sup>, since his name is strongly associated with the ESG and with the doctrine developed by this College<sup>130</sup>. As Myiamoto and Gonçalves put it, "from 1964, the analyses of the regime established a link between the ESG and Golbery to the extent that it was not possible to mention the latter without mentioning the former. In so doing it is possible to understand the myth surrounding the institution, due to Golbery having always been ascribed the label of "The Gray Eminence" of the governmental political strategy. In other words, the ESG became important because Golbery, the ESG's most notorious member, came from it"<sup>131</sup>. As a consequence, they continue, "the link ESG-Golbery has assumed mystifying effects of such amplitude that the institution has assumed a disproportionate role, not only in academic interpretations, but also in the media and the political *milieu*, which began to identify the ESG, through Golbery, as the country's laboratory of ideas"<sup>132</sup>.

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129 After having being the first head of the National Intelligence Service (Serviço Nacional de Informações/ SNI), from 1964 to 1967, then a prominent governmental agency, Golbery was later reincorporated into the government as Head of the Civilian Cabinet of the Presidency (1974-1981), a very important position as far as the designing of the regime's political strategy was concerned.

130 Golbery was the author of one of the most important Brazilian works on Geopolitics and he had also helped to create ESG, with the result that he was considered a chief ideologue of the National Security Doctrine. SILVA, G. do Couto e. *Op. cit.*

131 MYIAMOTO, Shiguenoli & GONÇALVES, Williams da S. "Militares, Diplomatas e Política Externa no Brasil Pós-64". *Primeira Versão*, no. 36, IFCH/UNICAMP, 1991, p. 13. Translated by the author.

132 *Idem*, p. 14.

Nevertheless, while it can be said that the ESG had indeed fulfilled its role of generating a military doctrine – particularly between 1952-1956<sup>133</sup> –, a different story has to be told with regards to the association between this doctrine and the actual contents of Brazilian policy during the years of the military regime. Despite the close relationship between the NSD supporters and the ESG, it is not correct to explain the foreign policy contents of the period (with the exception of the Castello Branco government), by the so-called *esguiana* ideology, e.g., the ESG's ideology<sup>134</sup>. As correctly put by Gonçalves and Myiamoto, ESG's acquiescence regarding governmental decisions followed the implementation of the decisions and not without an initial degree of disagreement which was subsequently put aside<sup>135</sup>. Perhaps the best example is the fact that, when Brazil reestablished diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in August 1974, the ESG's intellectual output, as well as the military's in general, showed its opposition to this change<sup>136</sup>.

Likewise, Golbery's identification with traditional geopolitical thought and thus with the foreign policy of the entire military regime should also be qualified. It is true that Golbery was the author of one of the most important Brazilian works on Geopolitics – *Geopolítica do Brasil*<sup>137</sup>. In this sense, one could expect an immediate correlation between the contents of Brazilian foreign policy and

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133 STEPAN, A. *Os Militares: da Abertura à Nova República*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Paz e Terra, 1984, p. 57.

134 MYIAMOTO, S. & GONÇALVES, Williams da S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

135 *Idem*, p. 11. In addition, it is worth noting what General Golbery stated about the ESG's connections with Brazilian policy contents. In an interview with Alfred Stepan, he emphasized that the ESG was not important as a center of ideology or politics after the coup d'état, and that he hardly used any ESG papers when formulating government policy during his term as Head of Civilian Staff (1974-1981). STEPAN, A. "Os Militares: da Abertura à Nova República". *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

136 MYIAMOTO, S. & GONÇALVES, Williams da S. *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

137 SILVA, G. do Couto e. *Op. cit.*



the main ideas advocated by the geopolitical literature and by the NSD, both allegedly disseminated by the ESG. Nevertheless, as Lamazière puts it, “le Gouvernement [Geisel] qui marquait le retour au pouvoir des ‘castelistas’ de la ESG était justement celui où les idées de cette dernière avaient le moins de poids; et (...) l’ascension du Général Golbery do Couto e Silva ne devait absolument pas signifier la mise en pratique de “*Geopolítica do Brasil*”<sup>138</sup>.

In fact what seems to have happened was a significant review of the original ideas in the above mentioned framework. In this sense the rigorous aspects of geopolitics and the principles of the NSD which had characterized military thought during the 50s and 60s<sup>139</sup>, were replaced by more flexible ones to match the new demands of the Brazilian state in the equally new configuration of the international system. Thus, we have to admit the existence of a pragmatic geopolitical thought which, instead of stressing the traditional Western alignment and an anti-Communist stance, was much more concerned with energy issues, the arms industry, information technology and increasing exports<sup>140</sup>, regardless of their relations with the East-West conflict. Obviously, this pragmatism did not touch upon all matters of Brazilian foreign relations or all constituencies of the military regime – as I will show when discussing the case-studies.

As far as the second reason is concerned, which indeed constitutes the central argument of this chapter, e.g., the worship of the NSD as it was initially formulated, I suggest that what is seen as a military *ideology* should perhaps be substituted by

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138 LAMAZIERE, G. *Pensée Géopolitique et Politique Extérieure du Brésil (1952-1979)*, Paris, Université de Paris I, 1983, p. 46.

139 In fact Golbery's book was essentially a compilation of lectures and essays written by him on the late 50s and early 60s.

140 GRANDI, Jorge A. *Régime Militaire et Politique Extérieure du Brésil: l'Accord de Coopération Nucleaire Germano-Brésilien du 1975*. Ph.D. Thesis, Paris, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, 1985, p. 165.

the notion of *mentality*, as put by Juan Linz<sup>141</sup>. In other words, although the NSD was formulated and initially applied as a military *ideology* in the sense that it was “a more or less elaborate doctrine which embraced the holder with sufficient force, which was sufficiently elaborate in its details, and which had sufficient coherence that it could seriously constrain behavior”; it turned out to be a military *mentality*, to the extent that it became “more a set of attitudes than a cognitive structure, more a global orientation than a detailed guide, more *inchoate* than coherent; in short, not a set of deep and clear commandments to which action must adjust”<sup>142</sup>, but rather a set of directives adjustable by the actions. Indeed, as stressed by Alfred Stepan, “the new professionalism [closely associated with the NSD] contributes more to the military’s general attitude to political action than to specific policies”<sup>143</sup>. Moreover, he continues, “despite the new professionalism’s agreement on the inseparability of internal security and national development, (...) the ideology itself leaves unspecified most concrete policy decisions”<sup>144</sup>. In this sense, it is possible to imagine issues about which there were not straightforward guidelines, hence the eventual disputes. Nevertheless, for the sake of military pride, and with the serious consequence of becoming an academic cornerstone, foreign policy throughout the entire military regime kept being explained by NSD supporters and by scholars alike, as the realization of an elaborate military *ideology*, namely the National Security Doctrine.

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141 LINZ, J. “Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes” in Fred I. Greenstein & Nelson W. P. (Eds.) *Handbook of Political Science: Macro-Political Theory*, v. 3, Reading, Mass, Addison, Wesley Publ. Co, 1975, pp. 175-371, pp. 266-269.

142 MARKOFF, J. & BARETTA, Silvio R. D. *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

143 STEPAN, A. “The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion”. *Op. cit.*, p. 145.

144 *Idem*, p. 147.

The conflicts involving different branches within the armed forces, regarding their distinct views about the national interests<sup>145</sup>, and the different patterns of foreign policy decisions implemented by the military governments<sup>146</sup>, albeit with some degree of continuity, illustrate how distinctly the NSD premises can be interpreted. Indeed, sometimes “ideology plays a subordinate and minor role in deciding the state’s objectives and plan for action to reach them, and a more important role in justifying the decision once it has been made”<sup>147</sup>. Therefore, I maintain that the process, by which certain concepts were adapted to the conjuncture and to the interests involved, is a crucial element to be dealt with. In doing so I shall expand on how those interests were configured in the decision making arena.

## **2.2. Decision Making Arena – the President, the Military and the Foreign Ministry**

Moving to Geisel’s administration, the diversification of the country’s interests in the international system led to a remarkable complexity in the realm of foreign policy. Hence, the adjustment of interests around the main NSD premises became even more complicated. Indeed it was during Geisel’s government when the

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145 For an account of three main ideological branches within the armed forces, see: FONTAINE, Roger Warren. *The Foreign Policy Making Process in Brazil*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Ann Arbor University Microfilms, The John Hopkins University, 1970, Chapter V “The role of military in foreign policy-making”, pp. 167-217, particularly pp. 177-215. The Presidential succession issue is another example to illustrate the divisions within the Armed Forces. For this question, see: GÓES, Walder & CAMARGO, Aspásia. *O Drama da Sucessão e a Crise do Regime*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1984. Also for a general view of the problem under Geisel’s government, particularly, between Geisel and the “intelligence and security community” see OLIVEIRA, Eliézer R. “Conflicts Militaires et Décisions sous la Présidence du Général Geisel (1974-1979)” in Alain R. (Ed.) *Les Partis Militaires au Brésil*, Paris, Presse de La Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1980, pp. 105-139.

146 MARTINS, Carlos Estevam. “A Evolução da Política Externa Brasileira na Década de 64-74”. *Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 12, Apr./May/Jun. 1975, pp. 55-98.

147 LEVI, W. *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

shift of emphasis from security to the area of development was finally completed. As a result the intra-bureaucratic quarrels became more constant and intense. Therefore it is worth describing the decision making *process* that characterizes Geisel's government, as opposed to the decision making *structure*, so as to explain how those interests were orchestrated. In so doing, my purpose is firstly to highlight characteristics that made Geisel's administration quite unique. And secondly, to indicate the correlation between this uniqueness and the changes in the foreign policy contents.

My aim is to focus on the examination of the central executive agencies. By this I mean that I will not work on the supposed role played by the non-governmental actors, the political parties<sup>148</sup>, the private and the state business community, the press, the church, the labor unions, etc.; nor by the other ministries, mostly economic. Although acknowledging that the latter could have had some say in the process, this influence was characterized by an erratic pattern<sup>149</sup>.

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148 The Institutional Act no. 2 of October 27, 1965 abolished all the existing political parties. Following that, a complementary Act created a biparty system, in November 1965 a pro-government party called ARENA (Aliança Renovadora Nacional) and an opposition party called MDB (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro). SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil (1964-1985)*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 45, p. 48. In so doing, the process towards a more systematic participation which can be observed between 1961 and 1964 was halted. It is true, however, that historically Brazilian political parties were not characterized by a high profile in foreign affairs. To be more precise, they had an intermittent performance in this area, in spite of being sometimes quite intense. Nevertheless, their presence was usually perceived regarding specific issues such as foreign assistance and investment, lacking a clear-cut proposal for Brazilian international policy. By comparing the programs of the main political parties during two different periods, 1946-1964 and 1964-1984, Paulo Roberto de Almeida shows their loose interest and low commitment regarding foreign affairs. The only exceptions being, in the first period, the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) and the Popular Representation Party (PRP), both with very weak influence on matters of State. However, I must stress that, although soon after the military takeover foreign policy issues gained a much more important place in the parties' political programs that was proportionally reverse to the political parties' real capabilities to intervene in the realm of policy making. ALMEIDA, P. Roberto de. "Partidos Políticos e Política Externa". *Revista de Informação Legislativa*, Brasília, year 23, no. 91, Jul./Sep. 1986, pp. 173-216. For an account of the role of Congress in foreign policy from the late 50s to the mid-60s, see FONTAINE, Roger Warren. *Op. cit.*, Chapter VI "The Congress: the sometime critic", pp. 218-245.

149 Amongst them, the National Monetary Council (Conselho Monetário Nacional/CMN), the National Foreign Trade Council (Conselho Nacional de Exportação/CONCEX), the Foreign Trade Office

I will concentrate on the examination of three spheres of decision making: 1) the Presidency; 2) the inner-circle; and 3) the outer circle. While in the first the unique presence of the president is conspicuous, in the second I shall emphasize the role of the Foreign Ministry, in addition to other close advisers to the president. Finally, in the third sphere, I shall scrutinize the outsider role of the most important federal agencies, mostly military-constituted, such as the National Security Council and the National Intelligence Service in the process of foreign policy making<sup>150</sup>.

### 2.2.1. The Presidency: Ernesto Geisel's policy-making system and management style<sup>151</sup>

According to Luciano Martins, within an authoritarian military regime where the President also holds a military rank, his first and most important constituencies are the military class. Nevertheless, he continues, “the power resources at the disposal of the general-president (along with his possible qualities of statesmanship) tended to increase his personal autonomy from the only institution to which he was accountable”<sup>152</sup>. That was what

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of Bank of Brazil (Carteira de Comércio Exterior do Banco do Brasil/CACEX), the Brazilian Coffee Institute, etc. There are excellent studies where it is possible to obtain an overview of the subject. FONTAINE, R. *Op. cit.* SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. *Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1976. GRANDI, Jorge A. *Op. cit.*

150 Although embracing a somewhat different view from mine, it is possible to draw a parallel with Perlmutter's article, saying that what he has named “presidential political center” would encompass those three dimensions, although his “presidential court” would perhaps be more appropriate to designate what I describe as the presidential inner-circle. See PERLMUTTER, Amos. “The Presidential Political Center and Foreign Policy: a critique of the Revisionist and Bureaucratic-Political Orientations”. *World Politics*, v. XXVII, no. 1, October 1974, pp. 87-106.

151 The title of this section is based on Alexander George's analysis of presidential management styles. GEORGE, Alexander L. *Presidential Decision-making in Foreign Policy: the effective use of information and advice*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1980, Chapter 8, “Presidential Management Styles and Models”, pp. 145-168.

152 MARTINS, Luciano. “The ‘Liberalization’ of Authoritarian Rule in Brazil” in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter & Laurence W. (Eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule - Prospects for*

happened during Geisel's administration regarding some issue areas, as the President's centralist style augmented his autonomy, though not making it complete.

In addition, within the military regime, President Geisel was the only one, among his predecessors, with some previous experience in decision making on a macro level<sup>153</sup>. Furthermore he had a distinctive experience with foreign matters, which he acquired when he worked as Military Attaché for the Brazilian Embassy in Montevideo (1947-1950), and particularly when he headed the Brazilian state oil company, PETROBRAS (1969-1973). When chairing this company, Geisel dealt with an area of remarkable importance during the 70s. Besides, it was under his direction that PETROBRAS increased its reliance on imported oil<sup>154</sup>, which while making the country even more dependent on external resources for energy, provided Geisel with a certain know how on foreign issues.

Geisel's political and ideological background is usually identified with the ESG, of which he was a member since 1952<sup>155</sup>, and, as a result, to the general principles of the NSD. Besides, Geisel's close identification with the first military president, General Castello Branco, made him one of the several military men

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*Democracy*, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, Part II, Chapter 4, pp. 72-94, p. 81.

153 On several occasions he worked either with military ministers or with Presidents. It is worth mentioning his position as Head of the General Secretariat of the National Security Council, under General Eurico Gaspar Dutra's government (1945-1950). Head of president Pascoal Ranieri Mazzilli's Military Staff (1961) and Head of President Castello Branco's Military Staff (1964-1967). Regarding the latter, it is worth noting that during this time Geisel developed a way of handling politics very similar to that of his superior – discrete, silent, and hard-working. For more details of General Ernesto Geisel's biography see: FUNDAÇÃO GETÚLIO VARGAS, CPDOC. *Dicionário Histórico-Biográfico Brasileiro: 1930-1983*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Forense-Universitária, FGV/CPDOC: FINEP, 1984, 4 vs., v. 2, pp. 1450-1459.

154 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 179.

155 FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS, CPDOC. *Op. cit.*, p. 1450.

identified with the so called “Castelista” group. Like Castello Branco, Geisel strongly supported the principles of military hierarchy and constitutional government and, despite discretionary measures taken by his administration<sup>156</sup>, he was an eager opponent of the military “hard-liners”.

Nevertheless, despite having kept a strong allegiance to the general precepts of the NSD, as far as the opposition between Eastern and Western countries – the core of the doctrine regarding foreign matters – was concerned, Geisel held a different view. Indeed, for him the nature of international politics and conflict should be searched in the North-South strife, rather than in the Capitalist-Communist dispute. Moreover, he was extremely concerned with Brazil’s independence, sovereignty and non-compliance regarding the United States<sup>157</sup>. In other words, for him what was good for the US was not necessarily good for Brazil, to quote a former Brazilian ambassador to Washington, Juraci Magalhães.

As for his managerial style, his remarkably centralist methods were striking. Geisel’s habit of immersing himself in administrative details<sup>158</sup>, as well as his preference for making decisions personally<sup>159</sup> are well known. However, the latter characteristic did not mean a complete absence of previous discussions with his advisors, particularly as far as foreign matters were concerned, as I shall illustrate later on. As correctly stressed by his former minister

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156 One of the most significant being the so called “pacote de abril” (April package) in 1977. In a Complementary Act he closed the Congress and announced a series of major constitutional changes. SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-192.

157 Interview with General Ernesto Geisel, by Maria Celina Soares D’Araújo and Celso Castro, Rio de Janeiro, February 1994. CPDOC/FGV.

158 GÓES, Walder de. *O Brasil do General Geisel*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1978, pp. 19-20 and 24.

159 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 64-65 and p. 79.

of Planning, Geisel's administration can be characterized by an emphasis on teamwork, despite the fact that the final choices were not taken in a group decision-making style<sup>160</sup>. In fact, at the very beginning of his administration Geisel made clear his intentions of being the ultimate decision maker<sup>161</sup>. In this sense, there was little – if any – room for Geisel's advisors either to make or to implement a decision without his knowledge. Therefore, in contrast to the government of his predecessor (Garrastazú Médici, 1969-1974), in Geisel's administration there was no opportunity for any kind of super minister or secretary holding a central position in the decision making arena, with some degree of advantage over the president<sup>162</sup>.

The combination of Geisel's personal characteristics and his view about the need for a more centralist method of formulating decisions in order to avoid potential obstacles to his plans led him to impose a remarkable control in the decision making arena.

### 2.2.2. The inner circle

Geisel introduced one important change in the pattern of decision making that prevailed during his predecessor's governments. He gathered around himself a group of direct assistants, namely the Head of the Military Staff, General Hugo de Abreu; the Head of the Civilian Staff, General Golbery do Couto e Silva; the Head of the National Intelligence Service, General João Batista Figueiredo; and the Planning Secretary, João Paulo dos Reis Velloso. This group constituted Geisel's think-tank and became

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160 Interview with former Secretary of Planning, João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, 27/03/1992.

161 GEISEL, Ernesto. *Discursos*, v. 1, Assessoria de Imprensa e Relações Públicas da Presidência da República, Brasília, 1975, p. 32.

162 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Autoritarismo e Democracia na Argentina e no Brasil - uma década de política exterior (1973-1984)*, São Paulo, Ed. Convívio, 1988, p. 38 and "O Poder e os novos poderes da Presidência". *Visão*, June 24, 1974, pp. 16-22.



known as the President’s “house ministers” (“grupo palaciano”)<sup>163</sup>. According to Walder de Góes, the presidential think-tank “certainly constituted the government’s main informal council, a mechanism from which the most immediate decisions were triggered or from which the direct instructions for future decisions used to come”<sup>164</sup>.

The absence of Itamaraty from the “house ministers” group should not lead us to think that the Foreign Ministry did not have a leading role in the decision making process. In fact, in the foreign policy decision arena, the first important question to take into account is the special relationship between Geisel and Azeredo da Silveira. To ascertain the special role played by Azeredo da Silveira as a decision maker during this period, a crucial aspect has to be addressed. I am referring to the unique status achieved by Itamaraty in Brazilian history, which, although not enough to explain the singular partnership between Geisel and Silveira, was a strong element in making it feasible.

The founding of the Rio Branco Institute – an official diplomatic academy in charge of recruitment and preparation of candidates for the Brazilian diplomatic service – in 1945<sup>165</sup>, coincided with the beginning of a period of serious shortcomings in the process of the education of Brazilian political elites. Therefore, its importance as a place where a homogeneous and high profile education could be

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163 Geisel used to meet the “house ministers” twice a day to discuss matters of general and specific interest. Questions related to the military and to the national security were under the supervision of the Head of the Military Staff, who also happened to be the General Secretary of the National Security Council (Conselho de Segurança Nacional/CSN). Political issues were reported to the Head of the Civil Staff. As expected, economic questions were reported to the Planning Secretary, and, finally, any of those areas, once related to the concept of national security, could be taken to the Head of SNI.

164 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 27. Translated by the author.

165 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Departamento de Comunicações e Documentação. *Instituto Rio Branco - The Brazilian Diplomatic Academy*, Brasília, Divisão de Divulgação Documental, 1983.

developed had remarkably increased<sup>166</sup>. In other words, the process of preparation for diplomatic affairs towards the consolidation of the nation and the Brazilian nationality, aimed by the Institute, played a remarkable role in the formation of a special group of civil servants. Similar patterns of education and socialization were only undergone by the military class in Brazil. As a result, a sort of empathy between the two groups was established. This fact led to a peculiar relationship between them, in which the military class displayed a great deal of confidence in the diplomats in contrast to the lack of confidence shown towards other civilian groups<sup>167</sup>, notwithstanding the remaining ideological and political differences between them<sup>168</sup>. It is worth mentioning that whilst the military had considerably increased their presence in the several bureaucratic federal agencies since 1964, not only was Itamaraty protected against this “intervention”, but it also increased its presence within many federal agencies<sup>169</sup>.

In addition, until the mid-50s when Itamaraty demanded an active role in Brazilian foreign affairs, leaving behind its traditional role of passivity<sup>170</sup>, a process of continuing institutionalization provided it with the tools for 1) protecting the institution from

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166 CHEIBUB, Zairo B. “Diplomacia e Construção Institucional: o Itamaraty em uma perspectiva histórica”. *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 28, no. 1, 1985, pp. 113-131, p. 128.

167 *Idem*, pp. 127-129.

168 BARROS, Alexandre de S. C. “A Formulação e Implementação da Política Externa Brasileira: o Itamaraty e os Novos Atores” in MUÑOZ, Heraldo, TULCHIN, Joseph S. *A América Latina e a Política Mundial*, São Paulo, Ed. Convívio, 1984, pp. 29-42, pp. 31-32.

169 BARROS, Alexandre de S. C. “Política Exterior Brasileña y el Mito del Barón”. *Foro Internacional*, v. XXIV, Apr./Jun. 1984, no. 4, pp. 1-20, p. 5.

170 On this subject Wayne Selcher quotes an expressive critique on Itamaraty’s behavior: “All actions have consequences; these are unforeseeable, so we should not act; that is the general principle which governed our Ministry (of Foreign Relations) from 1913 to 1956”. Quoted from RODRIGUES, José Honório. “Uma Política Externa própria e independente”. *Política Externa Independente*, no. 1, May 1965, p. 24 in: SELCHER, Wayne A. *The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)*, Gainesville, Florida, University of Florida Press, 1974, p. 12.

external influences and interventions; 2) developing a more complex structure; 3) enforcing a cohesive conduct; and, finally 4) guaranteeing a certain degree of autonomy of action<sup>171</sup>. By way of example, despite the radical changes in the contents of the foreign policy sponsored by the first military government, the Foreign Ministry was the least affected federal agency by the witch-hunt policy executed by the new regime soon after the takeover. The number of diplomats then expelled from office due to their political and ideological positions was indeed very low<sup>172</sup>. Moreover, the first Foreign Minister named by the military government, Vasco Leitão da Cunha, was himself a career diplomat. Although not a novelty, the nomination of diplomats to head Itamaraty was not a tradition in Brazilian history<sup>173</sup>. As a result, notwithstanding Castello Branco's strong presence in foreign matters, Itamaraty maintained its potential role as a decision maker<sup>174</sup>. Immediately after the takeover, Itamaraty had to exchange its ideas for its integrity, which, however, allowed it to work towards restoring its central position in the foreign decision arena in the following years<sup>175</sup>.

In spite of those aspects, I shall discuss the hypothesis that Itamaraty's ideas were actually produced within the NSD premises,

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171 For an excellent analysis of this process, see: CHEIBUB, Zairo Borges. *Diplomacia, Diplomatas e Política Externa: aspectos de institucionalização do Itamaraty*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IUPERJ, June 1984.

172 Four in total – Jayme de Azevedo Rodrigues, Antônio Houaiss, Jatyr de Almeida Rodrigues and Hugo Gouthier de Oliveira Gondim. CUNHA, V. Leitão da. *Diplomacia em Alto-Mar - depoimento ao CPDOC*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Fundação Getúlio Vargas, pp. 308-309, Forthcoming.

173 Less than 2% of the Ministers during the Republican years were diplomats. For more details about it, see Ronald M. S. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

174 Alexandre Barros takes a different view saying that Itamaraty had indeed maintained its central position in foreign policy making even immediately after the takeover. He then explains – incorrectly in my view – the break off with Cuba and Hungary, the sending of troops to Santo Domingo and even the alignment to the United States, as compelled "concessions" made by Itamaraty to the military, due the fact that these issues were key-questions for them. BARROS, Alexandre de S. C. "A Formulação e Implementação da Política Externa Brasileira: o Itamaraty e os Novos Atores". *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

175 CHEIBUB, Zairo B. *Diplomacia, Diplomatas e Política Externa: aspectos do processo de institucionalização do Itamaraty*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IUPERJ, Junho 1984, p. 123.

which would confirm the NSD as the basis of foreign policy. So, I move onto the relationship between Itamaraty and the ESG.

Itamaraty's contacts with the College were indeed significant. As mentioned above, Itamaraty was the only civilian ministry to act as adviser to the ESG's Commander. In addition, the presence of diplomats at the ESG as lecturers was a common procedure. However, the presence of diplomats as students, that is, as an object of indoctrination was not quite as expressive<sup>176</sup>. In this sense, I suggest that, as far as Itamaraty developed its own interests and convictions as a consequence of its process of institutionalization as already mentioned<sup>177</sup>, we have to consider that Itamaraty used the ESG more as a sphere for experimenting and evaluating the receptivity of its own ideas, than as a source for them. In other words, it seems that this Ministry preserved within the College its own views on Brazilian international policy, rather than having them swamped by ESG ideology<sup>178</sup>.

In this context it is clear that Itamaraty gained a high level of autonomy giving its personnel their own identity, and developing a pattern of action of its own. Nevertheless, in the absence of a decision making analysis it is not possible to conclude that Itamaraty turned into a central decision maker in the foreign policy arena<sup>179</sup>; and, as a consequence, guaranteed the implementation of

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176 Between 1960 and 1977, of 206 diplomats, only 49 followed the ESG course. Moreover, these 49 had their career promotion delayed for approximately two years in comparison to the others. In this sense, as stated by Zairo Borges Cheibub, ESG "is not an important locus in terms of bureaucratic articulations". *Idem*, p. 109. Hence, I assume that the supposed indoctrination did not work as a guarantee of more prestige and power in the realm of foreign policy making.

177 *Idem*, p. 121.

178 On this respect, Myiamoto points to the fact that the ESG's papers which could be considered as good quality are, in their majority, those written by academics or diplomats. MYIAMOTO, S. "A ESG: Mito e Realidade". *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

179 CHEIBUB, Zairo B. "Diplomacia, Diplomatas e Política Externa: aspectos do processo de institucionalização do Itamaraty". *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

Itamaraty's proposals on foreign policy during the military years in general, and Geisel's government in particular<sup>180</sup>. Now I will turn to Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira's attributes in order to appraise how much he contributed to Itamaraty performing this role.

During the governments preceding Geisel's, Itamaraty's real importance as a source of policy contents was partially explained by a) the then Presidents' disregard for foreign affairs (except for Castello Branco); b) by the outstanding professionalism of the diplomats; and c) by the respect in which the latter were held by the military. In Geisel's government, however, Itamaraty could actually maintain its position as a central locus of policy formulation thanks to the prestige held by Azeredo da Silveira himself in Geisel's eyes, in addition to the latter two aspects.

A former Ambassador to Buenos Aires (1969-1974), and chief of the Brazilian delegation to several UNCTAD sessions (1966, 1967 and 1968), Azeredo da Silveira was known as a supporter of a more independent trend for Brazilian foreign policy. Not surprisingly he failed to secure military support when President Costa e Silva considered nominating him as General Secretary of Itamaraty<sup>181</sup>. However, when Geisel took over he was particularly keen on implementing a shift in Brazilian foreign policy and was determined to have Azeredo as his assistant, despite rumors of some resistance towards Azeredo's name from factions of the Armed Forces<sup>182</sup>. At one of his first meetings with Silveira, Geisel

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180 *Idem*, pp. 122-123.

181 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

182 "O Poder e os novos poderes da Presidência". *Visão*, June 24, 1974, p. 17.

told him: “You are the Foreign Minister I wish to have. If someone throws stones on your roof, I will be on your side”<sup>183</sup>.

The “Responsible Pragmatism” framework was indeed drafted during the meetings between president elect Ernesto Geisel and the Foreign Minister candidate, Azeredo da Silveira<sup>184</sup>. It is reported that when Silveira presented his ideas to Geisel, a strong convergence of opinion between them was asserted<sup>185</sup>. Azeredo’s proposals were already half-formed in Geisel’s mind<sup>186</sup>. As posited by Gino Costa, “Geisel’s own choice of Foreign Minister was essential in allowing him to have a subordinate with whom he shared a common global outlook and who could express and articulate his own sometimes inarticulate views on international affairs”<sup>187</sup>. As a result the most important foreign policy questions were, in general, discussed primarily between Geisel and Silveira<sup>188</sup>.

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183 STUMPF, André G. & PEREIRA, M. *A Segunda Guerra: sucessão de Geisel*, São Paulo, Ed. Brasiliense, 1979, p. 79 and interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, CPDOC, May 10, 1979. Translated by the author.

184 *Idem*, pp. 78-79.

185 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, former Head of Minister Azeredo da Silveira Cabinet, Rio de Janeiro, December 05, 1991.

186 “Política Externa”. *Jornal da Tarde*, January 1, 1979, p. 7.

187 COSTA, Gino F. *The Foreign Policy of Brazil towards her South American Neighbours during Geisel and Figueiredo Administrations*. Ph.D. Thesis, Queen’s College, Cambridge, 1987, p. 26.

188 According to the testimony of some of Azeredo da Silveira’s closest advisors, he usually phoned Geisel from his office when a delicate question was under discussion by him and his cabinet. Thus the supposed bureaucratic procedure of firstly reporting to the Head of Civilian Staff in charge of political issues or to wait for his next scheduled interview with the president, was replaced by an immediate and direct consultation, which was possible thanks to the special relationship between Silveira and Geisel. Interview with Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, former General Secretary of Itamaraty under Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira, Rio de Janeiro, November 11, 1991 and with Ambassador Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, former Sub-head of Minister Azeredo Cabinet, São Paulo, January 14, 1992. An interesting example of how Silveira attempted to keep Geisel reliant on him is the “Fontoura episode”. Soon after the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas/MFA) seized power in April 1974, Lisbon suggested to Brasília the replacement of General Carlos Alberto Fontoura, for whom they had already given the *agreement*, to be the next Brazilian Ambassador to Portugal. Fontoura, a former Head of the SNI, with links with the more conservative Brazilian military men, had been nominated to the post by Geisel’s antecessor, and was on his way

Hence it was not expected that the “house ministers” would reach a final decision on foreign matters without the presence of or previous consultation to Azeredo da Silveira<sup>189</sup>. Actually the role of the “house ministers” in foreign policy making was almost entirely restricted to opinions given by Golbery do Couto e Silva. Indeed, Golbery used to be consulted by Geisel<sup>190</sup> and by Minister Azeredo da Silveira<sup>191</sup> on foreign questions of any significance to the country, particularly regarding Latin America – an area of particular interest to him. Besides, Silveira used to discuss with Golbery issues about which a personal dialogue with the president was not considered essential, without harming other usual contacts between the former and Geisel<sup>192</sup>. In summary, as put by an adviser close to Silveira, the Foreign Minister’s talks to Golbery were one of his ways of assessing both Geisel’s and the system’s receptivity to his ideas on foreign policy<sup>193</sup>.

Likewise, in the case of the Councils created by Geisel – Economic Development Council (Conselho de Desenvolvimento Econômico/CDE), National Monetary Council (Conselho

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to take the office in the embassy. The immediate reaction from Silveira was to draft a telegram to the Portuguese government stressing that if Lisbon had any problem with Fontoura’s nomination, Brasília would keep the embassy headed by a Charge d’Affaires, and it would not indicate any other name for the ambassador’s post. Having been alerted by one of his advisers about the toughness of the telegram, Silveira replied asserting that he needed to have enough credibility before the Brazilian government in order to achieve his foreign policy aims. Hence, he needed to present the issue to the president with a suggestion of firm response to Lisbon, in accordance to what he supposed Geisel’s position would be, instead of just consulting him. Otherwise he would jeopardize the confidence Geisel had in him. Interview with Luiz Augusto Souto Maior, Head of Minister Azeredo da Silveira’s Cabinet, Rio de Janeiro, December 5, 1991.

189 Interview with João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1992.

190 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power”. *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

191 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, Rio de Janeiro, December 05, 1991.

192 Interview with Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, former General Secretary of Itamaraty under Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira, Rio de Janeiro, November 12, 1992 and with Ambassador General Holanda Cavalcanti, former Sub-head of Minister Azeredo Cabinet, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

193 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, Rio de Janeiro, December 05, 1991.

Monetário Nacional/CMN) and the Social and Development Council (Conselho de Desenvolvimento Social/CDS) –, as well as other ministries, having to examine matters related to foreign policy, the presence of the Foreign Minister was always required<sup>194</sup>. In this respect it is worth noting Silveira's comments on the fact that his Ministry did not take part in any of the governmental Councils. According to him, by not being a member of any Council, when a foreign issue was under discussion he was summoned especially to the meeting to give his statement. By so doing, he continues, Itamaraty exercised a much more decisive influence. Otherwise, Itamaraty would have been heard just as a matter of routine, instead of being consulted for its specialized opinion<sup>195</sup>.

I shall now continue to outline the other main elements of the decision making process. Thus, what follows is an analysis of the agencies which, notwithstanding having had a strong position during the military regime, as far as Geisel's government is concerned, they should be rather seen as the outer circle of the decision arena, particularly regarding the realm of foreign policy.

### 2.2.3. The outer circle

The National Security Council (Conselho de Segurança Nacional/CSN) was an ever important locus for decision making during the military regime<sup>196</sup>. Nonetheless, its importance during Geisel's government has to be qualified. The NSC was constituted by all cabinet ministers, the vice-president, the chiefs of staff of

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194 Interview with João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1992.

195 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 10, 1979, CPDOC.

196 According to the former Brazilian Constitution, the CSN was in charge of the establishment of the permanent national objectives as well as the national policy, the study of the domestic and foreign issues related to the Brazilian national security, as well as other more specific domestic matters. SENADO FEDERAL. *Constituição Federativa do Brasil*, Brasília, 1986, p. 98.



each of the three services, the chief of staff of the armed forces, the heads of the military and civilian presidential staff, and the director of the SNI. However, despite the practice of considering this Council as “the fundamental locus of the decision making process”<sup>197</sup>, its meetings were not common procedure at this time. In fact it seems that the NSC was rarely convened for plenary discussions during Geisel’s government<sup>198</sup>, since the president had deliberately diminished its importance as the locus for decision making<sup>199</sup>. Instead, the consultations usually took the form of written questions, the answers to which, as was once reported, were virtually settled<sup>200</sup>, hence the usual unanimity of the decisions. Moreover, according to some sources, there were several decisions taken by Geisel which were not subject to any previous consultation with the NSC<sup>201</sup>, or submitted to any of the military ministers in particular<sup>202</sup>, or even to the Army High Command<sup>203</sup>. Therefore, as appropriately put by Walder de Góes, “usually the hearing of the NSC’s members worked just as a ritualization of the President’s personal decisions”<sup>204</sup>. In this sense, although it is

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197 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 32.

198 *Idem*, p. 27. “CSN - Um superministério, mas aparece pouco”. *Jornal do Brasil*, August 22, 1982. Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 10, 1979, CPDOC. Interview with Colonel Kurt Pessek, former assistant to the General Secretary of NSC, Brasília, November 21, 1991. Interview with journalist Walder de Góes, Brasília, November 11, 1991 and Interview with General Antonio Jorge Correa, Head of Armed Forces General Staff from 1974 to 1979, Rio de Janeiro, March 18, 1992.

199 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power”. *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

200 “CSN - Um superministério, mas aparece pouco”. *Jornal do Brasil*, August 22, 1982.

201 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

202 Interview with João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1992.

203 Luciano Martins says that a four-star general who was member of the Army High Command for more than four years told him that in the mid-1970s this forum never discussed any economic or other major public policy – not even nuclear policy. I must add that Martins also says that this information was confirmed by one of the top figures in the Geisel government. MARTINS, L. *Op. cit.*, pp. 224-225.

204 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 29. Translated by the author.

correct to say that almost all crucial policy decisions had to obtain the approval of this Council<sup>205</sup>, an endorsement could have been easily forged in advance. In other words, in the actual process of decision making the NSC did not perform its institutional role as “the highest advisory agency to the president on the formulation and execution of the national security policy”<sup>206</sup>.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to underline the importance of the by-products of what Walder de Góes have named the “ritualization” mechanism. This process is significant because the practice of “dressing up” the decisions with the formal appearance of having been produced by a certain agency, also contributes to the decision contents, as long as explanations are produced, and a mechanism of taking into account different interests is added to the process<sup>207</sup>. Moreover, in this way the actual decision makers were able to legitimize their choices through the traditionally important agency of the military regime, notwithstanding the latter’s low capability as the ultimate decision maker.

Another important aspect has also to be scrutinized. The NSC has been considered by some analysts as a locus where the different political and ideological perspectives of the several sections of the state bureaucracy were integrated<sup>208</sup>. However, this interpretation can be rather deceptive. The fact that, theoretically, the final decisions expressed the opinion of all Council members must

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205 DALAND, Robert. *Exploring Brazilian Bureaucracy - performance and pathology*, Washington, University Press of America, 1981, p. 80.

206 Decree-Law no. 900, September 29, 1969. FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS, CPDOC. *Op. cit.*, v. 2, p. 898. Translated by the author.

207 GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 33. Translated by the author.

208 *Idem*, p. 12; and SARAIVA, Miriam Gomes. *A Opção Europeia nos Marcos do Pragmatismo Responsável - a política externa brasileira para os países europeus de 1974 a 1979*. Master’s Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IRI/PUC, Maio 1990, p. 72.

not overshadow the fact that dissension was also an important element within the process of reaching, or just endorsing, a decision. Furthermore, by claiming that the decisions taken – or just endorsed by the NSC – expressed the opinions of the Armed Forces as a whole, besides other agencies represented there, is the same as trying to explain the process of decision making by its results.

Finally, I shall also take into account two different hypotheses about the role of the NSC in particularly to foreign policy. Firstly the assertion that there was a close association between the NSC and Itamaraty<sup>209</sup>. Secondly, the hypothesis claiming exactly the opposite, e.g., that there were no horizontal institutional contacts between them<sup>210</sup>, notwithstanding possible personal contacts between Azeredo da Silveira and the NSC General Secretary, Hugo de Abreu.

According to the first hypothesis, the General Secretariat of the NSC – which should function as the locus of research, planning and supervision regarding national security matters – lacked a permanent and specialized research group which could perform all the necessary work<sup>211</sup>. Hence it used to demand the necessary support and information from other agencies<sup>212</sup>. Therefore, the Secretariat was dependent on information from Itamaraty regarding foreign issues, even if disagreeing with its terms. The second hypothesis maintains the nonexistence of such contacts,

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209 LAFER, Celso. *Paradoxos e Possibilidades*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1982, p. 160. GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, pp. 37-38. GRANDI, Jorge A. *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

210 Interview with Ambassador Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

211 In 1978 there were 130 people working in the General Secretariat. Of the 130 only 23 military men and 3 civilians were considered specialists in their respective field areas. GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 36. Taking into account the extensive volume of subjects under SG supervision, such a number was remarkably low.

212 *Idem, ibidem*.

hence both agencies used to send their reports directly to the president, without any previous bilateral discussions<sup>213</sup>. I should mention, however, that the role of the General Secretariat as an advice center was reported to be particularly significant on the matters of arms trading<sup>214</sup>.

These assertions lead us to suppose that either the reports sent by the Secretariat to the president were basically produced by Itamaraty (the “Information to the President”)<sup>215</sup>, due to the former’s lack of private sources about the issue<sup>216</sup>; or that there was a dispute between both agencies regarding who would have the last word on the subject, the truth about which only an analysis of the decision making process will reveal.

In conclusion, what I regard as central to the understanding of the foreign policy making process during Geisel’s government is the assumption that, although possibly prominent in some issue areas<sup>217</sup>, the NSC cannot be viewed as the predominant locus of decision making, either as a plenary or as a research agency. Hence the need to scrutinize its role in the day-to-day politics.

Finally, I shall scrutinize the role of the National Intelligence System (Sistema Nacional de Informações/SiSNI) in the decision arena, in which the SNI was the central agency. According to its founding Decree-Law (no. 4,341, June 13, 1964), the SNI’s main function was to assist the president by supervising and coordinating information and counter-information activities

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213 Interview with Ambassador Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

214 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, p. 39 and GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

215 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, Rio de Janeiro, November 12, 1991 and interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

216 Interview with Colonel Kurt Pessek, Brasília, November 21, 1991.

217 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, p. 39 and Walder de G. *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

inside national territory<sup>218</sup>. The SNI relied on its network of divisions and subdivisions, such as the Security and Information Divisions (Divisões de Segurança e Informação/DSIs) spread throughout the ministries. In this way the SNI kept an eye on the political and ideological stance of each ministry, in spite of the fact that those Divisions were also subordinate to their respective ministers.

The SNI's role in the decision making process, however, should not be measured solely by its official functions. In other words, due to the increasing importance given to security questions during the government of Geisel's predecessor, the boost of SiSNI led to the strengthening in the autonomy and power of influence of those working on security and intelligence matters, with serious consequences for the military and governmental hierarchy and discipline. Nevertheless this situation was particularly serious regarding internal affairs, primarily in relation to the subjects of subversion, regime liberalization and presidential succession.

Regarding the role of the SNI on foreign policy matters, I must stress that as a result of Geisel's style of not delegating power to any single agency to decide on its own, the SNI lost the autonomy it had held during the former government to make decisions on foreign matters along with the Civil and Military cabinets<sup>219</sup>. Indeed, during Geisel's government the SNI was mainly involved with domestic activities<sup>220</sup>, notwithstanding some concerns on alleged subversive activities in the continent. Accordingly, Itamaraty's DSI should observe "1) the influence and the activity performed abroad by Brazilian citizens who opposed

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218 LAGOA, Ana. *SNI - como nasceu, como funciona*, São Paulo, Ed. Brasiliense, 1983, p. 19.

219 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

220 SELCHER, Wayne A. "The National Security Doctrine and Policies of Brazilian Government". *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

the regime, particularly, those who have been exiled from the country, those who had their political rights revoked, and those who were political refugees; 2) past and present activities of officials from Socialist embassies, consulates and commercial representatives within Brazil; 3) organization and functioning of communist organizations; 4) the continental activities of subversive organizations; 5) subversion, actual or potential, within the continent; and 6) threats to Brazilian frontiers and to Brazilian territorial integrity”<sup>221</sup>.

Nevertheless, since the DSIs were subordinate to the ministries, their activities were dependent on the authority of each minister to limit and control their movements. In the realm of foreign policy, I claim that Azeredo da Silveira was strong enough to keep control over his own “house”<sup>222</sup>. Furthermore, Silveira could count on his good relationship with the president so as to limit the SNI’s action within his area. On the other hand, Itamaraty’s professionalism ensured that it kept its own files of information about the international situation and Brazil foreign relations properly updated. Therefore, notwithstanding any possible reports made by the intelligence and security community on foreign policy matters, and the alleged competition between this group and Itamaraty regarding who would have more ascendancy over Geisel<sup>223</sup>, Itamaraty’s place as the President’s privileged source in foreign policy decisions remained untouched<sup>224</sup>.

In conclusion, if intelligence operations contribute to the decision-making process by supplying the leader “with the

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221 LAGOA, A. *Op. cit.*, p. 47. Translated by the author.

222 It must be also mentioned that the head of the DSI within the Itamaraty was himself a diplomat.

223 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

224 Interview with General Ernesto Geisel, by Maria Celina Soares D’Araújo and Celso Castro, Rio de Janeiro, February 1994. CPDOC/FGV.

information and analytical estimates support necessary for him to reach a decision”, and by following up “the success or failure of the decision and analyzing the opponent’s reaction”<sup>225</sup>, I shall analyse how those duties were performed regarding certain issues so as to assess the SNI’s actual contribution to the decision contents.

### 2.3. Conclusion

According to Góes and Camargo, when the military occupied the public administration in its several layers “the power was actually shared. Civilian bureaucrats dominate the production of information, concepts and values which orient the State, but they used to do so in the name of the military class and inspired by their doctrine and ideology. Civilian and military started to work together, sharing governmental conceptions and responsibilities, coordinating interests and merging world views”<sup>226</sup>.

Several analysts of Brazilian foreign policy also believe in the existence, in the final analysis, of a pattern of cooperation between the military and diplomats; and/or the occurrence of a kind of division of work between them. However, despite slightly distinct, those interpretations are not antagonistic. In fact, those scholars usually support both explanations, adjusting them throughout the years of military regime. In this sense the room for disagreement within the literature is small and usually related to differences regarding when and with respect to which issue areas the cooperation and the division of work would have actually happened<sup>227</sup>. Regardless of these divergences, and notwithstanding

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225 HANDEL, Michael I. “Leaders and Intelligence” in Michael I. H. (Ed.) *Leaders and Intelligence*, London, Frank Cass, 1989, pp. 3-39, p. 9.

226 GÓES, Walder de & CAMARGO, A. *Op. cit.*, pp. 137-138.

227 To mention some of these authors, most of them working on the mid-1970s onwards, see CAMARGO, S. de & OCAMPO, José M. V. *Op. cit.*, part I (pp. 21-188) and part III (pp. 357-397). GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.* HIRST, M. *Pesos e Medidas da Política Externa Brasileira*, IV Reunião Anual

the plausibility of the hypothesis, what seems to be important to emphasize is the lack of concern of those same analysts about the facts behind either the cooperation hypothesis or the division of work one. As stated by a top diplomat, Ambassador Ronaldo Sardenberg, although it seems correct to say that in general terms the Brazilian foreign policy was based on a wide consensus, that it is not the same when addressing specific issues like the Middle East, Angola, etc. Regarding these issues, Brazilian foreign policy was, and still is, a subject of debate<sup>228</sup>. If one does not take these facts into account, he/she ends by corroborating the rationale of the military doctrine and the habit of hiding their differences for the sake of cohesion and hierarchy. As put by Thomas Skidmore, “the heart of decision making in Brazilian politics since 1964 (...) remains hidden from the public. In order to preserve discipline and the image of unity, the disagreements are submerged in the final policy adopted by the higher command. That policy may be subject to subsequent attack and revision, but only within the private channels of officer contact”<sup>229</sup>.

Therefore, I maintain that the main mistakes made by those who based their account for the foreign policy under the military regime mainly on the NSD were: firstly, to have neglected the fact

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de Centros Membros do RIAL, Universidad Simón Bolívar, October 4-6, 1982, paper. *Tempos e Contratempos da Política Externa Brasileira*, IRI/PUC-RJ & CIDE-Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, October 1983, paper. *Transição Democrática e Política Externa: a experiência brasileira*, mimeo. LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & MOURA, Gerson. “A Trajetória do Pragmatismo - uma análise da política externa brasileira”. *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, 25(3), 1982, pp. 349-363. PERRY, W. *Contemporary Brazilian Foreign Policy: the international strategy of an emerging power*, London, Foreign Policy Papers, 6, Sage Publ., 1976. SARAIVA, M. Gomes de. *Op. cit.* SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. “Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power”. *Op. cit.*

228 SARDENBERG, Ronaldo M. “Quatro visões do futuro das relações Brasil-Estados Unidos”. *Seminário sobre relações Brasil-Estados Unidos*, Brasília, UnB, Nov. 1981, mimeo, p. 4. Translated by the author.

229 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. “Politics and Economic Policy Making in Authoritarian Brazil (1937-1971)” in Alfred S. (Ed.) *Authoritarian Brazil - origins, policies and future*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1973, pp. 3-46, p. 17.



that the doctrine's constitutional ideas are not dateless; secondly to have taken the military class and its doctrine as monolithic; and, thirdly, to have looked at just one side of the question in their attempt to identify Brazilian foreign policy with the military doctrine. By so doing those analyses fail to account for the importance of the different actors present during the process of foreign policy making to its final contents. In fact, despite the military having been the ruling elite through the years, we have seen that there were other relevant actors in the process of foreign policy making. In this sense, the analysts who take the above mentioned view removed from the process of policy making all its more dynamic elements, ending up removing the conflict from it.

So, during Geisel's government, the President and the Foreign Minister constituted the central locus of foreign policy making. Hence, the decisions which clashed with the traditional military stance, or rather, with the current NSD premises, were actually made possible thanks to Geisel and Azeredo da Silveira's more innovative view about Brazilian international policy, and to this partnership's strength and autonomy regarding other actors within the decision arena. Notwithstanding the level of autonomy held by Geisel-Silveira, however, they could not avoid provoking grievances in those who took a different view of Brazilian foreign policy<sup>230</sup>. Therefore, the role of those actors should be considered

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230 The episode which perhaps best illustrates the rivalry among the military during Geisel's government was the dismissal of the minister of the Army, General Sylvio Frota (October 1977). In domestic terms, Frota's removal was related to the presidential succession. As far as foreign policy was concerned, the dismissal of Frota made public the existence of a focus of strong criticism of the "Responsible Pragmatism" policy. Although the hard liners' disapproval could already be perceived through the leading articles of some newspapers – mainly *O Estado de São Paulo* – and leaks to the media ("A qual destas vozes se deve dar ouvido?" *O Estado de São Paulo*, April 04, 1976, p. 3), on this occasion it was made explicit. In Frota's manifesto, issued just a few hours after his dismissal, opposition to the recognition of the People's Republic of China, to the Brazilian abstention from voting the lifting of sanctions against Cuba at the OAS, to the anti-Zionist vote at the United Nations, and to the recognition of the MPLA Angolan government, was spelled out. "Via ruir, fragorosamente, o edifício revolucionário". *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 13, 1977, p. 4.

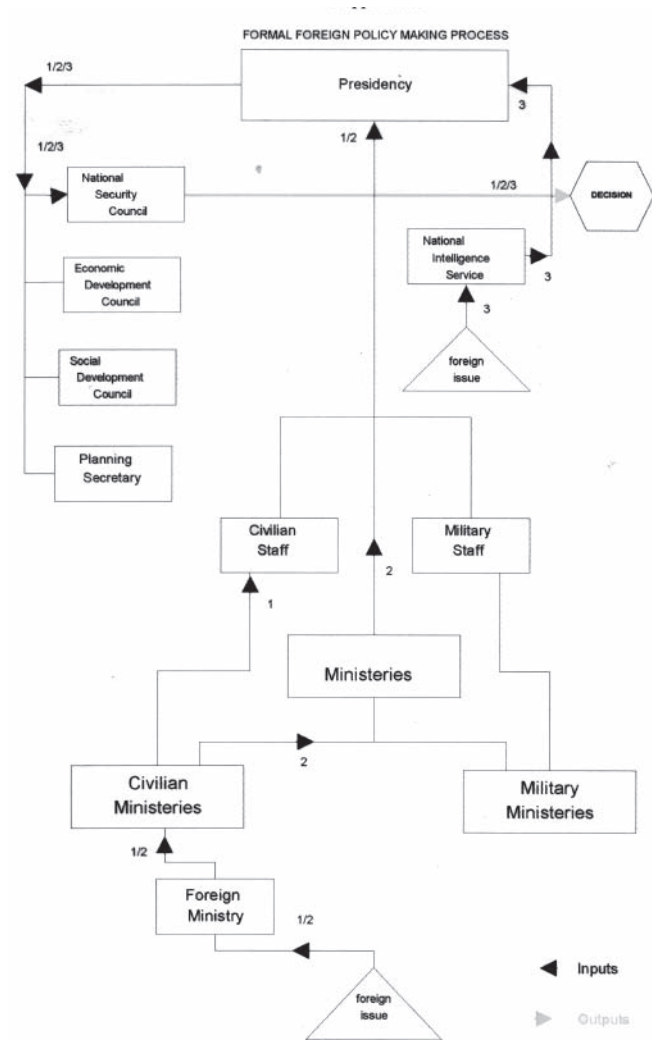
in all the different phases through which every decision had to go – from the definition of the problem to the implementation of the decision. These phases constitute important elements of the analysis in the understanding of the final outcomes and, therefore, they must be investigated.

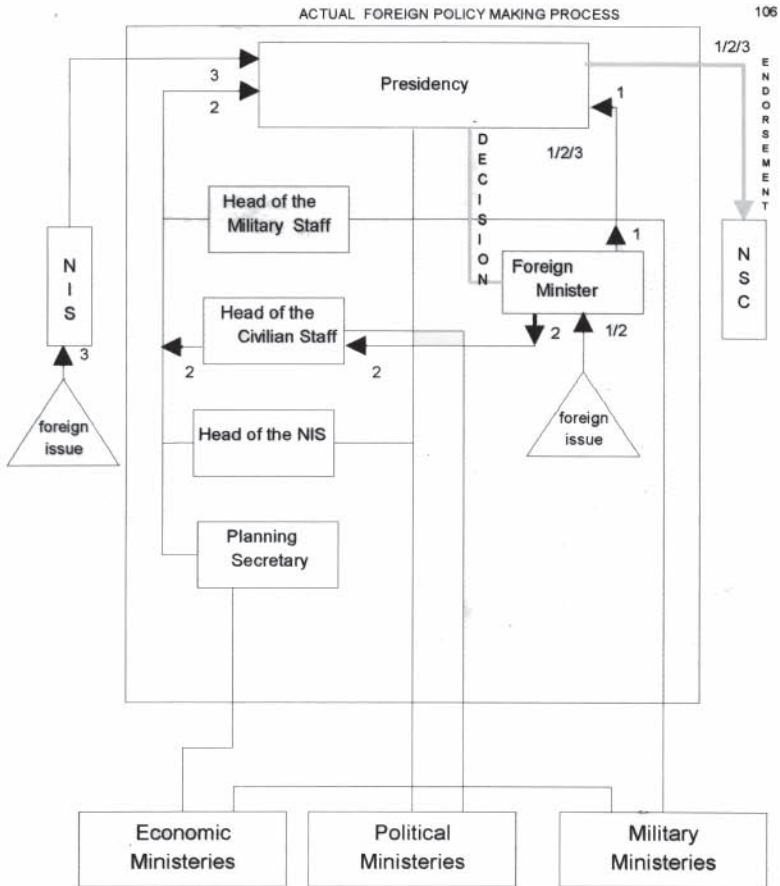
Hence I claim that the sole examination of ideology, doctrine or the belief system behind the foreign policy of any country is not enough to explain its contents. As Parakala has noticed, however, that does not mean that the mere correlation between acts and policies is able to fully explain the policy contents either<sup>231</sup>. What I stress is that the examination of the process by which the policy is formulated, which includes the arrangements made by the decision makers among themselves regarding the policy to be implemented, can help us to trace the reasons behind the decisions finally taken. Before doing that I shall expand on the main aspects of “Responsible Pragmatism”.

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231 PARAKALA, P. *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

## 2.4 Appendix I





NSC - National Security Council  
 NIS - National Intelligence Service

◀ Inputs

▶ Outputs

### **3. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF “RESPONSIBLE PRAGMATISM”**

The last chapter expanded on some aspects of the NSD and its role in the Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime. In addition, it portrayed the main aspects of the decision making process under the Geisel government. In so doing, its aim was to stress the need to go further than solely associating the NSD with the foreign policy contents by taking into account both the different interpretations of the Doctrine and the different actors in charge of foreign policy formulation. Hence, I have highlighted the limitations of an analysis within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy), proceeding “top-down”.

This chapter aims to account for the new pattern of foreign policy implemented by President Geisel in connection with the international context. Therefore, I shall move the discussion from the second debate to the first debate (international system vs. nation state), proceeding “top-down”. I will firstly give a brief account of the most significant aspects of the international system, both economic and political, that have concurrently activated and

enabled the Brazilian government to change the course of its foreign policy. Following that, I aim to set the economic and political scene of Geisel's government, which comprised the scenario for the implementation of the foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism". Finally, the main aspects of this foreign policy will be summarized. Having tackled the external opportunities and constraints which led to a redirection of Brazilian foreign policy, and the main aspects of this revised foreign policy, in the following chapters I shall explain how that actually happened by moving the analysis to the second debate proceeding "bottom-up".

### **3.1. New International Order and Foreign Policy changes**

President Geisel took office during the *détente*, when Washington and Moscow were negotiating major disruptive issues between them. SALT I agreement, a treaty on limiting defensive anti-ballistic missile systems had been signed in 1972, and further talks were already underway towards SALT II. Besides, we were on the verge of the 35-Nation Helsinki Conference (1975), aimed at reducing international tension by preventing accidental confrontations between the opposing power blocs, proposing economic and technological collaboration and an understanding on closer contacts between peoples of different nations. It was also a period when Washington was pursuing a less interventionist behavior based on the precepts of the Nixon Doctrine. Accordingly, Washington should only assist other countries militarily when it was thought that this assistance would indeed contribute to the political outcome and when it was seen by the US government as a situation of real interest to the country.

Taking the twin policies of superpower *détente* and Nixon Doctrine, the rationale was that, as put by Litwak, "the policy of superpower *détente* was viewed as a means of creating and ensuring

the stable conditions along the periphery, which would allow for an orderly devolution of responsibility to incipient regional powers. In effect it was hoped that the rhetoric of commitment (...) could continue because the reality of détente would allow the commitments to remain unimplemented"<sup>232</sup>.

Likewise, Sino-American relations were going through a process of remarkable revision. Whilst the tension between Beijing and Moscow had worsened following the Soviet invasion of Prague (August 1968) and the clashes on the Sino-Soviet border (March 1969), Washington saw the rapprochement to Beijing as a means of pressuring Moscow into collaborating with their plans for détente<sup>233</sup>. Therefore, following Beijing's readmission to the UN (October, 1971), the US and the People's Republic of China (PRC) signed the "Shanghai Communiqué" (February, 1972), in which both countries committed themselves not to seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region as well as to opposing any attempt at such a policy by any country or group of countries<sup>234</sup>. In addition, the signature of the Paris Accords in 1973 between the US and North Vietnam, which led the latter to accept a cease-fire and the former to agree to withdraw all its forces from Indochina, very much contributed to the easing of relations between the US and the PRC.

As far as regional matters were concerned, the 1970s can be considered a period of changes in the traditional pattern of relationship between American countries. Although the Nixon Doctrine took a less interventionist line in US foreign policy, it was

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232 LITWAK, Robert S. *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine - American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability (1969-1976)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 126.

233 BARON, M. "The United States and China" in Robert C. Gray & Stanley J. Michalak Jr. (Eds.) *American Foreign Policy since Détente*, New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984, pp. 38-53, pp. 40-41 and LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

234 YAHUDA, M. *Towards the End of Isolationism: China's Foreign Policy after Mao*, London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1983, p. 40.

actually translated in a remarkably low profile towards some areas like Latin America, as opposed to the high-profile North American stance on Asia and Middle East, as well as towards the policy of détente towards the USSR<sup>235</sup>. As a consequence, some Latin American countries adopted a strategy of diversification whereby they “would become partially dependent on a variety of outside nations and external influences, rather than wholly dependent on a single power”<sup>236</sup>, namely the US. In addition, some of those countries also adopted a much more autonomous foreign policy towards Washington, exemplified by several expropriations of US-owned properties and challenges to American operations<sup>237</sup>.

The period was also characterized by the so-called “oil crisis” when, as a result of the October War (1973) between Egypt and Syria against Israel and of the latter’s expansion beyond the 1967 cease-fire lines, the Arab oil-producing countries agreed to use oil as a weapon to put pressure on the governments considered unfriendly to their cause by cutting supplies of oil. In addition, between mid-October and late December, those countries raised the price of crude oil from US\$ 3 to almost US\$ 12 per barrel<sup>238</sup>.

This situation only brought increased instability to the world economy, which already had its monetary system based on the

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235 As put by Litwak, “On the periphery, the transitional and ambiguous nature of the Nixon Doctrine was evidenced in the awkward, uncoordinated manner in which the Administration conducted relations with those countries which were nominally targeted to be the recipients of any regional devolution of American power – Brazil, Zaire, Iran and Indonesia. Although this tentative, *ad hoc* approach to regional security questions might be attributed to the general state of flux within the international system, it is also evident that these matters were considered of secondary importance relative to the Administration’s major diplomatic undertakings – the Vietnam negotiations, the opening to China and SALT”. LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

236 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. & SMITH, Peter H. *Modern Latin America*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1989, 2ed., p. 364.

237 *Idem*, p. 131 and 212.

238 For an overview of the oil crisis, see the special issue of *Deadalus*, v. 104, no. 4, 1975.



dollar-gold standard since Bretton Woods (1944), hit by the US decision to stop the conversion of dollars into gold (August, 1971) in order to face its balance of payments deficit. In parallel, the beginning of 1970s was also a period when the Western European countries were in a moment of recession and high unemployment<sup>239</sup>, and when there was a reemergence of protectionist views in the US economy<sup>240</sup> due to the country’s trade balance deficits. The consequences for the international trade stemmed from the domestic economic problems of Europe and the US led members of GATT agreeing to start a new round of negotiations in late 1973 that lasted until 1979 (Tokyo Round).

This international setting of nascent multipolarity<sup>241</sup> comprised the scenario in which president Geisel took power, on March 15, 1974, and in which the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism” was implemented. Moreover, these elements comprised sufficient reasons and favorable conditions for the inaugural government proposing – or, regarding some issues, just reinforcing – significant changes in foreign policy. The international recession that imposed substantial deficits on Brazilian trade balance, the weight of the oil prices on the national expenditures, to say nothing about the possibility of being included on the OPEC black list, etc., were convincing arguments for a redirection of the country’s foreign policy towards new markets for its exports, new sources of finance, technology, and energy<sup>242</sup>. In addition, the easing of tensions between Washington and Moscow provided

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239 BUCHAN, A. *The End of the Postwar Era - a new balance of world order*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, 1974, p. 47.

240 *Idem*, p. 71.

241 LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

242 HURRELL, Andrew J. *Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy*. Master’s Thesis, St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford, April 1982, p. 7.

the necessary environment in which peripheral countries like Brazil could move towards a more independent and nationalist foreign policy, as the détente allowed them to diversify their bilateral contacts within the international community, as well as to take a more independent stance on multilateral organizations.

Therefore, although I do acknowledge that, since the late 1960s, Brazil was already well on the way in the redefinition of foreign policy, which was implemented soon after the 1964 coup<sup>243</sup>, as the disengagement from the US, and the move towards Western Europe, Japan, the Socialist and the Third World countries exemplified<sup>244</sup>, I claim that it was only during Geisel's government that a decisive redirection was actually implemented.

These positive conditions for the implementation of a new and more independent pattern of foreign policy do not mean, however, that the new government was free from obstacles regarding the domestic receptivity towards the changes in the ongoing foreign policy. On one hand, there was quite a favorable climate among the government constituencies regarding the need for making essential changes in foreign policy so as to keep on the path towards accelerated development. On the other, however, there were fears regarding to what extent those changes could bring threatening consequences to the Western approach taken by the military regime. To be more precise, according to the more conservative supporters of the regime, the diversification of commercial partners, the abandoning of the automatic alignment with the United States, and the building of a closer relationship with the Third World could have led to an excessive ideological

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243 For a very good analysis of Brazilian military foreign policy see HURRELL, Andrew James. *The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1986, Chapters 3 to 7, pp. 65-283.

244 *Idem*, p. 196.

disengagement with possibly disastrous effects for what they regarded as the country’s security<sup>245</sup>.

It is to the working out of this ambivalence that I shall turn next, by summarizing the political and economic scenario of Geisel’s government.

### 3.2. Political and economic aspects of Geisel’s government

The choice of Geisel for the presidency could be considered the outcome of an effective military deal<sup>246</sup>, notwithstanding the fact that he had been chosen over different preferences held by some top rank military within the government<sup>247</sup>. By finally supporting his name, however, the military could avoid a more serious split among themselves<sup>248</sup>. In fact the erosion of military cohesion was one of the regime’s main concerns, because the latter was in itself deeply dependent on principles of unity, hierarchy and discipline among the military. Thus the new president should be able to halt the process of growing disunity among the Armed Forces,

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245 Assuming a view based on the NSD precepts, Tarcísio Meirelles Padilha defined the country’s security, or the national security as “the relative degree of guarantee, by political, economic, psychological, and military actions, that the State provides at a given time to the nation which it rules, for the realization or maintenance of National Objectives in spite of existing or potential opposition or pressures”. I shall add that the “National Objectives” were understood as territorial integrity, national integrity, democracy, progress, social peace, and sovereignty, according to the NSD precepts. COMBLIN, J. *El poder militar en América Latina*, Salamanca, Ediciones Sigueme, 1978, pp. 50-68. PADILHA, Tarcísio M. “Segurança Nacional”. *Segurança e Desenvolvimento*, v. 20, no. 147, 1971, pp. 33-39, p. 36. Or yet, taking an academic definition, “national security (...) connotes the condition of preservation of national institutions and interests against all threats of any origin and hence is not merely military”. SELCHER, Wayne A. “The National Security Doctrine and Policies of Brazilian Government” in *Parameters - Journal of the US Army War College*, v. II, no. 1 (s/d), pp. 10-24, p. 13. Bold in the original.

246 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil (1964-1985)*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 160.

247 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. *Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1976, pp. 63-64.

248 *Idem*, p. 64.

particularly threatened by the increase of power and autonomy of action achieved by the so called “security and intelligence community” during the former governments.

In this sense, as far as political aspects were concerned, Geisel’s government had three main targets, all of them very much connected to each other. Firstly, the new government expressed the intention to pave the way for the return to democracy<sup>249</sup>. That should be done, however, within a spirit of “revolutionary continuity”, rather than as an interruption or as a rejection of the principles of 1964’s military action<sup>250</sup>. This proposal led to the adoption of a strategy of political decompression in the regime known as “Abertura” (Opening). Secondly, it aimed at maintaining military support for the government, although trying to reduce the power of the hard-liners<sup>251</sup>. Finally, Geisel intended to conclude the work of his predecessor regarding the eradication of “subversive” action – by then almost suppressed – as well as to prevent its resurgence<sup>252</sup>. It is worth noting that besides being an aim in itself, this concern about the alleged subversive threat was also viewed by the new government as a way of decreasing the role of the security community and of the military hard-liners. By obliterating the “subversives”, the new government would be able to attenuate the strength of the hard-liners and their fight against the former; likewise, by avoiding the revival of an underground left-wing opposition, Geisel would avert the hard-liners’ antagonism towards his proposal of political liberalization, even if, inconsistently, by doing so political and human rights had to be sacrificed. In other words, as long as Geisel was successful in

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249 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 163.

250 “O ponto sensível”, by Carlos Castelo Branco. *Jornal do Brasil*, August 14, 1974.

251 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 162.

252 *Idem*, p. 163.

extinguishing the alleged subversive residue, he would leave little room for any criticism regarding his control over the country, as well as narrowing the scope of action by the security forces.

In this sense, although *détente* allowed the peripheral countries to diversify their bilateral contacts within the international community, as well as to take a more independent stance on multilateral organizations, the incorporation of such political pluralism within the domestic milieu was neither immediate nor painless. Indeed, the task of converting an ideological foreign policy into a more pragmatic one had to face the remains of a regime very much based on the Cold War precepts. To the extent that these precepts were basically shared by those who also supported criticisms of Geisel's proposal of domestic political liberalization, the battle for implementing a new foreign policy became also part of the process of redemocratization, though in a less intense form. The best example of this situation is the dismissal of the Army Minister, General Sylvio Frota in October 1977<sup>253</sup>.

In addition to those political goals, keeping up the economic rate of growth was very important to the new government. Amongst other reasons, because a high economic standard played an important role in giving legitimacy to the military regime. Lacking political support from the population, the regime had been sustained in power since the 1964 coup through significant economic achievements, to say nothing about the repression of civil and political rights. Geisel was fully conscious of this fact, whence his deep concern about the need to remain on the path towards development.

If OPEC had not quadrupled oil prices in late 1973, and this fact had not considerably worsened the world economic recession,

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253 See footnote no. 230, Chapter II.

Geisel's government would have begun with good prospects. Amongst other figures of the so called "Economic Miracle" (1968-1977)<sup>254</sup>, characterized by a remarkable economic expansion in spite of the continuous unfair distribution of wealth, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had risen at an annual average of 10%, whilst inflation had stayed at an average of 17% per annum. Based on those numbers, and notwithstanding the unpromising world economic environment, at the outset of his government Geisel optimistically predicted that the GDP would reach the figure of US\$ 100 billion by 1977 following his proposed "Second National Development Plan: 1975-1979"<sup>255</sup>.

Nevertheless, the new prices of petroleum and other oil products established by OPEC deeply affected Brazilian economic plans, since the country was dependent to the extent of 80% on external oil resources to satisfy its consumption average<sup>256</sup>. To mention just the first years, Brazil's oil import bill increased by 299% between 1973 and 1974<sup>257</sup>. As a way of facing this problem in the short term, at the very end of the Médici government Brazil redirected its foreign policy towards the Arab countries by reinforcing the decision to abandon its equidistant posture regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict when, during a visit of representatives of Arab League to Brazil on January 31, 1974, Foreign Minister Mário Gibson Barboza expressed Brazilian sympathy for the Palestinian cause and called for an Israeli withdrawal from the

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254 A summary of the chief figures of the "Economic Miracle" is in the MÉDICI, Emílio Garrastazú entry of the FUNDAÇÃO GETÚLIO VARGAS, CPDOC. *Dicionário Histórico-Biográfico Brasileiro (1930-1983)*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Forense Universitária, FGV/CPDOC, FINEP, 4 vs., v. 3, p. 2167.

255 PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, E. *Discursos*, Reunião Ministerial de Encaminhamento ao Congresso Nacional do II PND, v. 1, September 10, 1974, pp. 123-131, p. 129.

256 Amongst Brazil's most important suppliers were Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait and Iran, all OPEC members. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

257 VELLOSO, João Paulo dos R. *O último trem para Paris*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1986, p. 220.

occupied territories<sup>258</sup>. In so doing the government intended to avoid any threat of boycott from its regular Arab suppliers, as had been made against the US and the Netherlands in October, and later in November against Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa, as part of the Afro-Arab deal.

In parallel with the oil crisis, the international system was facing a strong economic recession, which also imposed serious obstacles on Brazilian development plans. The adoption of strong protectionist policies by the developed economies deeply affected international trade, and, notwithstanding the prospects of improvements with the decision to summon a new round of talks among the GATT members, in the short run Brazil had to face significant deficits in its balance of trade. It became even more difficult to get fair prices for the primary products usually exported by the less developed countries. Furthermore, the terms of acquisition of manufactured products were severely affected due to the significant increase of their prices. This situation led to a huge disequilibrium in international terms of trade with serious consequences for the Third World countries.

In order to face those problems and to keep on the path towards development, Brazil adopted an intensive policy of borrowing abroad<sup>259</sup>. Thanks to the abundance of capital held by the international finance system and its eagerness to recycle its petrodollars, Geisel's government could keep its balance of payments artificially healthy. By so doing, it was possible to achieve a reasonably high economic growth, although lower than during the former government. Between 1974 and 1978, the GDP

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258 HURRELL, Andrew J. "The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)". *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

259 The same strategy was sought by other Latin American countries, with the exception of net oil exporters, such as Venezuela. SKIDMORE, Thomas E. & SMITH, Peter H. *Op. cit.*, p. 365.

grew at an average rate of 7% per year, in spite of the fact that the annual inflation rate reached the figure of 37.9%<sup>260</sup>. It is true, however, that “the need to maintain access to capital markets and to do nothing that might affect the country’s credit rating is bound to have had an effect on the country’s foreign policy”<sup>261</sup>. In other words, although energy vulnerability and the need to expand and develop new markets for exports have driven Brazil towards a Third World approach, the need for foreign currency, which made Brazil very much dependent on the developed countries who controlled the international capitalist system led the country to maintain a high deference to the North.

The measures taken to attract foreign loans were several, including the cutting of the tax on remittances of interest abroad from 25% to 5%<sup>262</sup>. The negative consequences of this decision were quickly demonstrated, nonetheless: from 1973 to 1979 Brazil’s net external debt increased from US\$ 6.156 million to US\$ 40.215 million<sup>263</sup>. Indeed this strategy had all the characteristics of a time bomb, since it made the country’s economy even more dependent and vulnerable to external influences. It is worth noting that since the foreign capital entering Brazil was mainly made up of loans rather than direct private investments, the export earnings were mostly committed to the payment of the debt interest and amortization<sup>264</sup>. According to Thomas Skidmore, “on balance,

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260 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 206.

261 HURRELL, Andrew J. “Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy”. *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

262 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 180.

263 CASTRO, A. Barros de & SOUZA, Francisco E. Pires de. *A Economia Brasileira em Marcha Forçada*, Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1985, p. 180.

264 CLINE, William R. “Brazil’s Emerging International Economic Role” in Riordan R. (Ed.) *Brazil in the Seventies*, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington, D.C., 1976, pp. 63-87, p. 71.



the debt-led growth strategy remained viable during the Geisel presidency. The Geisel policy makers had played for time and won. But Brazil’s long term prospects were another matter”<sup>265</sup>.

In addition to the alternative of borrowing abroad, Geisel’s government reinforced the former government’s strategy of combining import substitution with an export-oriented economy, with particular emphasis on the diversification of markets. For it was imperative to look for new markets, besides the traditional ones. As long as the United States lost their position as the world economic pole and other Western countries became important economic centers, eventually Brazil could diversify its dependence. Simultaneously, it was possible to benefit from the policy of détente sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, which abandoned the confrontation policy which had been in force since the beginning of the Cold War, and allowed greater flexibility regarding international relations. As for the import substitution proposal, the goal was to develop the national industry of capital goods so as to decrease the expenditures in hard currency.

Having shown the main political and economic aspects that comprise Geisel’s government, I shall next turn to the most important features of the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”, which constituted the country’s external response to this environment.

### **3.3. The foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”**

The area of foreign policy was, perhaps, the most distinctive aspect of Geisel’s government, in comparison to the former military governments<sup>266</sup>. At his first ministerial cabinet meeting in March 1974, President Geisel stated that:

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265 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. *Op. cit.*, p. 208.

266 A comparison between Geisel’s and the former military government’s foreign policy in particular regarding Latin America, Asia, Africa and the United States is set out in the ensuing chapters.

*Dramatic changes on the world scenario – like the energy crisis, the shortage of food and essential raw materials in general, petroleum and oil products in particular, the instability of the international monetary system (...), the spread of the inflation around the world (...), the social and political tensions (...) which makes nations jittery (...) – will have serious repercussions on the national situation.*

*(...) If we have, forcefully, to adapt ourselves to those external circumstances (...) we must not only improve the institutional mechanisms of development and security coordination, but also bear in mind the new goals and the new priorities which arise, naturally, from the more advanced stage of progress already reached by this nation<sup>267</sup>.*

Moreover, Geisel emphasized his readiness to make the necessary choices and possible realignments in the realm of foreign affairs so as to increase Brazilian foreign trade, and to guarantee the supply of raw materials and Brazilian access to the modern technology<sup>268</sup>.

These statements constituted the core of what President Geisel labeled the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”, eventually supplemented by the adjective “Ecumenical”. This label used to define the new government proposal coined by Geisel himself during the first address to his cabinet mentioned above<sup>269</sup>. By “Pragmatism” was implied a policy without commitments to any ideological principles which could hold back the search for

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267 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, no. 1, Brasília, Mar./Apr./May/Jun. 1974, p. 8. Translated by the author.

268 *Idem*, p. 9.

269 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 10, 1979, CPDOC.

Brazilian national interests, whatever they were. Moreover, it was presupposed that Brazil was prone to adapt itself to any potential change in the international system. As for “ecumenical”, it was intended to describe a universal foreign policy that would take into account all global possibilities in the argumentation of Brazil’s international relations<sup>270</sup>. Finally the adjective “responsible” constituted a key word and it was particularly addressed to the immediate constituency of the regime. As posited by a former advisor of Azeredo da Silveira, Ambassador Souto Maior, the proposal of adopting a “responsible” foreign policy, as much as the proposal of launching a “slow and gradual” policy of political liberalization, was aimed at softening those policies’ impact on the more conservative military regime supporters, by making both propositions more palatable<sup>271</sup>.

The main aspects of the new pattern of foreign policy were actually outlined before Geisel took over. During the six months before his investiture, Geisel prepared his governmental manifesto by calling into his office his ministers-to-be for talks about the new government political and economic blue-print<sup>272</sup>. At this point Azeredo da Silveira, then Brazilian Ambassador to Buenos Aires, was chosen to be the new Minister of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, he then exercised a strong influence on the contents of the new proposals for foreign policy<sup>273</sup>.

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270 NAZARIO, Olga. *Pragmatism in Brazilian Foreign Policy the Geisel years (1974-1979)*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Miami, Florida, May 1983, p. 3.

271 SOUTO MAIOR, Luiz Augusto P. “O ‘Pragmatismo Responsável’” in *60 Anos de Política Externa Brasileira*. Programa de Relações Internacionais, USP/IPRI, p. 6, Forthcoming.

272 “Geisel e seu Governo”. *Veja*, March 27, 1974, p. 20.

273 STUMPF, André G. & PEREIRA, M. A *Segunda Guerra: sucessão de Geisel*, São Paulo, Ed. Braziliense, 1979, pp. 78-79. Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 10, 1979, CPDOC.

It is worth describing the basis of Silveira's views on foreign policy. In general – although not exclusively – they came from the same bulk of ideas expressed by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador João Augusto de Araújo Castro (1963-1964), about Brazilian foreign policy. According to the latter, it was necessary to react against the superpowers' policy of forcing the United Nations to perform a more technical role at the expense of its political one, as well as against the neglect of the North-South problems in favor of the East-West conflict, and moreover, against the attempt of freezing the world power structure, e.g., against a kind of condominium of power whose aim was to freeze the present distribution of power and wealth<sup>274</sup>.

In summary, for Araújo Castro, Brazil's international policy should be defined as a way towards the elimination of all obstacles to its economic, technological and scientific development as well as the eradication of all impediments to the affirmation and the increase of its power<sup>275</sup>. True, such a statement could be seen as no more than naiveté, coming from a representative of a peripheral country. However, as with several other statements of this kind, I shall stress its purpose of keeping those issues on the agenda, or rather, of feeding the debate instead of endorsing the status quo by adopting a well behaved silence.

However, as Jorge Grandi puts it, despite the fact that the political and theoretical bases of "Responsible Pragmatism" were already visible in diplomat Araújo Castro's writings of the early seventies, "les idées qu'ils expriment ne constituent une force politique et économique susceptible d'intervenir dans les décisions

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274 For a complete account of Araújo Castro ideas, see AMADO, Rodrigo. (Ed.) *Araújo Castro*, Brasília, Ed. UnB, 1982 and João Augusto de Araújo C. *O Pensamento de Araújo Castro. Relações Internacionais*, 1(1): 50-59, Brasília, Jan./Apr. 1978.

275 GRANDI, Jorge A. *Regime Militaire et Politique Extérieure du Brésil: l'Accord de Cooperation Nucleaire Germano-Brésilien du 1975*. Ph.D. Thesis, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, Paris, 1985, pp. 184-185.

extérieures qu’après la fin du miracle économique, la crise du pétrole, et la consolidation du changement dans la structure commerciale externe du Brésil. Ces trois facteurs se combinent durant Geisel, et produisent une base économique sur laquelle pourra s’articuler le projet”<sup>276</sup>. In addition, I claim that the process of decision making was the fourth factor making feasible the implementation of a new pattern of Brazilian foreign policy based on Araújo Castro’s ideas. With respect to this, I have no doubts that those economic factors favored the redirection of foreign policy, amongst other ways, by making the economic ministries support some of the attitudes which had been advocated mainly by Itamaraty some years earlier<sup>277</sup>. That does not mean, however, that the economic ministers should be placed at the same level as Geisel/Azeredo da Silveira as chief decision makers. Yet, as Hurrell points out, the “economic ministries continued to place greater emphasis on relations with the First World”<sup>278</sup> which, as I will demonstrate later on, was not always reinforced by the decisions taken by the government.

The chief aspects of “Responsible Pragmatism” can be summarized by glancing at the main political and economic attitudes taken towards the international system during Geisel’ government<sup>279</sup>. First of all the change in the pattern of relationship with United States has to be noticed. Although maintaining a Western-oriented approach, Brazil discontinued the policy of automatic alignment with Washington. In the Foreign Minister’s words:

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276 *Idem*, pp. 113-114.

277 HURRELL, Andrew J. “The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil’s Role in the International System (1964-1985)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

278 *Idem*, p. 207.

279 For an overall view of the pattern of international trade between Brazil and the US, Latin America, Western Europe, Africa, Asia, Middle East and Eastern Europe see Appendix II.

*We refuse to consider that our national interests are necessarily contingent to those of other countries. For that reason we try to disavow the argument that invokes automatic alignment in the name of the supremacy of the interests of leader-nations<sup>280</sup>.*

Notwithstanding the signature of a US-Brazilian Understanding Memorandum in February 1976<sup>281</sup>, which was seen by Silveira as having as its main objective the provision of “a framework for resolving divergences between the two countries so that they should not become causes of antagonism”<sup>282</sup>, serious differences between the two countries persisted throughout the period. Amongst them, the plethora of commercial problems due to Washington’s protectionist measures against Brazilian products<sup>283</sup>, which, along with Brazil’s effort to diversify its international markets, resulted in the continuation of the decrease in trade between the two countries<sup>284</sup>. In addition, in March 1977 Brazil broke with an agreement on Military Assistance with the US –

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280 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil* (“O Brasil e a Nova Ordem Internacional”), no. VII, Brasília, Oct./Nov./Dec. 1975, p. 119. Translated by the author.

281 Through this Memorandum was established a system of reciprocal consultation regarding issues of mutual interest. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Realizações do Governo Geisel. *Relatório* (1974-1979), p. 57.

282 SILVEIRA, A. Azeredo da. “A Política Externa do Brasil”. *Diálogo Econômico*, 252, Nov./Dec. 1975, p. 34, as quoted by HURRELL, Andrew J. “The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil’s Role in the International System (1964-1985)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 213.

283 Amongst other measures, the US decision to place Brazil’s export of shoes under “countervailing duty” action, which meant the charge of additional tariffs allegedly to compensate for Brazilian subsidies to the exports.

284 Whilst in 1968 Brazilian exports to United States had reached 33.3% of the total, by the end of Geisel’s government it represented only 19.3%. As for imports, whilst in 1968 Brazil imported 33% of its products from the United States, in 1979 it imported only 17.9%. GRANDI, Jorge A. *Op. cit.*, pp. 99-100. Nevertheless, the US continued to be Brazil’s single most important trade partner in mid 70s. PERRY, W. *Contemporary Brazilian Foreign Policy: the international strategy of an emerging power*, London, Foreign Policy Papers, 6, Sage Publ., 1976, p. 56. For the volume of trade between the Brazil and US from 1964 to 1979, see Table I (Appendix II).

which had been in force since 1952 –, thus allowing the country to develop its own arms industry as well as to strengthen its international arms trade. Moreover, Brazil broke its dependency upon North American nuclear policy when it did not accede to Washington's pressures against the agreement with West Germany. Finally, Brazil stuck to its principle of not allowing any foreign intervention in its domestic affairs by reacting strongly to Washington's statements about human rights violation in Brazilian territory<sup>285</sup>.

As far as Latin American countries were concerned, a policy of strengthening Brazil's solidarity, only comparable to the policy towards Africa<sup>286</sup>, was enforced. Indeed, due to the Brazilian need for expansion of its external markets and its energy sources, a policy of intensification in the cooperation with its neighbors became essential. As a result, between 1974 and 1979, trade with Chile increased in 224%, with Colombia in 282%, with Mexico in 216%, and with Uruguay in 142%<sup>287</sup>. In 1974 Brazil and Bolivia signed a Treaty which, among other aspects, included Bolivian supply of gas to Brazil in exchange for Brazilian participation in the building of a gas pipeline. It is also important to mention the understandings between Brazil and Paraguay regarding the

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285 For a more complete account of the Brazil-US relationship, see FONTAINE, Roger. *Brazil and US: toward a maturing relationship*, AEI/Hoover Institute, Policy Study, no. 14, December 1974 and "The end of a beautiful relationship". *Foreign Policy*, Fall, no. 28, 1977, pp. 166-174. GRANDI, Jorge A. *Op. cit.*, pp. 230-248. MOURA, Gerson & LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. "Brasil-Estados Unidos, do entendimento ao desentendimento". *Seminário sobre o Brasil e a Nova Ordem Internacional*, Friburgo, 1978, paper. WESSON, Robert. *The United States and Brazil, limits of influence*, New York, Praeger Special Studies, 1981.

286 According to Silveira's speech when he was sworn in, both regions should be seen as top priorities within the new government's foreign policy, BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. "Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil", no. I. *Op. cit.*, pp. 19-21.

287 HURRELL, Andrew J. "The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)". *Op. cit.*, p. 249. For the volume of trade between the Brazil and Latin America from 1964 to 1979, see Table II (Appendix II).

exploitation of the hydroelectric potential of the Paraná River, by the creation of Itaipu binational corporation, in addition to an increase of 300% in the trade between the two countries between 1974 and 1979<sup>288</sup>. Finally, the efforts made by Geisel's government to develop a better relationship with Argentina should be mentioned<sup>289</sup>.

Contrary to a policy pursued by the former government, during Geisel's administration, some degree of Latin American multilateral policy was implemented. By way of example, in 1975 Brazil signed the constitutive covenant of the Latin American Economic System (Sistema Econômico Latino Americano/SELA) and adhered to the Antarctic Treaty. Besides, in 1978 Brazil signed the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, which included Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guiana, Peru, Surinam and Venezuela<sup>290</sup>.

As for the African continent, the need for new markets as well as the need for strengthening the relations with oil producing countries and the search for potential supporters for many political and economic demands on the international system led to the definitive abandoning of the full backing of Portugal's colonialism. In July 1974, Brazil recognized the Guinea-Bissau government,

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288 *Idem*, p. 248.

289 "Surto Econômico viabilizou diplomacia de Geisel" by Stanley Hilton. *O Estado de São Paulo*, July 22, 1979.

290 For more details about Brazil and Latin America relationship, see BOND, Robert D. "Venezuela, Brazil and the Amazon Basis". *Orbis*, v. 22, no. 3, pp. 635-650 and "Brazil's relations with the Northern Tier Countries of South America" in Wayne A. S. (Ed.) *Brazil in the International System: the rise of a middle power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1981, pp. 123-141. CAMARGO, Sonia de. "Caminhos que se juntam e se separam: Brasil e Argentina uma visão comparativa". *Política e Estratégia*, v. IV, no. 3, São Paulo, Ed. Convívio, Jul./Sep. 1986, pp. 372-403. COSTA, Gino F. *The Foreign Policy of Brazil towards her Southern American Neighbors during the Geisel and Figueiredo Administrations*. Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's College, Cambridge, 1987. JAGUARIBE, Hélio. "El Brasil y la América Latina". *Estudios Internacionales*, no. 8, Jan./Mar. 1975, pp. 106-136. MOURA, Gerson. "Brasil: uma nova política latino-americana?". *Brasil - Perspectivas Internacionais*, year III, no. 7, May./Sep. 1975, PUC/RJ, pp. 2-5. SILVEIRA, A. Azeredo da. "Brasil e a América Latina: interesses e divergências". Lecture delivered at Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, March 04, 1975.



followed by the inauguration of diplomatic missions in Gabon, Sierra Leone, Mauritius and Guinea. In 1975, Brazil was the first country to recognize the Angolan government, besides having also recognized the government of Mozambique, Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. In commercial terms it is worth noting that Afro-Brazilian trade increased by 500% between 1974 and 1978<sup>291</sup>. Simultaneously Brazil sought to strengthen its contacts with Nigeria and Algeria, mainly due to the need for oil<sup>292</sup>.

The Middle East also had a special place in the new Brazilian stand on international affairs. The era of “the oil way of life” induced a huge redirection of Brazilian foreign policy. Brazil abandoned its even-handed position regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, by reinforcing a more pro-Arab posture. The oil-producing countries had already made it sufficiently clear to the importing countries that the guarantee of oil supply depended on the political stand towards this subject matter. Thus, besides the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Persian Gulf countries, Brazil re-stated its position in favor of Palestinian rights of self-determination and

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291 “Surto econômico viabilizou diplomacia de Geisel” by Stanley Hilton. *O Estado de São Paulo*, July 22, 1979. For the volume of trade between the Brazil and Africa from 1964 to 1979, see Table IV (Appendix II).

292 For more information about Brazil’s foreign policy towards Africa, see ABREU, Fernando José Marroni de. *L’évolution de la Politique Africaine du Brésil*, Memoire redige sous la direction de M. le Professeur Georges Couffignal, University Pantheon Sorbonne (Paris I), Novembre 1988. ANGLARILL, Nilda D. “Brazil’s foreign policy toward black Africa”. *Revista de Estudios Internacionales*, v. 1, no. 1, Spain, 1980, pp. 93-106. DZIDZIENYO, A. & TURNER, J. M. “African-Brazilian Relations: a reconsideration” in Wayne A. S. (Ed.) *Brazil in the International System: the rise of a middle power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1981, pp. 201-218. GRANDI, Jorge A. *Op. cit.*, pp. 252-264. GRANDSAIGNE, Jean de. “La Politique Extérieure du Brésil en Afrique Noire: essai de synthèse”. *Tiers Monde: croissance, développement, progress*, no. 30, Jan./Mar. 1989. MARTINIERE, Guy. “La Politique Africaine du Brésil (1970-1976)”. *Problèmes d’Amérique Latine (Note et Études Documentaires)*, Paris, v. XLVIII, no. 4474, Juillet 1978, pp. 7-64. SELCHER, Wayne A. *Brazil’s Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1978 and *The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)*, Gainesville, Florida, University of Florida Press, 1974.

sovereignty<sup>293</sup>, though simultaneously recognizing Israeli rights to exist as a sovereign state<sup>294</sup>.

Likewise the existing low profile relations between Brazil and some European and Asian countries were object of revision, for which Brazil exchanged several high ranking visits. From then on Brazil sought to create a more regular and consistent pattern of relationship – mostly economic – with those countries. Japan and Western European countries were the main targets of this strategy<sup>295</sup>. The most significant political and economic step towards Europe, however, was the signature of the Nuclear Cooperation Treaty with West Germany in 1975<sup>296</sup>. In summary,

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293 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Relatório*. Departamento de Administração, Brasília, 1974, p. 79.

294 On this respect, it is worth mentioning the fact that the Brazilian decision predated the European Community's taking of the same stand by at least 3 years, when the European Council adopted a resolution recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, as well as the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries (London, June 29-30, 1977). IFESTOS, P. *European Political Cooperation - towards a framework of supranational diplomacy*, Aldershot, Avebury, 1987, pp. 418-459, p. 441. As for more information about Brazilian foreign policy towards Middle East, see GRANDI, Jorge Alberto. *Op. cit.*, pp. 264-269. HARTOG, Carlos A. M. "O Brasil e o Oriente Médio" in *Cadernos do IPRI*, no. 2, Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Instituto de Pesquisa de Relações Internacionais, Brasília, 1989. LAFER, C. "Política Exterior Brasileira - balanços e perspectivas" in *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, 22, 1979, pp. 49-64. NYROP, Richard. (Ed.) *Brazil - a country study*, Washington D.C., Dept. Army, 1983. PERRY, W. *Op. cit.* SADKI, Florida. *La Politique Arabe du Brésil (1964-1981)*, Ph.D. Thesis, Paris III, 1983. SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazil's Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds". *Op. cit.* SILVEIRA, Antônio A. da. *Política Externa do Brasil*. Lecture at Higher War College. Departamento de Estudos, T 150-178. ESC, September 20, 1978, p. 8. SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. "Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power". *Op. cit.* For the volume of trade between the Brazil and Middle East from 1964 to 1979, see Table VI (Appendix I).

295 These two regions have not received much attention from scholars of Brazilian foreign policy. For a discussion about Geisel's foreign policy towards Europe and Brazil-Asia relationship in general, I suggest: GÓES, Walder de. "Brasil se vuelve a Europa Occidental: perspectivas cambiantes" in Wolf Grabendorff & Riordan R. (Eds.). *América Latina, Europa Occidental y Estados Unidos. Un nuevo triángulo atlántico?*, Buenos Aires, Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1984. GOMES, Mirian S. *A Opção Europeia nos Marcos do Pragmatismo Responsável, a política externa brasileira para os países europeus de 1974 a 1979*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IRI/PUC, 1990 and Wayne A. S. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.* For the volume of trade between the Brazil and Western Europe from 1964 to 1979, see Table III (Appendix II).

296 For more information about Brazilian Nuclear Policy, see GRANDI, Jorge *Op. cit.* LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazil Foreign Policy - Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis,

the so called “European option” undertaken by Geisel’s government aimed at increasing “economic cooperation, access to sensitive technology in the nuclear and arms field and political support for its independent foreign policy”<sup>297</sup>.

As for the Asian countries, besides the important decision of recognizing the People’s Republic of China in August 1974, the increase of trade with Japan should be noted. While during the period 1970-1974 trade between the two countries reached the figure of US\$ 753 million, between 1975-1977 it was US\$ 1.6 billion. Likewise, Japanese investment in Brazil increased by US\$ 500 million from 1974 to 1976<sup>298</sup>.

Finally, Brazilian policy towards Eastern Europe was object of a significant improvement by strengthening diplomatic contacts and reinforcing the ongoing economic relations<sup>299</sup>, which were significantly stimulated by the period of détente<sup>300</sup>. Brazilian energy needs were also responsible for this redirection on foreign policy<sup>301</sup>, as illustrated by the purchase of Soviet diesel and crude oil, in addition to the use of Soviet turbines in Brazilian hydroelectric program<sup>302</sup>. Likewise, it is worth noting the expansion of trade

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Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, August 1986. WROBEL, Paulo S. *Brazil, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Latin America as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone*. Ph.D. Thesis, King’s College, University of London, London, 1992.

297 HURRELL, Andrew J. “The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil’s Role in the International System (1964-1985)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 232.

298 “Surto econômico viabilizou diplomacia de Geisel” by Stanley Hilton. *O Estado de São Paulo*, July 22, 1979. For the volume of trade between the Brazil and Asia from 1964 to 1979, see Table V (Appendix II).

299 For the volume of trade between Brazil and Eastern Europe from 1964 to 1979, see Table VII (Appendix II).

300 “A complicada aproximação”. *Visão*, February 24, 1975, pp. 52-58.

301 HURRELL, Andrew J. “Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy”. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

302 HURRELL, Andrew J. “The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil’s Role in the International System (1964-1985)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

with Poland, with whom Brazil signed several trade agreements during Geisel's government<sup>303</sup>.

As for the multilateral aspects of "Responsible Pragmatism", I shall underline the main Brazilian proposal of contesting the freezing of international power and its frequent demands for a New International Economic Order, which Brazil did together with the Group of 77 in the United Nations. The Brazilian attitude in the multilateral organizations was connected to an attempt to give more strength to its presence in international system. In other words, by allying itself to other developing countries in the multilateral arenas, Brazil could guarantee support for its main demands regarding the international system, such as a new international economic order, access to nuclear technology, revision of the UN Charter, control of population, etc<sup>304</sup>. Notwithstanding its combative posture in the international organizations – even adopting a strong Third World perspective –, Brazilian multilateral policy was also exercised to reinforce its position in bilateral relations with the developed countries<sup>305</sup>. In other words, multilateral diplomacy was often used by Brazil "as an adjunct to its bilateral efforts"<sup>306</sup>.

Behind this policy, and indeed as a way of implementing it, the new government had to make a significant shift in the emphasis on two features of the regime's doctrine, the binomial "security and development". From then on, as stated by Geisel himself, a "maximum possible development with minimum indispensable

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303 *Idem*, pp. 235-236.

304 HURRELL, Andrew J. "Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy". *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

305 SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazil's Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds". *Op. cit.*

306 HURRELL, Andrew J. "Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy". *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

security<sup>307</sup> had to be pursued. As correctly noted by Nazario, the fulfillment of this objective was heavily dependent on the “capacity of the internal policy-making structure of the Brazilian military to assimilate the necessary changes”<sup>308</sup>.

As mentioned in the last Chapter, the looseness of the NSD has indeed allowed this kind of adaptation. By saying so, I am not claiming that there was not a significant dispute regarding the nature and the intensity of the change. In fact, the decision to disengage Brazilian foreign policy from a rigid ideological stand met quite a lot of resistance from the more conservative supporters of the military regime, despite their recognition of the need for some changes so as to keep on the path towards economic development. By way of example, there were serious criticisms about what the conservative newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* once termed “extremely pragmatic and excessively ecumenical attitudes”<sup>309</sup>.

In this sense, despite the non-existence of actual external threats to the maintenance of the authoritarian military regime<sup>310</sup>, there was an important core of resistance among the hard-liners against the easing of the security aspect of the doctrine allegedly behind the foreign policy. Therefore, a change in the foreign policy strongly relied on the strength of Geisel’s leadership and his abilities to deal with his constituencies. Due to the lack of debate

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307 “Diretrizes do Governo Geisel”. President Ernesto Geisel’s address to the first Cabinet Meeting, Brasília, March 19, 1974. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. “Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil”, no. 1. *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

308 NAZARIO, O. *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

309 “Nossa Perene Tradição Diplomática”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, August 26, 1975.

310 Olga Nazario points to the end of any real threat coming from the political situation of the neighboring countries to Brazil since the overthrow of Bolivian President Juan José Torres in 1971 and of Chilean President Salvador Allende in 1973, as well the emergence of anti-communist governments in the Southern Cone. NAZARIO, O. *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

on political issues beyond the decision arena, the analysis of the process of decision making is a crucial aspect to take into account.

### 3.4. Conclusion

In this Chapter I aimed to present the main aspects of the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”. Moreover, I linked those aspects to major international issues, like détente, oil crisis, recession, etc., to the extent that one can say that the change in Brazilian foreign policy was indeed a response to the new opportunities within the international system. However, that is not the same as saying that those developments are enough to explain the country’s redirection on foreign policy<sup>311</sup>.

Indeed, what I have not scrutinized was the very fact that “any foreign policy change must overcome normal resistance in political, administrative, and personality structures and processes”<sup>312</sup>. As I have already stated, I do believe that to perform a change in the foreign policy course of any nation, some degree of action within the decision making process must be taken. Or since some degree of resistance within the government could be expected, “the presence of key individuals with the knowledge and the ability to circumvent normal (...) constraints”<sup>313</sup>, must also be taken into account.

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311 In contrast to Holsti, who considered a “foreign policy restructuring” to be when “governments seek to change, usually simultaneously, the total pattern of their external relations”, I embrace a less radical viewpoint. Hence, as far as I am concerned, the attitudes taken during Geisel’s government towards a less aligned relationship with Washington, as well as towards a less ideologized foreign policy regarding some Communist countries, such as the PRC, Guinea Bissau, Angola, etc., can indeed be considered a case of foreign policy restructuring. HOLSTI, K. J. “Restructuring Foreign Policy: a neglected phenomenon in foreign policy theory” in K. J. Holsti (Ed.), *Why Nations Realign*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982, pp. 1-20, p. 2.

312 HERMANN, Charles F. “Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy”. *International Studies Quarterly*, March 1990, 34, 3, pp. 3-21, p. 8.

313 *Idem*, p. 8.

In summary, although I regard the external and the internal environment as basic variables in the explanation of Geisel's foreign policy redirection<sup>314</sup>, I maintain that both had worked along with other sources of foreign policy changes, e.g., the Geisel/Silveira partnership within the decision making arena. Therefore, although by taking those aspects into account I am regarding them as fundamental sources of explanation for the foreign policy contents of the period, it was within the process of decision making that these features could actually be converted into substantive attitudes.

Thus, in the following chapters I intend to demonstrate that, although the inter-bureaucratic dispute is not sufficient to explain foreign policy contents, it is indeed a necessary part of the explanation.

### 3.5 Appendix II

**Table I – Trade with the United States  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)**

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	1570	1802	2371	2605	3229	2940
Import	1878	4158	3618	2912	3250	3217

*Source: Banco do Brasil. Cacex. Comércio Exterior, Exportação, 1976, 1978, 1979.*

314 For an analysis of the Brazilian foreign policy redirection, particularly towards the Third World, as mainly determined by economic factors, see HURRELL, Andrew J. "Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy". *Op. cit.*, particularly Chapter 2, pp. 41-74.

**Table II – Trade with Latin America\***  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	675	1685	1651	1890	1967	2579
Import	683	1023	1576	1925	1752	2242

Source: Banco do Brasil. Cacex. Comércio Exterior, Exportação, 1976, 1978, 1979.

\* Includes trade with LAFTA, Central American Common Market, Panama, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

**Table III – Trade with Western Europe**  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	2666	4368	5526	6323	5339	5588
Import	2227	5234	4162	3599	3614	4067

Source: Banco do Brasil. Cacex. Comércio Exterior, Exportação, 1976, 1978, 1979.

**Table IV – Trade with Africa**  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	159	538	493	650	715	651
Import	202	672	588	667	545	463

Source: Banco do Brasil. Cacex. Intercâmbio Comercial - 1953-1976. Vol. 1, DEMAC/DIGRA, August 1977; and Banco Central do Brasil. Boletim do Banco Central do Brasil. Vol. 17, no. 1, January 1981.



**Table V – Trade with Asia**  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974*	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	424	1192	1082	1449	1398	1591
Import	463	1644	1219	1126	1523	1512

Source: Banco do Brasil. *Cacex. Intercâmbio Comercial - 1953-1976. Vol. 1, DEMAC/DIGRA, August 1977; and Banco Central do Brasil. Boletim do Banco Central do Brasil. Vol. 17, no. 1, January 1981.*

\* People's Republic of China and Oceania excluded.

**Table VI – Trade with Middle East**  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	114	601	351	402	402	518
Import	545	3131	3926	3931	4131	5808

Source: Banco do Brasil. *Cacex. Intercâmbio Comercial - 1953-1976. Vol. 1, DEMAC/DIGRA, August 1977; and Banco Central do Brasil. Boletim do Banco Central do Brasil. Vol. 17, no. 1, January 1981.*

**Table VII – Trade with Eastern Europe**  
(US\$ million/1979 constant prices)

	1964-1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Export	328	1027	1171	1042	820	976
Import	160	259	291	274	216	239

Source: Banco do Brasil. *Cacex. Intercâmbio Comercial - 1953-1976. Vol. 1, DEMAC/DIGRA, August 1977; and Banco Central do Brasil. Boletim do Banco Central do Brasil. Vol. 17, no. 1, January 1981.*



## **4. BRAZILIAN POLICY TOWARDS CUBA (1964-1975)**

This chapter aims to analyze Brazil's abstention in the vote on the lifting of sanctions against Cuba, during the XV and XVI Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers (Quito, November 1974 and San Jose, July 1975)<sup>315</sup>. I depart from the hypothesis that Brazil's final position did not denote compliance with the US stance on the subject; and that it was thanks to Geisel and his Foreign Minister that a milder position regarding the Castro regime could be adopted, notwithstanding the opposition against it.

The need to review the argument that the Washington-Brasilia alliance was the major factor in the explanation of the Brazilian decision is based on a single piece of evidence: in July 1975, Washington actually changed its position of hostilities towards Havana within the OAS by finally voting for a resolution aimed at

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315 For the sake of clarity, a chronology of the chief events with a direct connection to Cuba is included at the end of this chapter (Appendix III).

normalizing relations between Cuba and the American continent. Nevertheless, Brazil took a different stance by abstaining in the vote. The analysis of the events related to Cuba during Geisel's government demonstrates that the traditional Brazil-US alliance was not strong enough to continue determining the Brazilian position on this matter. Likewise, it reaffirms the existence of indigenous aspects within Brazilian security concerns beyond those sponsored by Washington.

In addition, I intend to show why Brazil could not support the Cuban readmission to the Inter-American System, since the reasoning for isolating Cuba in the early 60s had too much in common with the legitimacy and survival of Brazilian military regime. Nevertheless, despite not being able to avoid complying with the opposition from the more conservative elements of the government<sup>316</sup> – after all Cuba was still the “Achilles heel” of the military regime – Geisel and Silveira succeeded in taking a first step towards the normalization of relations with the Castro regime.

I will firstly address the main aspects of the Brazil-Cuba relationship within the Inter-American System from 1959 to 1964. Following that, I shall tackle this relationship during the military period. In the same section, the role played by the Castro regime on Brazilian military ideology is assessed. A third section presents the new configuration of US-Latin America relations and its consequences for the assessment of the Castro regime in the outset of the 70s. In addition, this section also examines Cuban foreign policy at the time. The fourth section sets the scene for Geisel's stance towards Cuba, by scrutinizing Brazil's relationship within Latin America and with the United States. Following that,

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316 In a report to a Senate Commission in 1979, Silveira stated that he had indeed tried to move towards the normalization of relations with Cuba, but pressures from the military against it were too high to be overcome. HURRELL, Andrew J. *Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy*. Master's Thesis, St. Antony's College, University of Oxford, April 1982, p. 89.

a fifth section briefly summarizes the contemporary debate on Cuba within the Inter-American System. Finally, the sixth section assesses the several stages of the decision-making process which led Brazil to abstain in the vote on the lifting of sanctions.

#### **4.1. Brazil's civilian governments assess the Castro regime**

By and large, the civilian governments in Brazil between 1959 and 1964 (Juscelino Kubitschek, 1956-1961; Jânio Quadros, 1961 and João Goulart, 1961-1964) considered that the causes, not the consequences, of the political instability on the continent should be the main Latin American concern. As a result, those governments systematically opposed Washington's attempts to isolate and even to intervene in Cuba, by strongly supporting the principle of non-intervention as opposed to the notion of collective security as far as the Castro regime was concerned<sup>317</sup>.

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317 Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Roosevelt corollary (1904), made the US interference in Latin American economy and politics almost legitimate, the Latin American countries underwent a fierce struggle to see the notion of non-intervention accepted as a precept of American international law. [McCALL, Richard. "From Monroe to Reagan: an overview of U.S. - Latin American Relations" in NEWFARMER, Richard. (Ed.) *From Gunboats to Diplomacy*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 1984, pp. 15-34. MOLINEU, Harold. *U.S. Policy toward Latin America - from regionalism to globalism*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1986, pp. 15-19]. Eventually, on the wave of president Franklin Roosevelt's (1933-1945) "Good Neighbor Diplomacy", the Seventh International Conference of American States (Montevideo, 03-26/12/1933), declared: "no state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another" (Quoted by CONNELL-SMITH, Gordon. *The Inter-American System*, London, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 90). Three years later, during the Conference for the Maintenance of Peace (Buenos Aires, December 01-23, 1936), the precept was strengthened, despite having been attached to the first outlines of the principle of collective responsibility or collective security. In other words, notwithstanding the declaration considering intervention as "unacceptable", it was suggested that depending on the case, a collective action from the American Republics could be recommended (CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, pp. 96-98). The outbreak of the Second World War and the US need to reinforce inter-American cooperation for strengthening the Western Hemisphere defense led Washington to work towards the incorporation of the continent into its global strategy. Therefore, bilateral defense agreements between the US and some Latin American countries, of which those with Brazil and Mexico were the most meaningful, were signed (KRYZANEK, Michael J. *U.S. - Latin American Relations*, New York, Praeger, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1990, p. 55). The end of the war and the emergence of the Communist threat over the Western Hemisphere led to the attempt to build up an Inter-American Defense System. The principle of collective security was then finally incorporated into

However, whilst the Cuban revolution was used by Kubitschek to reinforce the reasoning behind Operation Pan America (Operação Panamericana/OPA), the issue lacked the strength within his foreign policy framework that it acquired in the following governments<sup>318</sup>. Indeed, it was only during the Quadros and Goulart governments that a policy towards Cuba aiming to avoid isolating the country from the rest of the continent, even exploring possibilities of reducing Cuban reliance upon the Soviet Union, was actually pursued<sup>319</sup>. It is worth noting that, some years

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The Inter-American System, during the Inter-American Conference for the Consolidation of Peace and Security, (Rio de Janeiro, from August 15, 1947 to September 02, 1947). There, the Inter-American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance (ITRA) was signed, stating in one of its most important articles that “an armed attack against an American state shall be considered an armed attack upon all, and each signatory undertakes to assist in meeting it by exercising the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the United Nations Charter” (CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 192). Subsequently, the Rio Treaty was reinforced by Military Assistant Programs signed between the majority of Latin American countries and the US from 1951 to 1958 (VARAS, A. “Hemispheric Relations and Security Regimes in Latin America” in VARAS, Augusto. (Ed.) *Hemispheric Security and U.S. Policy in Latin America*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1989, pp. 33-65, p. 48). Finally, the creation of the Organization of American States (1948) was sought to solve the stalemate resulted from the adoption of those two almost contradictory principles: non-intervention and collective security. In its Article 15, the OAS Charter restated the former principle, though adding a provision against the “collective intervention” which claimed that an intervention by any group of states should be opposed, unless that was done under the existing inter-American treaties, namely the Rio Treaty (CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, pp. 201-202). Altogether, the Rio Treaty – a hemispheric defensive alliance – and the OAS – a hemispheric institutional structure – provided the US with a military and a political mechanism for its global anti-Communist network.

318 It is worth mentioning that the OPA had been proposed by Kubitschek in June 1958 as a program to ensure continental security by enhancing it economically. Furthermore, the OPA connected the political instability of the continent as a result of the underdeveloped conditions to the possibility of having the Capitalist order subverted. Nevertheless, the proposal was initially ill-received by those supposed to guarantee its funding, namely the Eisenhower government (1954-1960). Only later, when the counterinsurgency doctrine became the central US policy for Latin America, e.g., after the Castro regime became a real threat to US security, the Alliance for Progress, an initiative which contemplated some provisions present at the OPA proposal, was launched by President John Kennedy (1961-1963) in March 1961. For an account of OPA, see MELLO E SILVA, Alexandra de. “A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana”. *Textos CPDOC*, Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC, 1992 and for the discussion on Cuba within the Inter-American System during the sixties, see RABASA, Emilio O. “Cuba y el Sistema Interamericano - presencia de Mexico”. *Curso de Derecho Internacional*, Washington, D.C., Secretaria General, Organización de los Estados Americanos, 1986, pp. 137-150.

319 ROSENBAUM, H. Jon. “Brazil’s Foreign Policy and Cuba”. *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, v. 23, no. 3, Winter 1969, pp. 25-45, pp. 27-31.

later, Geisel's government would implement a similar rationale with regards to Angola. Turning back to the sixties though, soon after the disclosure of the ill-fated US sponsored invasion of the Bay of Pigs (17-19 April 1961)<sup>320</sup>, Quadros condemned the attempt by asserting the principles of self-determination and sovereignty. Moreover, he instructed the Brazilian representative to the UN to support a Mexican proposal calling upon the organization to investigate the episode<sup>321</sup>. Such a decision led the US government to ponder about punishing both countries through economic sanctions<sup>322</sup>.

Subsequently, at the VIII Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers (Punta del Este, January 22-31, 1962), summoned to discuss the alleged Cuban violation of human rights and conducting of subversive activities in the continent, Brazil's main purpose was, according to the then Foreign Minister, to allow a Cuban return to the "democratic American universe, by a natural evolution superior to political and ideological passions"<sup>323</sup>. In spite of Brazil's and other countries' efforts, Washington achieved its goals against the Castro regime. In addition to the declaration stating that the principles of Marxism-Leninism were incompatible with those of the Inter-American System, which was unanimously approved, resolutions suspending trade in arms and instruments of war with Cuba and expelling the Cuban government from the Inter-American System were also approved.

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320 For an account of the episode see MORLEY, H. Morris. *Imperial State and Revolution - the United States and Cuba (1952-1986)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp. 135-146 and WYDEN, Peter. *Bay of Pigs - the untold story*, London, Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1979.

321 STORRS, Keith L. *Brazil's Independent Foreign Policy (1961-1964): Background, Tenets, Linkage to Domestic Policy and Aftermath*. Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University, January 1973, p. 313.

322 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 145.

323 DANTAS, San T. *Política Externa Independente*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Civilização Brasileira, 1962, pp. 196-197, quoted by ROSENBAUN, H. Jon. "Brazil's Foreign Policy and Cuba". *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

Those two resolutions, however, were not supported by “the Six” – as the group of countries which opposed taking constraining measures against Havana was called (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico) –, who all abstained<sup>324</sup>. Despite this, Cuba was evicted from the OAS in February 14, 1962.

The Cuban Missile Crisis (October, 1962) provided some foundation to the thesis that Cuba represented a threat to the Western Hemisphere<sup>325</sup>. Thus, when the OAS voted for a resolution supporting measures to secure the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from the island, the majority of Latin Americans gave full support to a possible armed intervention in Havana. Brazil, Mexico and Bolivia, however, still regarding the non-intervention principle as a central inter-American precept, declared that the support for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles should not be taken to justify an armed attack against Cuba<sup>326</sup>.

Eventually, in December 1963, Venezuela appealed to the OAS Permanent Council against what she described as Cuban intervention and aggression, by means of supplying arms to Venezuela terrorists<sup>327</sup>. The Goulart government supported the calling of a Meeting of Consultation and also the establishment of an Investigation Committee. The final Brazilian stance on the subject, however, would only be taken in July 1964 (IX Meeting of Consultation), when the country, already under a military rule, became one of the most reliable, and perhaps also the most consistent, United States’ ally in Latin America as far as Cuba was concerned.

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324 CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 178.

325 For an account of the episode, see ALLISON, Graham T. *Essence of Decision - Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1971 and DINERSTEIN, Herbert S. *The Making of a Missile Crisis: October 1962*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.

326 CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 32. MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 186 and STORRS, K. *Op. cit.*, pp. 337-338.

327 CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 185.



As put by Parakala, while the civilian governments had used “their support to Cuba in order to assert their independence from and opposition to the United States and to emphasize the newly articulated Independent Foreign Policy”; the “military government, in contrast, used its opposition to the Castro regime to demonstrate its threat perception on the one hand, and to underline its ideological community with the United States on the other”<sup>328</sup>.

Although there are elements from other areas which perhaps could help to explain Brazil’s fierce opposition towards Cuba post-1964, the actual core of Brazilian stance was, indisputably, of an ideological nature<sup>329</sup>. Thus, I shall point to the links between Brazilian military ideology and that of the US security policy towards the Western Hemisphere in correlation with the Cuban revolution (1959). By so doing I intend to gather the elements so as, later on, to demonstrate why the continuous opposition to Cuba was a crucial factor in Brazilian foreign policy and, moreover, in the consistency of the military regime’s outlook.

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328 PARAKALA, Prabhakar. *Military Regimes, Security Doctrines and Foreign Policy: Brazil, Indonesia and Ghana*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, London School of Economics, London, 1991, p. 74.

329 According to William Perry, it seems that Brazil’s increasing sugar sales to the United States, after Cuba’s US sugar quota was set at zero (December 1960), could have reinforced Brazil’s ideological and security concerns, since a rehabilitation of the Castro regime could have resulted in problems for Brazil in maintaining this important part of the international market for sugar. (PERRY, William. *Contemporary Brazilian Foreign Policy: the international strategy of an emerging power*, London, Foreign Policy Papers, 6, Sage Publ., 1976, p. 48). In addition, it is worth noting that the US had deliberately used the product as a bargaining tool with the sugar-exporting countries. When the US government was still planning to launch a Cuban boycott, in early 1960, a State Department official, Douglas Dillon, suggested that the way to keep Latin American countries in line would be “payment of generous above-world-market prices for regional sugar imports and consideration of increased economic assistance to the hemisphere”. (MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, pp. 121-122). Note that during the government of Juscelino Kubitschek, when Brazil was still sponsoring a mild stance with regards the Cuban revolution, Brazil had shown considerable interest in substituting Cuban sugar for the US market. (QUINTANEIRO, Tania. *Cuba e Brasil: da revolução ao golpe (1959-1964) - uma interpretação sobre a política externa independente*, Belo Horizonte, Editora UFMG, 1988, pp. 27-28).

## 4.2. The Brazilian military regime and the Cuban question

Due to the US fears of having a repeat of the Cuban example on the continent, the emphasis on the internal threat to Latin American political stability was reinforced. In other words, the Cuban revolution bolstered the view that the Latin Americans should take care of their domestic political and social order, whilst the US Armed Forces would be in charge of the continental defense, as part of the broad idea of Western Hemisphere security, developed by the US. In this sense, the Castro regime's support for revolutionary movements abroad was of great value in legitimizing the US strategy. As a result, Washington provided extended military aid to Latin America, which was very much directed to fight internal subversion<sup>330</sup>. In addition, Washington launched the Alliance for Progress program (March 1961) in order to attack the underdeveloped conditions from which a revolutionary movement could grow<sup>331</sup>. Nevertheless, this program, which intended to tackle underdevelopment in order to guarantee internal order and stability, was gradually giving priority to security matters, as opposed to economic and social questions<sup>332</sup>.

By and large, those aspects helped to give the Latin American military forces the strength to stage coups, since the US commissioned the military class to execute the counterinsurgency policy, as well as providing the military with the instruments for

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330 US military assistance to the region grew from US\$ 65.58 million per year between 1953-1961 to US\$ 172.3 million per year between 1961 and 1964. MOLINEU, H. *Op. cit.*, p. 29. The US government also established a program of assistance and training to the military and police officers throughout Latin America. MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 134.

331 For an account of the Alliance for Progress, see SCHEMANN, Ronald L. (Ed.) *The Alliance for Progress - a retrospective*, New York, Praeger, 1988.

332 MOURA, Gerson. *Estados Unidos e América Latina*, São Paulo, Ed. Contexto, 1990, p. 56.

its accomplishment<sup>333</sup>. In so doing, the counterinsurgency theory that made the combat against Communism a domestic issue put the opposition to Castro's foreign policy for the continent at a much higher level of importance within the Latin American and Brazilian military dogma.

In addition, the Brazilian doctrine had as one of its basic concepts the idea of "ideological frontiers" as a complement to "territorial frontiers". By pointing to the existence of an ideological border separating the pro-Capitalist and pro-Communist countries, the concept of "ideological frontiers" was a crucial element of the regime's ideology, since the need for a defensive reaction against the international Communism was one of the *raison d'être* for the coup, according to its own makers<sup>334</sup>. In so doing, as Hurrell put it, the "notion of 'ideological frontiers' became the rationale for Brazil's advocacy of a permanent Latin American collective security system that would be able to override traditional notion of non-intervention and territorial integrity"<sup>335</sup>. In addition, according to the geopolitical aspects of the NSD, Brazilian geographical position should also determine Brazil's belonging to the Western bloc<sup>336</sup>. As president Castello Branco claimed, "the current Brazilian situation coincides with the wishes for Continental peace, and with the collective security precepts, the latter so

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333 Argentinean non-support for the US position during the VIII Meeting of Consultation (Punta del Este, 1962) was, according to Connell-Smith, "a main factor in Frondizi's removal by military coup not long afterwards". CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 29. Likewise, Goulart's position towards the issue was also a strong point in justifying military intervention in Brazilian politics.

334 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, August 1986, p. 16.

335 HURRELL, Andrew J. *The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1986, p. 69.

336 SILVA, Golbery do Couto e. *Geopolítica do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1967, pp. 95-138.

much a US responsibility”<sup>337</sup>. The dispatch of Brazilian troops to Santo Domingo (1965)<sup>338</sup>, and the support for the creation of a permanent Inter-American Force were part of the same rationale, which claimed the political stability of Latin American continent against the International Communist Movement<sup>339</sup>.

However, before the association between the US security policy towards Latin America and the main aspects of Brazilian military doctrine leads to the conclusion that the latter was nothing else than a dependent variable of the former, I have to emphasize one point in addition to the previously outlined indigenous components of the NSD<sup>340</sup>. Considering the prior significance of Latin America as far as Brazilian security was concerned, “where the geographical proximity increases the impact of other countries’ domestic political process on the Brazilian territory”<sup>341</sup>, Brazil’s policy towards the region should not be regarded as purely determined by US interests. As correctly stressed by Lima, “such conduct responded rather to the definitions of security of the military establishment and to a sort of survival instinct in view of the potential domestic political consequences of changes in the

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337 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Departamento de Administração. *A Diplomacia da Revolução Brasileira* (discurso de Sua Excelência o Senhor Presidente da República Marechal Humberto de Alencar Castello Branco no Palácio do Itamaraty). Divisão de Documentação, Seção de Publicações, 1964, p. 11. Translated by the author.

338 It is worth noting that by sending contingents to the Dominican Republic, Brazil was helping US to disguise its actual unilateral intervention, which had been launched before the formation of the Inter-American Peace Force under the auspices of the OAS. For an account of Brazilian participation in the episode see DULLES, John W. F. *President Castello Branco - Brazilian reformer*, College Station, Texas, A & M University Press, 1980, p. 139 and CASTELLO BRANCO, Carlos. *Os Militares no Poder*, v. 1, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1976, pp. 238-242.

339 MOURA, Gerson. “Brasil-Cuba: enfim, o reatamento”. *Brasil - Perspectivas Internacionais*, year II, no. 10, Apr./Jun. 1986, PUC/RJ, pp. 1-4, p. 1.

340 See Chapter II.

341 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu”. *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

correlation of forces in the regional context, rather than either to a delegation of power from the United States or to the logic of expansion of transnational capital, albeit, in the final analysis, both state and corporate interests would benefit from such behavior”<sup>342</sup>.

Hence, based on the OAS Investigating Committee’s full substantiation of Venezuelan charges against Cuba<sup>343</sup>, Brazil broke off diplomatic relations with Havana (May 13, 1964), alleging, among other reasons, that Cuba was attempting to export its revolution to other countries in the hemisphere<sup>344</sup>. In so doing, Brazil joined the group of 13 Latin American countries to sever diplomatic relations with the Castro regime – Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

Subsequently, during the IX Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers (Washington, July 21-26, 1964) – following the reports of the OAS Committee giving evidence of Cuba’s sending of arms, training guerrillas, and seeking to overthrow the Venezuelan government<sup>345</sup> –, Brazil reaffirmed its opposition against Castro by supporting the resolution which imposed suspension of diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba. Moreover, Brazil proposed a Declaration expressing the hope that the Cuban people would free themselves from the tyranny of the Communist regime<sup>346</sup>. As for the so called group of “Six”, only Mexico, Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay opposed the resolution. Argentina, for instance, by this time under the administration

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342 *Idem*, p. 15.

343 CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

344 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Textos e Declarações sobre Política Externa (de Abril de 1964 a Abril de 1965)*, 1965, pp. 50-51.

345 RABASA, Emilio O. *Op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

346 STORRS, Keith L. *Op. cit.*, p. 416.

of Arturo Illía (1963-1966), though not sponsoring a strong pro-sanctions stance – Buenos Aires actually abstained – also joined the anti-Castro chain.

Later, between 1967-1972, when the Brazilian military regime had to face revolutionary warfare and domestic terrorism, supported – or just inspired – by the Cuban regime<sup>347</sup>, the rationale for advocating the isolation of Cuba became even more legitimate, as far as the ruling elite was concerned. Indeed, throughout those years Brazil backed all resolutions making the Cuban economic blockade more effective, to say nothing about its struggle to implement an inter-American crusade against “subversion” and “terrorism”, both through OAS mechanisms, and bilaterally<sup>348</sup>.

The outset of the 70s, however, brought a new wave in international politics, with direct consequences for the assessment of the Cuban regime by the Latin Americans. The combination of variables involving the United States, Latin America and Cuba produced new prospects regarding the isolation of the Castro regime from the Inter-American System. It is hard to present those events in a chronological or cause-effect sequence. Despite the fact that some events had indeed triggered others, they occurred almost simultaneously. Hence, what follows should not be seen as an action-reaction chain of events. Rather, it should be seen as a selection of the main events which eventually led the majority of American Republics to face the Cuban issue from a more pragmatic viewpoint. However, as I shall demonstrate later on, as far as Brazil

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347 For an account of Brazilian armed struggle against the military regime, see QUARTIM, João. *Dictatorship and Armed Struggle in Brazil*, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 137-209.

348 The efforts to exclude the right of “political asylum” from those who had been caught in subversive or terrorist actions, as well as the agreements signed with other conservative Latin American countries to combat terrorism in the continent date from the beginning of the 70s. LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “As Relações Econômicas e Políticas do Brasil com a América Latina: balanço de uma década”. Paper delivered at the Conference *Oportunidades e Limites da Sociedade Industrial Periférica: o caso do Brasil*. Stanford-Berkeley Joint Center for Latin American Studies/IUPERJ, Nova Friburgo, July 18-20, 1983.

was concerned, this new international scenario was not enough to change its fierce opposition to the Castro regime.

### 4.3. The requirements for a change

The increasing US involvement with Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern affairs, as well as the policy of détente towards China and the USSR, led Washington to adopt a low profile policy towards Latin America. Following the end of the Alliance for Progress (1969), President Richard Nixon's (1969-1974) plans to allegedly improve the US-Latin America relationship were a far cry from Latin American aims. Indeed those plans were not only considerably distant from Latin American demands for improvements in US trade policy and foreign assistance programs, which had been formulated during a special conference in Viña del Mar in early 1969; but, also from the suggestions made by Nixon's own special representative to the region, Nelson Rockefeller<sup>349</sup>. As a result, the attitudes of defiance towards the US from the more progressive Latin American governments became stronger.

In fact, in the early 70s a nationalist upsurge epitomized by the governments of José Torres (1970-1971) in Bolivia, Salvador Allende (1970-1973) in Chile, Guillermo Rodríguez Lara (1972-1978) in Ecuador, and Juan Velasco Alvarado (1969-1975) in Peru spread over Latin America. As a result, a more autonomous foreign policy towards the US was adopted by those governments. By way of example, expropriations of US-owned properties and challenges to American capital operations, such as the Peruvian decision to nationalize a Standard Oil affiliate, to say nothing about Chile's

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349 For more details about the gap between the Latin American requirements and Rockefeller's report ("Quality of Life in the Americas") and the actual proposition made by president Nixon, see SCHMITT, Karl M. "The United States and Latin America" in GRAY, Robert C. & MICHALAK, Jr. Stanley J. (Eds.) *American Foreign Policy since Détente*, New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984, pp. 114-147, pp. 118-120.

various attitudes of defiance towards the US were carried out<sup>350</sup>. Nevertheless, “from the imperial state’s vantage point, regional modifications in trade and industrialization were tolerable. But (...) a shift toward autonomy from the United States (...) was far less tolerable”<sup>351</sup>. In those cases, “covert actions and subversion to facilitate the disintegration of hostile regimes” were pursued<sup>352</sup>. The overthrow of Allende in September 1973 being the most obvious and successful example<sup>353</sup>.

Hence, expressing Washington’s requirements of committing more attention to what was considered more important issues as far as US national interests were concerned, during the Nixon years Latin American issues were put in second place unless they touched upon the East-West conflict<sup>354</sup>. Indeed, the so-called Nixon Doctrine was based on the central idea that “the United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends, but that America cannot – and will not – conceive all the plans,

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350 SKIDMORE, Thomas E. & SMITH, Peter H. *Modern Latin America*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1989, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p. 131 and 212 and FRANCIS, Michael J. “United States Policy toward Latin America during the Kissinger Years” in MARTZ, John D. (Ed.) *United States policy in Latin America - a quarter century of crisis and challenge (1961-1986)*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1988, 28-60, pp. 42-54.

351 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 246.

352 *Idem*, p. 244.

353 For an account of US participation on Allende’s overthrow, see FRANCIS, M. J. *Op. cit.*, pp. 42-50. PETRAS, J. & MORLEY, Morris. *The United States and Chile - imperialism and the overthrow of the Allende government*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1975 and SCHMITT, Karl M. *Op. cit.*, pp. 121-124.

354 As Michael Francis recalls, “If a matter was perceived as having no East-West aspects or serious domestic political implications, it was handled within the foreign policy bureaucracy (largely by the Department of State) (...). If somehow the issue had Cold War or domestic political significance, it received the attention of Kissinger and Nixon, and they were willing to play very rough (as in the case of Chile) or make substantial concessions (as in Panama), depending on what action they thought would be most effective. But in the cases in this second category, the goal of good relations with Latin American countries was not highly valued – the stakes were the competition with the Soviet Union and the political future of the Republican administration, and in these situations the sensibilities and sovereignty of the Latin American states were of little concern to the White House”. FRANCIS, Michael J. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.



design all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free world. We will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest”<sup>355</sup>. As put by the first *State of the World* message of the Nixon Administration, “We are not involved in the world because we have commitments; we have commitments because we are involved. Our interests must shape our commitments rather than the other way around”<sup>356</sup>.

The seventies also gave rise to important alterations as far as Cuban foreign policy was concerned. Cuban support for revolutionary movements in Latin America, which had been an important element of Castro’s foreign policy since the inauguration of the regime<sup>357</sup>, was being gradually replaced by state-to-state relations<sup>358</sup>. By this time Africa and Indochina were Cuba’s primary targets<sup>359</sup>. In addition, Castro was also determined to improve his relations with the USSR, which were at odds with former Cuban policy towards Latin America<sup>360</sup>. Concurrently, the new stance of some Latin American countries in their relationship with the US contributed to the implementation of a different pattern of relations with Cuba. From Castro’s vantage point, as long as those countries were prepared to pursue an anti-imperialist stance,

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355 US PRESIDENT. *US Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace*, February 18, 1970, p. 5, quoted by LITWAK, Robert S. *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine - American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability (1969-1976)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 122-123.

356 *Department of State Bulletin*, LXVIII, no. 1762, April 02, 1973, p. 395, quoted by LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

357 Cuba had indeed supported by different means the potential focus for revolution in Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, among other countries. DOMINGUEZ, Jorge I. *To Make a World Safe for Revolution - Cuba's foreign policy*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989, pp. 113-120.

358 BRENNER, Philip. *From Confrontation to Negotiation - U.S. relations with Cuba*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1988, p. 17.

359 DOMINGUEZ, Jorge I. *Op. cit.*, p. 114.

360 SMITH, Wayne. “Castro, Latin America, and the United States” in MARTZ, John D. (Ed.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 288-306, pp. 292-293.

Cuba could develop many forms of cooperation. As stated by Castro himself during his visit to Chile in November 1971, “We subordinate whatever other difference or whatever other problem exists [between Cuba and other governments] to the fundamental one: defiance of the dictates of the United States”<sup>361</sup>.

The combination of those factors created a “diplomatic space” for Cuba and Latin America to reexamine their relationship<sup>362</sup>. As a consequence, from 1969 to 1973 a significant improvement in Cuban economic and political relations with Argentina, Chile, Peru and Venezuela, to say nothing of the Caribbean countries, was achieved<sup>363</sup>. Yet, as far as the Inter-American System was concerned, the necessary majority to normalize relations with Havana was still missing. According to the Rio Treaty procedures, the lifting of sanctions against Cuba could only be implemented by the favorable vote of a two thirds majority of the American Republics<sup>364</sup>. The overlapping of those two aspects, e.g., the improvement of relations between some Latin American countries with Cuba and the maintenance of the continental condemnation of the Castro regime, was the breach of the ever-praised – though not always actual – inter-American unity and solidarity.

Eventually, a movement towards the improvement (if normalization was too strong a description) of the Washington-Havana relationship was finally launched. Following a period when Nixon’s particularly emotional stance against Castro was a trademark of US foreign policy towards Cuba<sup>365</sup> and the

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361 Quoted by DOMINGUEZ, Jorge I. *Op. cit.*, p. 225.

362 *Idem, ibidem.*

363 *Idem*, pp. 224-226.

364 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

365 *Idem*, pp. 247-249 and Michael J. F. *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

negotiations over Cienfuegos harbor<sup>366</sup>, a slightly more positive relationship between the two countries was pursued. The signature of an important US-Cuba anti-hijacking agreement dates from March 1973. Subsequently, when President Gerald Ford came to power in August 1974, a move towards bringing détente to Latin America was finally made. In September the US government agreed to support a Colombian request for a Meeting of Consultation to discuss the Cuban issue. Moreover, President Ford was reported to have said that the US would abide by the majority decision within the Inter-American System<sup>367</sup>.

Within this frame, Brazil's stance, then under the Médici government (1969-1974), was quite distinctive. On the one hand, by opposing any measure which could lead to Cuban readmission to the Inter-American System, Brazil was complying with strong internal opposition to the Castro regime, basically sponsored by the more conservative military and particularly by those working in the security agencies that still saw the latter as a perpetrator of subversion in the continent<sup>368</sup>. Brazil could still count on Washington's opposition to Castro – albeit milder from 1973 – and on its rightwing continental fellows who, at this time, used to reinforce one another's conservative stances. By adopting such a policy, Brazil also guaranteed a safe-distance from the more progressive governments of Argentina, Chile, Peru, etc. On the other hand, by doing so Brazil continued to be seen as playing the role of a US surrogate. Yet, this position was not as profitable as it used to be a couple of years before, both from the perspective of Brazilian interests regarding the issues under discussion by the

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366 FRANCIS, Michael J. *Op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

367 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 251.

368 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & MOURA, G. "A Trajetória do Pragmatismo - uma análise da política externa brasileira". *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 3, no. 25, 1982, pp. 349-363, p. 360.

international community, such as population growth, international trade, sea limits, environment, etc., about which Brazilian interests were far from US concerns<sup>369</sup>; and from the perspective of Brazil's increasing isolation from its neighbors and from other less developed countries. Nevertheless, Brazilian opposition towards the Castro regime was of such intensity that even when Washington seemed to be prepared to lift the prohibition over US multinationals to negotiate with Cuba through their foreign subsidiaries, Brazil expressed its reservations to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger<sup>370</sup>.

Regarding Brazil's stance towards the US, four years of the Nixon administration with its low profile foreign policy towards Latin America and, moreover, of evidence that the US did not retain the position of world hegemony any longer<sup>371</sup>, led the government to rethink its unconditional alliance. In addition, the oil crisis, and the increasing isolation within the continent also helped to convince Brazilian decision makers that a significant shift in Brazilian priorities had to be made. A policy of diversification from the old partnerships should be pursued, both in relation to the

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369 MARTINS, Carlos E. "A Evolução da Política Externa Brasileira na Década de 64-74". *Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 12, Apr./May./Jun. 1975, pp. 55-98, p. 88.

370 When Henry Kissinger told Brazilian Foreign Minister, Mário Gibson Barboza, that the US was prepared to make some modifications in US licensing procedures (December 1973/January 1974), Barboza expressed Brazil's disagreement with the US viewpoint, by calling his attention to the possible consequences of such a decision for the fulfillment of the trade embargo against Cuba. Confidential sources. Eventually, in April 1974, Washington issued a license to the three US subsidiaries – Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler – to make a deal, mainly due to Washington's aim of preserving a good relationship with Buenos Aires. MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

371 I had better qualify this statement. There is no doubt that Washington still had the capacity to influence the behavior of other states, particularly those which were traditionally in the US sphere as was the case of the Latin American countries. However, as put by Joseph Nye, "To understand what is changing, we must distinguish power over others from power over outcomes. What we are experiencing is not so much an erosion of our power resources compared to those of other countries (although there has been some), but an erosion of our power to control outcomes in the international system as whole". NYE, Joseph S. "American Power and Foreign Policy". *New York Times*, July 07, 1976, quoted by LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

First and the Third World. Regarding Latin America in particular, a policy of rapprochement ought to be formulated.

It is to Geisel's government and its assessment of this question that I shall now turn. I shall examine the new administration's view on the Brazilian-Latin American relationship, both from the perspective of state-to-state relations and from the perspective of the Inter-American System. Further, I shall examine Brazil-US relationship within this period of adjustment of interests both from the US and from Latin Americans. Having analyzed those aspects, I will then assess Brazil's position towards Cuba's readmission to the OAS during the Quito and San Jose conferences.

#### **4.4. Setting the scene for Geisel's stance towards Cuba**

##### **4.4.1. Brazil-Latin America**

The improvement of relationship within Latin America was a strong point of Geisel's foreign policy<sup>372</sup>. Indeed, the choice of Azeredo da Silveira as Foreign Minister was, among other reasons, due to his experience with continental issues<sup>373</sup>. There are obvious reasons for such an interest in the continent. Geographically there is the fact that Brazil shares its borders with no less than 10 countries (i.e., all except for Ecuador and Chile). Nevertheless, it was mainly due to the new government's intentions to expand its horizontal relations, especially concerning the diversification and expansion of Brazilian trade and energy suppliers, which actually counted as a source of Brazil's special concern for the

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372 In Azeredo da Silveira words, "Our foreign policy aim is to harmonize Brazilian national interests (...) firstly with Brazil's neighbors". BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Broadcast speech, March 28, 1974. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, no. 1, Brasília, Mar./Apr./Jun. 1974, p. 23. Translated by the author.

373 A former Ambassador to Buenos Aires (1969-1974), Silveira had also been delegate to CEPAL, OAS, and to several Latin American meetings like those held by the River Plate Basin countries.

continent<sup>374</sup>. As a result, Brazilian exports to and imports from the Latin American Free Trade Association members increased 206% and 307% in 1975 and 1979, respectively<sup>375</sup>. Regarding energy issues, I shall mention the signature of the Agreement on Trade Complementation with Bolivia (May, 1974), which led to the sale of 240 million cubic feet per day of natural gas to Brazil<sup>376</sup> and the improvements made on the Itaipu Dam project signed with Paraguay in April 1973<sup>377</sup>. In addition, it is worth mentioning the increase of contacts with Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia, who respectively could provide Brazil with oil (both Venezuela and Ecuador), copper and coal in exchange for trade and technical cooperation<sup>378</sup>.

The political aspects behind Brazilian policy towards the continent are also important. Geisel's administration sought to implement a more cooperative pattern of relationships within

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374 For an account of Geisel's foreign policy towards Latin America see BOND, Robert D. "Venezuela, Brazil and the Amazon Basin". *Orbis*, v. 22, no. 3, pp. 635-650 and "Brazil's relations with the Northern Tier Countries of South America" in Wayne A. S. (Ed.) "Brazil in the International System: the rise of a middle power". *Op. cit.*, pp. 123-141. SILVEIRA, A. Azeredo da. "O Brasil em face da América Latina". *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year II, no. VI, Brasília, 1975, pp. 7-13. SILVEIRA, A. Azeredo da. "Brasil e a América Latina: interesses e divergências". Lecture delivered at Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, March 4, 1975. JAGUARIBE, Helio. "El Brasil y la América Latina". *Estudios Internacionales*, no. 8, Jan./Mar. 1975, pp. 106-136. CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, pp. 70-85. COSTA, Gino F. *The Foreign Policy of Brazil towards her South American Neighbors during the Geisel and Figueiredo Administrations*. Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's College, Cambridge, March 1987. MOURA, Gerson. "Brasil: uma nova política latino-americana?". *Brasil - Perspectivas Internacionais*, year III, no. 7, May/Sept. 1985, PUC/RJ, pp. 2-5.

375 BANCO CENTRAL DO BRASIL. *Boletim do Banco Central do Brasil*. Departamento Econômico, Brasília, v. 17, no. 1, Jan. 1981, pp. 186-187 and 190-191.

376 MONETA, Carlos J. & WICHMANN, R. "Brazil and the Southern Cone" in SELCHER, Wayne A. *Brazil in the International System: the rise of a middle power*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1981, pp. 143-180, p. 161.

377 For an account of the whole process of negotiation around the dam, which also involved Argentina, see LIMA, Maria Regina Soares de. "The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu". *Op. cit.*, pp. 348-408.

378 NAZARIO, Olga. *Pragmatism in Brazilian Foreign Policy: the Geisel years (1974-1979)*. Ph.D. Thesis, Coral Gables, Florida University of Miami, May 1983, p. 55.

the region in order to break Brazilian isolation. The latter was the result of the Brazilian free-rider stance, due to its high economic performance in the early 70s – known as the period of the “Economic Miracle”<sup>379</sup>. By way of example, in 1974 Brazil alone constituted 32.4% of Latin America’s economic product<sup>380</sup>.

Yet, at the beginning of his administration, Geisel kept the same rationale as his predecessor, who used to emphasize bilateral rather than multilateral contacts. In Hélio Jaguaribe words, “regarding Latin American countries, Brazil had few to profit from, due to their similar or inferior economic and technological levels, which led the country to keep a strictly bilateral pattern of relationships, correct, but not too close, because a more effective multilateral pattern of relationships would impose, in the name of regional solidarity, duties on the country without profitable compensations”<sup>381</sup>. Indeed, with regard to the OAS, for instance, few subjects attracted strong Brazilian participation. According to Selcher, Brazil used to see the OAS “as an institutionalized multilateral channel for discussion and informational exchange, which provides dialogue opportunities but does not constitute a major podium”<sup>382</sup>.

Such a policy would be gradually abandoned throughout Geisel’s administration, as several attitudes can illustrate. Amongst them, the signature of a constitutive covenant of the

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379 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “As Relações Econômicas e Políticas do Brasil com a América Latina: balanço de uma década”. *Op. cit.*

380 World Bank. *World Bank Atlas*, 1976, Washington, D.C. World Bank, 1977, quoted by SELCHER, Wayne A. *Brazil’s Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1978, p. 245.

381 JAGUARIBE, Helio. *Brasil: Crise e Alternativas*, Ed. Zahar, 1974, p. 116, quoted by Carlos Estevam M. *Op. cit.*, p. 91. Translated by the author.

382 SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazil’s Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds”. *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

Latin American Economic System (Sistema Econômico Latino Americano/SELA), which aimed to create a regional trade alliance independent from the US<sup>383</sup>. In addition, the signature of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty in 1978, demonstrated Brazil's will to take part into the coordinated development of the eight countries bordering the Amazon River basin<sup>384</sup>.

#### 4.4.2. Brazil-US

Brazil was not an exception in Washington's dismissive stance towards Latin America, notwithstanding the US having chosen the country for special treatment under the Nixon Doctrine<sup>385</sup>. In addition, the relationship between the two countries was being aggravated by quite a lot of specific problems. By way of example, in July 1974 Washington decided not to guarantee processing nuclear fuel for the Brazilian reactors under construction by Westinghouse. Considering the oil crisis, US decision was "a hard blow to a country seeking to expand its nuclear capacity as a substitutive for high priced-oil"<sup>386</sup>, to say nothing of the wider discussion on the First World criteria of reliability. Likewise, the Washington-Brasilia relationship was also under stress due to the US protectionist policy against Brazilian policy of subsidies to exports<sup>387</sup>.

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383 It is true that in the beginning Brazil tried to undermine the creation of the System. [BAILY, S. *The United States and the Development of South America (1945-1975)*, New York, New Viewpoints, 1976, p. 156]. By finally agreeing with its creation, however, Brazil supported an important Latin American initiative.

384 BOND, Robert D. *Op. cit.*, pp. 130-133.

385 For an analysis of the rhetorical benefits and the actual costs which stemmed from the alleged special place Brazil had within the Nixon Doctrine, see HURRELL, Andrew James "The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)". *Op. cit.*, pp. 165-169.

386 FISHLOW, A. "Brazil: the case of the missing relationship" in Richard N. (Ed.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 147-161, p. 149.

387 *Idem, ibidem*.



Indeed, Brazil's aims to enlarge its political and economic influence in Latin America in particular, and in the Third World in general, required the country's disengagement from the framework of the Nixon Doctrine. As long as Brazil complied with the US view on encouraging "emerging power centers" that shared fundamental interests with Washington, as part of the latter's rationale of relying on regional powers out of its preferential areas of interest to look after Western interests, the country had also to cope with the drawbacks of being "perceived as a preferential ally of the United States and a mere surrogate of the metropolis's goals in those areas"<sup>388</sup>. That is the reason why since the beginning of Geisel's government it was stressed that Brazil was prepared to fight for its own interests, even if they were contradictory to Western objectives, which obviously meant US interests. In Azeredo da Silveira's words, "Brazil will not ally itself to interests that do not represent Brazil's own interests (...). We have enormous Western affinities, and those must be enlarged, but, they will always be so, always, as a result of a Brazilian national decision"<sup>389</sup>.

It is within this framework that the discussion about the lifting of sanctions against Cuba emerged in the first year of Geisel's government. During the second meeting gathering Latin American representatives to discuss with Henry Kissinger the means to create a new pattern of relationship between them (Washington, April 1974)<sup>390</sup>, the Cuban question was raised and a resolution proposing

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388 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. "The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu". *Op. cit.*, p. 15. It is well known the strong negative impact Nixon's remarks that "as Brazil goes, so will go the rest of the Latin American continent", during President Médici's visit to Washington in December 1971. Quoted by William C. P. *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

389 SILVEIRA, Antonio Azeredo da. Broadcasted speech, March 28, 1974. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, no. 1, Brasília, Mar./Apr./Jun. 1974, p. 24. Translated by the author.

390 The first meeting had been held in Tlatelolco, Mexico (February, 1974). This initiative became known as the "New Dialogue" which, although able to stimulate the works on the reorganization of the Inter-American System and to raise important aspects of the US-Latin America relationship, did not go so

consultations about the issue was approved by consensus. It was expected that the question would be actually discussed only in Buenos Aires in March 1975, after the consultations had been made. Nevertheless, the movement in favor of the normalization of relations with Cuba, along with the need to reorganize the Inter-American System, speeded up the events.

As I shall demonstrate, the consecutive XV and the XVI Meetings of Consultation of Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, respectively in Quito and in San Jose, approached the question in distinct ways. While at Quito a straightforward action towards the lifting of sanctions was, without success, attempted, at San Jose, the strategy was to separate the discussions on the reform of the Rio Treaty (in order to make it more in line with the new international political configuration of the continent) from the discussions about the Cuban embargo. The analysis of those events will give special attention to Brazil's stance.

#### **4.5. Cuba and the Inter-American System – defining means and ends**

It is hard to distinguish what were the means and what was the end as far as the debate on the Cuban readmission to the Inter-American System and the reorganization of the latter were concerned. Talking about the XV Meeting of Consultation (Quito, 1974), which had been called only to discuss Cuban readmission to the system, Costa Rican Foreign Minister, Gonzalo Facio, stressed that the major aim of the conference was “to save the Rio

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far as to reach any solution for the latter. Following the adoption of the Trade Reform Act by the Ford government (1974-1976), in December 1974, which by increasing US protectionism directly affected Latin American exports, all Latin American countries suspended talks as a protest against what they considered “discriminatory” provisions in favor of the developing countries. For an account of this initiative, see STEPHANSKY, Ben S. “New Dialogue’ on Latin America: the cost of policy neglect” in HELLMAN, Ronald & ROSENBAUN, H. Jon (eds.) *Latin America: the search for a New International Role*, New York, Sage Publications, 1975, pp. 153-166.

Treaty”<sup>391</sup>. The reason for this muddle was the disregard for the mandatory resolution of the IX Meeting of Consultation (1964) imposing economic and diplomatic embargo on Cuba<sup>392</sup>, which led to discrediting the instrument used to enforce the hemisphere solidarity, namely the Rio Treaty. Theoretically, the lifting of the embargo should be agreed on by at least a two thirds majority of the American Republics, since it had been implemented according to Article 17 of the ITRA. Therefore, it was necessary to take some steps either to reformulate the rules in order to legitimate the breach, *ex post facto*; or, conversely, to get the majority of the states to vote in favor of the readmission of Cuba to restore the integrity of the law. Regardless of the course finally taken, preserving the Inter-American System, and moreover the Rio Treaty, was an imperative.

The first of Washington’s attempts to probe Brasilia’s position about Cuban readmission to the system date from the arrangements for the Tlatelolco Conference (February 1974) between Latin American representatives and Henry Kissinger, coinciding with Médici’s last month of government. Whereas Washington was interested in probing Latin America’s position due to the positive domestic atmosphere in the US towards the normalization of relations with Havana<sup>393</sup>, the Médici government’s opposition to any change of policy regarding the issue, and the imminent change of government, led Brazil to avoid discussing the question<sup>394</sup>.

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391 “Facio quer conciliação”. *Jornal do Brasil*, November 10, 1974.

392 By 1974, when the XV Meeting was called, seven countries had in distinct ways and with different levels of intensity normalized their relations with the Castro regime – Argentina, Panama, Peru, Guyana, Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad Tobago –, besides Mexico, who had never actually broken relations with Cuba. In addition, at least other 4 countries had already given signs that they were also prepared to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba – Venezuela, Costa Rica, Colombia and Ecuador.

393 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, pp. 279-285 and P. Brenner. *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

394 “Niet Cuba”. *Veja*, February 20, 1974, p. 24 and RAMOS, Ana Tereza L. *Cronologia da Política Externa do Brasil*, IRI/PUC-RJ, 1985, mimeo, no page. It is worth mentioning, however, that as far as the Inter-American System strength was concerned and, moreover, the US-Latin America relationship,

The Cuban issue had been discussed by Geisel and Azeredo da Silveira during their meeting to outline the new government's foreign policy. Then, Argentinean requirements for exporting products from US subsidiaries to Cuba had been examined. In comparison to Médici's opposition to the deal<sup>395</sup>, Geisel agreed with Silveira about Washington's lack of right to intervene in the question – an aspect pointed out by Silveira as evidence of the similarity of opinions on foreign policy between the president and himself<sup>396</sup>.

Geisel's positive stance towards Argentinean exports to Cuba could be seen as a governmental move towards the normalization of trade relations with Havana. However, as the preparations for summoning the XV Meeting of Consultation highlight, the improvement of Latin American relations with the Castro regime did not lead the Brazilian ruling class to do the same. Geisel's stance on the multinationals issue can therefore be interpreted as a *personal* position towards a rapprochement to Havana, and a *governmental* stance against US interference in domestic affairs.

In April 1974 Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela addressed a resolution to the Permanent Council of the OAS proposing the calling of a Meeting of Consultation to vote on the lifting of sanctions against Cuba<sup>397</sup>. A Commission had to be firstly formed to

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Brazil adopted a much more cooperative posture. As long as the Cuban issue stayed out of the negotiations, the Médici government was ready to collaborate in the success of the "New Dialogue". Confidential sources.

395 See footnote no. 370.

396 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira by Maria Regina Soares Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 15, 1979 and June 07, 1979.

397 It is worth noting that the same country which had triggered the movement towards the embargo against Cuba in the sixties, e.g., Venezuela, was then, under the rule of President Rafael Caldera (1970-1974), adopting a foreign policy towards Central American and Caribbean countries based on the so called "ideological pluralism". VIDIGAL, Armando A. F. "Brasil-Cuba: uma análise politico-estratégica". *Política e Estratégia*, v. III, no. 2, Apr./Jun. 1985, pp. 167-188, p. 178.

evaluate the conditions of the international political system which had led to the sanctions in 1964, to check whether the latter were still the same so as to justify the maintenance of the embargo. The immediate Brazilian reaction was to issue a note arguing that the Commission should not take into account the new international situation, but rather the elements which indeed had justified the embargo, e.g. the external behavior of the country in question<sup>398</sup>. In so doing, Brazil managed to introduce the principle of non-intervention as a requirement for the reexamination of the issue.

It is worth stressing the difference between Brazilian and the majority of Latin American countries' assessment of the question. Whilst the latter examined the question from the perspective of the collective security precept in correlation with the Cold War, and therefore had to be re-interpreted in line with détente; Brazil turned back to the non-intervention principle – viewing Cuba as an interventionist country –, precisely because the new international configuration and its consequences for the principle of collective security no longer met the requirements of the Brazilian military regime. For reasons I will discuss later on, it was imperative to keep Brazilian opposition towards the Castro regime. It did not really matter that Brazil was perhaps the least vulnerable country to outside interference from the continent. What really mattered was that, since the international environment of détente tended to play down the image of Cuba as a threat to the continent, e.g., as an issue to be discussed through the principle of collective security, Brazil turned back to the principle of non-intervention as a way to keep up its opposition to Cuba's readmission to the Inter-American System.

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398 "O Brasil e a questão cubana". *O Estado de São Paulo*, September 19, 1974 and SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazil's Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds". *Op. cit.*, p. 253.

In so doing, Brazil gave clear evidence of its subsequent position. By initially supporting the summoning of the Meeting, it intended to demonstrate its solidarity towards Latin America. On the other hand, it did so by presenting a demand which, supposedly, would make it more difficult for any other country which might have had problems with Cuban interventionism to vote in favor of the sanctions lifting, especially considering the fact that, officially, Castro had not eliminated from his foreign policy the aim of exporting revolution to other countries. Nevertheless, since the contemporary Latin American inclination to normalize relations with Havana was less bound by historical reasons than by a clear-cut political wish to bring détente into the continent, the Brazilian strategy of introducing the criterion of non-intervention to assess the Cuban embargo was, in fact, a cover for its own position.

Eventually, in mid-September, the Permanent Council voted unanimously for the XV Meeting of Consultation to be held in Quito on November 1974. Then came the phase of Brazilian decision makers pondering the alternatives involved.

## **4.6. The process of decision-making**

### **4.6.1. Brazil identifies and weighs its alternatives (XV Meeting of Consultation)**

Geisel's government had to think through several issues in order to reach its decision. Among the most important were: the US and the Latin American position; Brazilian economic interests; and the Brazilian military view on the subject.

As far as the US was concerned, it is important to analyze the statement made by President Ford saying that Washington was planning to abide by the majority decision<sup>399</sup>, since it

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399 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 251.

apparently had adopted a position of not influencing the other OAS members. Thus exempting itself from pointing the way to be taken, Washington put Brazil in a delicate situation. During the preliminary conversations between Geisel and Silveira, it was settled that from then on Brazil would no longer play the role of the Latin American leader in an anti-Cuban chain. In Silveira's words, if the US intended to condemn Cuba, they should do so by themselves, and not through the Brazilian delegation<sup>400</sup>. The only reason for Brazil not completely changing its policy towards the Castro regime was due, according to Silveira, to the Brazilian commitment to some of its Latin American neighbors<sup>401</sup>. By doing so, Brazil was trying to escape from the uncomfortable position of being an US instrument in the maintenance of Cuban isolation. Nevertheless, if Washington was really prepared to follow the main trend, and if Brazil, in its turn, had commitments that did not allow it to do the same, in the end Brazil would retain its image of an important link in the anti-Castro chain.

Hence, considering the new Latin American mood towards the Castro regime and the Brazilian aim to improve its links with the region, Brazil had to be aware of the effects of its stance on its continental fellows.

Along with Colombia and Venezuela, the Central American countries were those who had the most determined position towards the lifting of sanctions. Or, more, towards the restoration of the integrity of Inter-American System and the efficacy of the Rio Treaty, as long as they were the most vulnerable countries in the continent. Notwithstanding Geisel's plans to cultivate better relations with Latin America, Brazil still kept a low profile as far

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400 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 18, 1979, CPDOC.

401 *Idem*.

as Central America and the Caribbean region was concerned<sup>402</sup>. As for Mexico in particular, with whom it had always been important to cultivate a cordial relationship, there was nothing innovative in its position towards Cuba. Mexico was the only Latin America that never broke off relations with Havana. Notwithstanding Brazil's fierce opposition to Castro after 1964, Brazil-Mexico relations had never really been harmed as a result of this difference, perhaps because although Cuba had a particular role in Mexican foreign policy, the latter was related to Mexico's relationship with the US, rather than with Latin America.

Otherwise, those South American countries sponsoring the end of the embargo, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, to name the most prominent, had a strong effect on Brazilian foreign policy. However, although Brazil had interests in maintaining cordial relations with all of them, the bilateral contacts of the time were still able to hold a good relationship. Hence, although such a unified policy could be very profitable as far as avoiding Brazilian isolation was concerned, its absence did not seem to add any extra constraint to Brazil's relationship with those countries.

Conversely, those countries defending the maintenance of the sanctions – Bolivia, Chile<sup>403</sup>, Paraguay, and Uruguay – were for many reasons at the top of the Brazilian list of interests. Besides having similar conservative military regimes – with the exception of Uruguay whose government, despite its extreme conservatism, was civilian –, those countries had significant economic links

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402 For a general account of the Brazil-Caribbean and Brazil-Central American relationships, see HIRST, Monica. *O Brasil e o Caribe: os primeiros passos de aproximação*. Paper delivered to the Conference "América Latina e o Caribe". Asociación Nacional de Instituciones Financieras de Colombia, Bogotá, May 27-28, 1982 and CAMARGO, Sonia de. "O Brasil em face da América Central e do Caribe - a história de uma ausência". *Política e Estratégia*, v. III, no. 2, Apr./Jun. 1985, pp. 231-245.

403 Then under the government of General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990), who broke off relations with Havana soon after he seized power (September 1973).



with Brazil<sup>404</sup>. As mentioned above, the commitment to these countries “whose cooperation and solidarity Brazil needed”<sup>405</sup> was considered a strong point of Geisel’s policy towards Cuba. In addition, Brazilian concern about Southern Cone security and the historical competition between Brazil and Argentina in the influence over the River Plate Basin countries – Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay<sup>406</sup> –, where both countries moved on a pattern of balance of power politics, was still a point to stimulate Brazilian solidarity with them as opposed to Argentinean support for Cuban readmission.

Regarding the issue of strengthening the Inter-American System, Geisel’s government could rely on the peculiarity of the situation. As long as the proposal to end the embargo against Cuba meant to restore the continental unity with a strategy of making the majority of the countries join together with those who had sponsored an “illegal” stance – e.g., those who had disobeyed the

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404 Bolivia – who in the end also abstained from voting – was one of the largest beneficiaries of Brazilian aid in Latin America, and therefore the government in power [Colonel Hugo Banzer (1971-1978)] was very much pro-Brazilian – President Banzer was almost deposed when he considered selling more Bolivian oil and natural gas to Argentina rather than to Brazil. Furthermore, in May 1974 Brasilia and La Paz signed an agreement envisaging the construction of a massive pipeline that would carry natural gas to São Paulo [FERGUSON, Yale H. “Trends in Inter-American Relations: 1972-mid-1974” in Ronald Hellman & H. Jon R. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-24, p. 7]. Chile, by its turn, had strong connections with the Brazilian arms industry [NAZARIO, O. “Pragmatism in Brazilian Foreign Policy: the Geisel years (1974-1979)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 53]. As for Paraguay, the agreement towards the construction of the world’s largest hydroelectric plan on the Paraná River, had an important role in the Brazilian appraisal [NAZARIO, O. “Pragmatism in Brazilian Foreign Policy: the Geisel years (1974-1979)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 50 and Yale H. F. *Op. cit.*, p. 7]. Finally, whilst Brazilian trade with Uruguay was not only high but also very steady, with the other three countries there was a significant upward mobility (between 1970 and 1975 Paraguayan, Bolivian and Chilean imports from Brazil increased, respectively from 6,1% to 16,3%; 6,1% to 17,0% and 3,1% to 5,3%, of their total imports). (International Monetary Fund. *Direction of Trade Annual, 1968-1972 and 1971-1977*, quoted by Maria R. Soares de Lima “As Relações Econômicas e Políticas do Brasil com a América Latina: balanço de uma década”. *Op. cit.*)

405 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 18, 1979, CPDOC.

406 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 356-377 and JAGUARIBE, Helio. “Brasil-Argentina: Breve Análisis de las Relaciones de Conflicto y Cooperación”. *Estudios Internacionales*, no. 15, Jan./Mar. 1982, pp. 9-27.

inter-American resolution –, rather than by enforcing the rule or even by punishing the “outlaws”, Brazil could rest comfortably knowing that it had always been a straight follower of the system’s regulation.

Purely economic reasons, or rather, the lack of them, also played a role as far as Brazil’s stance was concerned. By and large, from an economic point of view Brazil had almost nothing to gain from a change in its position towards Cuba<sup>407</sup>. When the lifting of sanctions was discussed in Quito, the international market for sugar was very good. Thus, as some OAS analysts were reported to have said, the lifting of sanctions would not cause any significant alteration in the international market. Although the consumers would benefit from the increased competition, the producers could also count on the consumption increase at the time to leave their quotas untouched<sup>408</sup>. It is in this sense that the president of Brazilian Sugar and Alcohol Institute, general Álvaro Tavares do Carmo, declared that he did not see any lasting damage to Brazilian sugar trade if the OAS approved the lifting of sanctions against Cuba<sup>409</sup>.

Yet, if Brazil did not have anything to lose, it seemed that it did not have anything to gain either, since the economies of Brazil and Cuba were not yet complementary, but still competitive. Hence, whilst the economic aspects constituted a factor in the reinforcement of the position regarding, for example, the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing, they did not play any role as far as Havana was concerned. It is worth recalling

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407 Even before Brazil had joined the American Republics on the economic embargo against Cuba the rate of Brazil-Cuba trade was very low and intermittent. VASCONCELOS, L. L. “Um repasse sobre as relações Brasil-Cuba”. *Contexto Internacional*, v. 13, no. 2, Jul./Dec. 1991, PUC/RJ, pp. 187-203, p. 191.

408 “Havana, um fraco mercado”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 10, 1974.

409 “Brasil, Cuba e o açúcar”. *Visão*, September 23, 1974, p. 15.

an episode involving the president of the Brazilian Exporters Association, Giulite Coutinho, who would take part, even if marginally, in the game that eventually led to the restoration of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC)<sup>410</sup>. Following the Argentinean decision to export products from US subsidiaries to Cuba, and the subsequent US permission, Coutinho was reported to have said that Brazilian entrepreneurs were interested in normalizing relations with Havana. Contrary to what eventually happened regarding his comments on the Chinese market, his statements on Cuba did not get any positive response from the Brazilian ruling elite. On the contrary, the then Minister of Commerce and Industry, Severo Gomes, stated that Coutinho's declarations expressed solely a personal opinion<sup>411</sup>.

Regarding this, Nazario argues that the "resumption of relations with Cuba (...) was rejected by the military regime on grounds that the socialist island did not offer either the energy resources or the substantial markets needed by Brazil, two considerations which had gone far to ease the concern of military hardliners over ideological issues"<sup>412</sup>. Indeed ideology was the first and decisive aspect in justifying the decision not to vote for the lifting of the sanctions. As claimed by Souto Maior, "the continuing lack of relations with Cuba embodied the most evident concession made by the foreign policy area to a domestic policy injunction"<sup>413</sup>. And that leads us to the examination of the military view on the subject, an issue of crucial importance to be considered by President Geisel.

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410 See Chapter V.

411 "Cuba continua fora dos planos oficiais". *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 14, 1974.

412 NAZARIO, O. "Brazil's Rapprochement with Cuba: the process and the prospects". *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, v. 28, no. 3, Fall 1986, pp. 67-86, p. 67.

413 SOUTO MAIOR, Luiz Augusto P. "O 'Pragmatismo Responsável'" in *60 Anos de Política Externa Brasileira*. Programa de Relações Internacionais, USP/IPRI, p. 27, Forthcoming. Emphasis added. Translated by the author.

I have already stressed the role of the National Security Doctrine as far as the appraisal of the Castro regime is concerned. The vote in favor of the lifting of sanctions would give the Castro regime a certificate of good behavior, to the extent that it would nullify the reasons why the embargo had been implemented in 1964, e.g., the Cuban interventionist policy. Hence, this vote could lead to a debate about some important aspects of Brazilian military doctrine, such as the “revolutionary warfare” and the concept of “ideological frontiers”. Although decisions such as the restoration of diplomatic relations with the PRC would do a good job in reducing the importance of “anti-Communism” as a basis for the military regime, a too sympathetic stance towards the Castro regime would probably increase the level of controversy regarding Geisel so called pragmatic foreign policy. Indeed, contrary to the Chinese case, the Cuban threat was more associated with the disruption of the regime from within due to the fact that a large number of people who took up arms against the dictatorship belonged to groups sympathetic to the Cuban regime. In addition, as long as the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing turned out to be less simple than imagined, due to the “unexpected” military resistance<sup>414</sup>, the strong opposition against the Castro regime along with the scant advantages from a rapprochement, seemed not to recommend to provoke the regime supporters with another dissatisfaction. At the end of the day, as put by one of Silveira’s advisers, “the Cuban question was not sufficiently important to justify the work necessary in convincing the opponents”<sup>415</sup>.

Moreover, in Lima’s words, whilst for global issues “Brazilian behavior could be ruled by pragmatic realism in the defense of the

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414 See Chapter V.

415 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, former Head of Minister Azeredo da Silveira Cabinet, Rio de Janeiro, December 05, 1991.

interests of the state”, since they did not put “the political survival of the regime (...) at stake”, there was “a clear-cut reason so as to explain why this postulate [e.g., the concept of ideological frontiers] kept on being applied for Latin American countries (...). In Latin America, where the geographical proximity increases the impact of other countries’ domestic political processes on the Brazilian territory, the policy of ‘ideological frontiers’ appeared to be a more effective way of maintaining the political-ideological equilibrium of the region”<sup>416</sup>. Hence, President Geisel could not disregard the anti-Castro stance as an important element in legitimizing Brazilian military rule when weighing the alternatives at stake. Likewise, the importance for the military in Brazil of cultivating a pattern of solidarity with other military regimes in the continent as a means of giving one another a sort of legitimacy should also be appraised.

Having examined all those aspects, I shall move on to the actual stage when the decision was finally taken.

#### 4.6.2. Not much to choose

In the days before the Quito Meeting, some newspapers speculated on the likely position to be taken by the Brazilian delegation<sup>417</sup>. By and large, the expectations were for a Brazilian abstention, which in the end proved to be correct. Yet, the available data suggests that, notwithstanding abstention being the most likely and even expected position, this decision was the product of a cautious reflection within the decision arena.

The main rationale behind the view which favored the lifting of sanctions was to avoid Brazil’s isolation within the OAS, a position

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416 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. “The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu”. *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

417 “Brasil se abstém e não vai reatar”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 18, 1974. “Cuba”. *Jornal do Brasil*, October 24, 1974. “Cuba na pauta de Geisel e Silveira”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 29, 1974.

very much in harmony with the new foreign policy towards Latin America, sponsored by Geisel and his Foreign Minister. In addition, this stance was also based on the need to strengthen the Inter-American System. Last, but not least, this position faced the rationale of the Castro regime itself of decreasing its potential threat in exchange for more cordial state-to-state relationship.

Conversely, those who were against the end of the embargo were guided by matters of national security. Or rather by a certain view about it. According to the Brazilian Constitution of 1967 and the Constitutional Amendments of 1969, the concept of national security was associated with the military concerns about internal subversion. That was opposed to the previous Constitutional text of 1946, where the concept of national security was basically related to foreign aggression<sup>418</sup>. As pointed out by Alves, the Constitution of 1967 “changed this definition to conform to the Doctrine of Internal Security with its theory of psychological warfare and the enemy within”<sup>419</sup>. Needless to say that those alterations were made during a period when the military security and intelligence community was very powerful within the government. Hence, the opposition to any sympathetic attitude towards Cuba was mainly based on the role played by the former Cuban support for Latin American revolutionary movements on the legitimization of Brazilian military regime. In spite of the lack of evidence that Havana still supported this policy for the continent, the essence of internal security in the regime’s doctrine was too strong to allow a more flexible position towards Cuba.

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418 See BRASIL. Constituição. *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil* (1967), Brasília, 7ed. Senado Federal, Subsecretaria de Edições Técnicas, Março 1982, p. 82. BRASIL. Constituição. *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil - Quadro Comparativo*. Senado Federal. Subsecretaria de Edições Técnicas, Brasília, 1991, pp. 282-287 and Maria Helena M. A. *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

419 ALVES, Maria Helena M. *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

Analyzing Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime, Lima argued that the dismissive US stand towards Latin America and the presence of non-friendly neighbors in the continent led the armed forces to perceive the need to strengthen the country's military and industrial capabilities for the regime survival<sup>420</sup>. I would like to add that, likewise, part of the ruling elite perceived that it was also necessary to keep one of its most traditional enemies as such so as to protect the whole military ideology. In other words, Cuba became a useful icon for the regime's endurance. Therefore, notwithstanding Geisel's intention to decrease the strength of the hardliners within the government<sup>421</sup>, the belief in a Cuban threat to the continent, particularly held by the intelligence community as a legitimizing force for the existence of the military regime, was still too strong to be simply ignored. In fact, by drawing an analogy to Arno Mayer's conclusions about the relationship between domestic crisis and foreign war in Europe since 1870, "this over-reaction [towards the Castro regime] was anchored in, collaborated with, energized by, and ultimately benefitted the established ruling classes, interest, and institutions"<sup>422</sup>.

Finally, the remarkable military presence in the Brazilian representation to the OAS gives little room for doubting that within the Organization the Cuban issue was handled by ideological rather than by pragmatic reasons. According to the January 1975 OAS *Directory* from a staff of 22, the Brazilian delegation had 11 military officers and three attaches, some of them assigning the OAS work with the Joint Brazil-US Military Commission,

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420 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. "As Relações Econômicas e Políticas do Brasil com a América Latina: balanço de uma década". *Op. cit.*

421 See Chapter III.

422 MAYER, Arno J. "Internal Crisis and War since 1870" in Charles L. B. (Ed.) *Situations Révolutionnaires en Europe (1917-1922): Allemagne, Italie, Autriche-Hongrie*, Montreal, Centre Interuniversitaire d'Études Européennes, 1977, pp. 201-238, p. 202.

the Brazilian Purchasing Commission, and the Inter-American Defense Board”<sup>423</sup>.

Eventually a compromise was produced: abstention and explanation of vote. The process leading to this outcome is hard to reconstruct. Although having had access to the testimonies of several key actors who took part in the process, the delicacy of the issue seems to have blurred their version of the facts. Still, it is possible to sketch a tentative scenario about what has actually happened.

According to one of Silveira’s closest advisers, there was a strong inclination towards voting for the lifting of sanctions within the Itamaraty<sup>424</sup>. Likewise, there is information about a similar stance advocated by part of the ruling elite, Geisel included<sup>425</sup>. Indeed, Geisel supported a position that could soften – but not exactly obliterate – the opposition to Cuba, due to his belief that, as a result, a decrease of Cuban interventionist policy would follow<sup>426</sup>. In spite of this favorable atmosphere, it has already been stated that a change on the assessment of the Cuban issue was not

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423 SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazil’s Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds”. *Op. cit.*, p. 249. The significance of the Inter-American Defense Board in enhancing Brazilian military attachment to the protection of the continent against Communist aggression should be pinpointed. The Board had been established by the III Meeting of Consultation (Rio de Janeiro, January 15-28, 1942), in order “to study and recommend to the American governments measures necessary for the defense of the continent”. (CONNELL-SMITH, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 121). Moreover, its aim was “to give the Latin Americans a sense of participation in a joint effort [along with Washington] to ensure the security of the hemisphere” (*Idem*, p. 122). Hence, due to the Doctrine intimate connections with the US security policy for Latin America and as long as the NSD still was the main guideline for Brazilian ruling elite, particularly for the military, the outstanding presence of military men within the OAS had contributed remarkably to the maintenance of Brazilian opposition to Cuban readmission.

424 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, General Secretary of Itamaraty under Azeredo da Silveira, Rio de Janeiro, November 12, 1991.

425 GÔES, Walder de. *O Brasil do General Geisel - estudo do processo de tomada de decisão no regime militar burocrático*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1978, pp. 38-39.

426 Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, former subhead of Azeredo da Silveira’s Cabinet, São Paulo, February 14, 1992.



considered profitable enough, considering the likely damages the latter could cause for the implementation of the whole policy of Responsible Pragmatism. Indeed, according to a top diplomat in Silveira's Cabinet, issues like the recognition of the PRC, and the approach to the former Portuguese colonies such as Angola, were the highest priorities in respect of which the sacrifice of a possible change towards Cuba was justified<sup>427</sup>.

Hence, the position in favor of the lifting of sanctions which was about to be taken was replaced by a vote for abstention, following the advice of the Head of the Military Staff, General Hugo de Abreu<sup>428</sup>. The argument then presented to Geisel was, in Abreu's own words, that "to the extent that the subject was not of real interest for the country, Brazil need not remain in favor of the maintenance of the embargo, but on the other hand there was no good reason for antagonizing the dominant military opinion, which I knew would be against any sympathetic attitude towards Cuba"<sup>429</sup>. Indeed, still according to his testimony, the National Security Council, through its General Secretariat, issued a report against the end of the embargo, based on the "internal opinion of the country" (sic)<sup>430</sup>. Translating this statement from the military jargon, it meant the opinion of the military class.

Abreu's advice to Geisel leads us to conclude that, on this occasion, the ultimate decision was in the military class's hands. Nevertheless, two crucial aspects should not be forgotten. Firstly that the very fact that made Geisel abstain, as opposed to his alleged pro-lifting stance, was the question that he, as well as Silveira,

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427 Interview with José Nogueira Filho, Special Adviser to Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira (1974-1979), Brasília, November 20, 1991.

428 ABREU, Hugo de. *O Outro Lado do Poder*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1979, p. 168.

429 *Idem*, p. 50. Translated by the author.

430 *Idem*, p. 49.

were prepared to compromise with the regime's more conservative wing regarding Cuba, for the sake of his most ambitious and likely more politically and economically profitable plans towards the PRC and Angola. And secondly, that the maintenance of the abstention when the lifting of sanctions was again examined by the OAS in San Jose, invites the analyst to make a different appraisal of this internal negotiation, as I shall do later on.

In so doing, the Brazilian abstention in Quito pleased both internal demands and external aims. Internally, the abstention answered the strong resistance towards too soft a stance on the Castro regime, and in so doing it was consistent with the very well-known military inflexibility<sup>431</sup>. As put by a high ranking diplomat "a discrete position had the advantage of not leading to any internal fray. Moreover, regardless of the final result, either pro-Washington or pro-Havana, it would not damage any significant Brazilian interest"<sup>432</sup>.

Externally, as Schneider put it, the abstention had the advantage of "if readmission is going to happen anyway, Brazil should not risk incurring the diplomatic costs of holding out against a growing hemisphere consensus"<sup>433</sup>.

Regarding the broad effects of Brazilian decision, I claim that Brazil compelled both the US and those Latin Americans who were either against or in favor of the maintenance of the embargo, to resolve their differences among themselves, with no Brazilian mediation.

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431 Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

432 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, Rio de Janeiro, December 05, 1991. Translated by the author.

433 SCHNEIDER, Ronald M. *Brazil - Foreign Policy of a Future World Power*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1976, p. 101.

### 4.6.3. Brazil explains its position

Eventually the XV Meeting of Consultation was held between 8 and 12 November, 1974. Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela voted for the end of the embargo. Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay voted against it and the remaining six countries – Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua and the US abstained. As a result, the resolution was not approved since it lacked the necessary two thirds majorities.

The decision to add an explanation of Brazil's abstention allowed Azeredo da Silveira to stress the country's belief in the non-intervention principle, saying that no evidence that Cuba had substantially changed her international behavior had been presented to the Meeting. As a consequence, there was no reason to lift the embargo. Nevertheless, due to the fact that, during this Meeting, the lifting of sanctions against Cuba and the reinforcement of the Inter-American System were intermingled, Brazil had decided to abstain. In Azeredo's words, "we do not want a negative vote from Brazil on the resolution to contribute to the reinforcement of the current divisions within the Inter-American System which would lead to the weakness of the latter and of the OAS"<sup>434</sup>.

It is also worth emphasizing that Brazil stressed its views on the difference between the two questions. For Brazil stated that, although it was conscious that the continuous breaching of Resolution I (1964) imposing sanctions against Cuba was damaging the Rio Treaty, the Quito Meeting should not be seen as the place to discuss the ITRA reform. In other words, Brazil

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434 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, no. III, Brasília, Oct./Dec. 1974, pp. 25-27. Translated by the author.

refused to incorporate the thesis that the lifting of the sanctions against Cuba was the means to reinforce the Inter-American System. Both questions should be handled on different occasions. As Azeredo put it, “For a significant number of governments (...) the continuous breaching of an ITRA obligation was contributing to the weakening of the Treaty (...). The Brazilian government understands and shares such concern. Yet, Brazil does not think the solution is to revoke the resolution which has been breached. If it is correct that the ITRA needs alterations and reinterpretations in order to adjust it to the present world, here is not the forum for that. The subject has been studied in Washington, in the Special Committee of the OAS, and it is there that should be solved”<sup>435</sup>. Finally, as Azeredo da Silveira declared to the press, although all abstaining countries had understood the importance of saving the Inter-American System, they were not convinced that to do so it was necessary to make concessions to Cuba without any compensation. Therefore, he continued, in abstaining those countries intended to show that they considered the reasons of Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela correct – the authors of the resolution proposing the lifting of sanctions – but they did not see any guarantee that the end of the embargo would lead to any significant alteration in the Cuban relationship with the American countries<sup>436</sup>.

Brazil’s deliberation about the decision taken in Quito actually took place during the subsequent Meeting of Consultation. Then, on the one hand, the consequences of the government’s continuous opposition to a more sympathetic stance regarding Cuba for the strengthening of the Inter-American System would be finally solved. And on the other, the progress – albeit discreet – towards

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435 *Idem, ibidem*. Translated by the author.

436 “Silveira acha justo o adiamento”. *Jornal do Brasil*, November 12, 1974.

normalizing the Brazil-Cuba relationship would be sanctioned. In addition, Brazil would manage to rule out any remaining suspicions of having actually defined its position according to Washington, although both abstained in Quito.

#### **4.6.4. Brazil upholds its decision (XVI Meeting of Consultation)**

The Quito Meeting only emphasized the need for reorganizing the Inter-American System, instead of actually solving the problems caused by the different positions held by the American Republics towards the Castro regime. By way of example, at the end of the conference the 12 countries who had voted in favor of the lifting of sanctions issued a Declaration pointing to the anachronistic mechanism of the ITRA voting procedures whereby the majority had their will bypassed by the minority<sup>437</sup>.

As a result, during the V OAS General Assembly (Washington, May 1975) a conference to discuss proposed alterations in the Rio Treaty was called, to be held on July 16 to 25, 1975 in San Jose da Costa Rica<sup>438</sup>. Amongst other points, article 17 concerning the two thirds majority to revoke any coercive measure taken by the American States against a certain State was to be discussed.

Despite being a crucial step in the easing of the lifting of sanctions against Cuba, the introduction of the simple majority vote would not yet be enough to immediately bestow this outcome. It would still be necessary to wait for about 2 years to have the alterations implemented. Therefore, during the above mentioned Conference to examine the Rio Treaty, the Mexican delegation presented a resolution summoning a new Meeting of

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437 "Otimismo causou derrota de Cuba", by Milano Lopes. *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 13, 1974.

438 RABASA, Emilio O. *Op. cit.*, pp. 145-147.

Consultation. Its purpose was to introduce a mechanism allowing the normalization of American-Cuban relations before the Inter-American System. This resolution stated that “the Meeting of Consultation of the Foreign Ministers (...) decides (...) to leave the ITRA member-states free to normalize or to conduct its relations with the Cuban Republic at the level and in the form that each State considers appropriate”<sup>439</sup>.

Before examining the results of this Meeting of Consultation, I shall firstly point to the Brazilian stance with regards to the ITRA reform. At first, Brazil opposed the calling of the conference to execute the alterations in the Rio Treaty, since there were obvious attempts to connect those alterations to the lifting of sanctions against Cuba<sup>440</sup> – Brazil had indeed abstained in the vote to call the meeting. However, when the conference took place, Brazil finally backed the proposal to introduce a simple majority system of voting in place of the two thirds quorum<sup>441</sup>. It was imperative not to isolate itself even further from the Latin American community. Particularly if Cuban readmission to the Inter-American System was not directly associated with the vote, as had happened during the Quito Meeting.

As for the XVI Meeting of Consultation (San Jose, 1975), I shall stress that only a few – but significant – questions had changed since the XV Meeting (Quito, 1974). The majority of Latin Americans were still very much in favor of the normalization of relations with the Castro regime. Argentina, for instance, which had recently left a conservative military dictatorship behind, and was now under the controversial Peronist administration

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439 “A novidade desse encontro: várias decisões”. *Jornal da Tarde*, July 22, 1975. Translated by the author.

440 “Caso Cubano”. *Jornal do Brasil*, May 30, 1975.

441 Only Chile and Paraguay voted against the proposal. “Dominicanos votarão a favor de Cuba”. *Jornal do Brasil*, July 24, 1975.

(Juan Perón, October/1973-July/1974, and Maria Estela Perón, July/1974-March/1976), signed a series of economic agreements with Havana. Washington, in its turn, was sending new signs of flexibility regarding the issue. In March 1975, Henry Kissinger gave a speech playing down Washington's apprehension regarding Cuban action in Latin America<sup>442</sup>. Among other aspects, one reason explains the new US stance regarding the debate. The canceling of the third meeting to discuss the so called "New Dialogue" between the US and the Latin American countries demonstrated the difficulties encountered on the road to improving their relationship. Washington seemed to have seen that a softening of its position towards Cuba would be a strategy to please the Latin Americans. Since it was feasible to abide by the American Republics majority without actually changing its unilateral position towards Havana, Washington gave indications that she was going to vote in favor of the Mexican proposal for "Freedom of Action"<sup>443</sup>.

Finally, the XVI Meeting of Consultation took place in San Jose on July 29, 1975. Then, by 16 votes in favor, 3 against (Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) and two abstentions (Brazil and Nicaragua), a resolution stating the non-intervention principle and declaring all ITRA state-members free to conduct their relations with Cuba, was finally approved.

#### 4.7. Conclusion

Compared with Quito, four countries changed their votes in San Jose: Bolivia, Guatemala, Haiti and the US. From the vantage point of Bolivia, Guatemala and Haiti, they considered that by doing so they were not giving the Castro regime any sort of

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442 Speech delivered in Houston, Texas, March 01, 1975, quoted by MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 252.

443 "A novidade desse encontro: várias decisões". *Jornal da Tarde*, July 07, 1975.

“certificate of international good behavior”<sup>444</sup>. As for the US, its vote in favor of the Mexican resolution did not mean the end of the US embargo on Havana since Washington had actually imposed its sanctions on October 20, 1960, with the general authority of the 1948 Export Control Act, rather than by the American Multilateral Organization<sup>445</sup>. Washington’s new attitude contributed in enhancing its image in the eyes of the majority of Latin Americans. As put by a State Department official, “The thing that’s changed is U.S. policy in the OAS. U.S. bilateral policy has not changed”<sup>446</sup>.

In so doing, the Brazilian decision to stick to abstention shows that whereas in the past “Cuba’s political and military role in the region and its strategic implications were perceived in the same way by the Armed Forces of Brazil and its counterparts in the United States”<sup>447</sup>, in the mid-70s the remaining Brazilian military opposition as opposed to a more flexible United States position with regards Cuba, indicated that Brazil’s stance was not determined by Washington’s interests.

Moreover, I claim that the option of pleasing, or rather, of not provoking the regime’s constituencies, most of whom favored the maintenance of the opposition against Cuba, should not be seen as merely a compliance with the regime’s ideology. In fact, the decision to abstain in the vote cannot be disregarded. In this sense, although the abstention was a compromise made by Geisel towards the more conservative segment of the regime, it was also a step forward to a more flexible attitude towards the issue. This hypothesis is confirmed when we examine the decision to abstain once again during the San Jose meeting.

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444 RAMOS, Ana Tereza L. *Op. cit.*

445 MORLEY, H. M. *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

446 *Idem*, p. 252.

447 COSTA, Gino F. *Op. cit.*, p. 36.



By abstaining again, Brazil did not return to its traditional combative position against Cuba. Indeed, the arguments given by Silveira when he explained Brazilian vote during the Quito meeting were based on the idea that the lifting of the sanctions against Cuba and the reinforcement of the Inter-American System should be handled on different occasions. Not being so, Brazil would abstain in order not to vote against the ITRA reform. In so doing, as long as at San Jose both questions were handled separately, Brazil could indeed vote in favor of the ITRA reform and against the lifting of sanctions, if it wanted so. By not doing so, the repeat of abstention reveals that 1) during the Quito meeting the position in favor of the lifting of sanctions was encapsulated by abstention for the sake of other goals of the “Responsible Pragmatism”; and that 2) although the repeat of abstention in San Jose should not be seen as evidence that the country was not bound by ideological considerations any longer<sup>448</sup>, after all by abstaining the government was still complying with the internal opposition to the Castro regime, it shows that a milder stance towards the issue, closer to how Geisel and Silveira appraised it, was finally incorporated to the country’s foreign policy.

Therefore, I stress that the attitude of restraint from a clear-cut change on the Brazilian stance, taken at the very moment when Geisel decided on the issue, after having gone through the stages of definition of the problem, the identification and the weighing of alternatives, was a crucial element in the explanation of the final decision. In other words, although Souto Maior was correct when he said that “apparently those who were in charge of our foreign policy did not consider that the potential diplomatic gains were enough to compensate for the domestic drawbacks stemming

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448 NAZARIO, O. “Pragmatism in Brazilian Foreign Policy the Geisel years (1974-1979)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

from the resumption of relations with Cuba<sup>449</sup>, the compromise around the abstention made feasible the adoption and endurance of a less dogmatic position towards Havana, without causing too much harm to the Brazilian regime's stability.

## **4.8. Appendix III**

### **Chronology**

**January 1959** – Cuban Revolution

**October 20, 1960** – US implement an embargo against Havana, by the general authority of the 1948 Export Control Act.

**January 3, 1961** – US sever diplomatic relations with Cuba.

**17-19 April, 1961** – Ill-fated US sponsored invasion of the Bay of Pigs.

**January 22-31, 1962** – VIII Meeting of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers (Punta del Este) to discuss the alleged Cuban violation of human rights and conducting of subversive activities in the continent. A declaration stating that the principles of Marxism-Leninism were incompatible with those of the Inter-American System was unanimously approved. Moreover, resolutions suspending trade in arms and implements of war with Cuba, and expelling the current Cuban government from the Inter-American System, were also approved. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico abstain.

**February 14, 1962** – Cuba is evicted from the OAS.

**October 1962** – The Cuban Missile Crisis.

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449 MAIOR, L. P. S. *Op. cit.*, p. 26. Translated by the author.

**December 1963** – Venezuela appeals to the OAS Permanent Council against what she described as Cuban intervention and aggression, by means of supplying arms to Venezuelan terrorists.

**May 13, 1964** – Brazil breaks off diplomatic relations with Cuba by alleging, among other reasons, that Cuba was attempting to export its revolution to other countries of the hemisphere.

**July 21-26, 1964** – IX Meeting of Consultation (Washington) following the reports of the OAS Committee giving evidences of Cuban sending of arms, training guerrillas, and seeking to overthrow the Venezuelan government. A resolution suspending diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba is approved. Mexico, Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay voted against.

**March 1973** – US and Cuba reach an agreement on anti-hijacking measures.

**February 1974** – First meeting between Latin American representatives and the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to discuss the relationship between them (Tlatelolco, Mexico).

**April 1974** – Second meeting gathering Latin American representatives and Henry Kissinger towards the creation of a new pattern of relationship between them (Washington). On this occasion the Cuban question is raised and a resolution proposing consultations about the issue is approved by consensus.

**April 1974** – Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela address a resolution to the Permanent Council of the OAS proposing the calling of a Meeting of Consultation to vote the lifting of sanctions against Cuba.

**April 1974** – Washington issues a license to three US subsidiaries – Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler – to export to Cuba through their Argentinean subsidiaries.

**September 1974** – The Permanent Council of OAS votes unanimously for the call of the XV Meeting of Consultation to be held in Quito on November 1974.

**November 8-12, 1974** – XV Meeting of Consultation (Quito) summoned to discuss Cuban readmission to the Inter-American System. Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela voted for the end of the embargo. Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay vote against it. The remaining six countries – Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua and the US abstain. As a result, the resolution is not approved since it lacked the necessary two thirds majorities.

**December 1974** – Following the adoption of the Trade Reform Act by the US government, which, by increasing US protectionism directly affected Latin American exports, all Latin American countries suspend talks on the “New Dialogue” as a protest against what they considered “discriminatory” provisions in favor of the developing countries.

**May 1975** – During the V OAS General Assembly (Washington) a conference to execute proposed alterations in the Rio Treaty was called to be held on July 16 to 25, 1975, in San Jose de Costa Rica. Amongst other points, article 17 determining a two thirds majority to revoke any coercive measure taken by the American States against a certain State would be discussed. Brazil abstains in the vote to summon this meeting.

**July 16 to 25, 1975** – Conference to execute the alterations in the Rio Treaty. Except for Chile and Paraguay, who vote against the proposal, all countries back the proposal introducing a simple majority system of vote in substitution to the two thirds one. During the Conference, the Mexican delegation presents a resolution summoning a new Meeting of Consultation. Its purpose is to

introduce a mechanism allowing the normalization of American-Cuban relations before the Inter-American System, called “Freedom of Action”.

**July 29, 1975** – XVI Meeting of Consultation (San Jose) when, by 16 votes in favor, 3 against (Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) and two abstentions (Brazil and Nicaragua), a resolution stating the non-intervention principle and declaring all ITRA state-members free to conduct their relations with Cuba, is finally approved. By so doing, the embargo imposed against Cuba in 1964 is immediately nullified.



## 5. THE RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Chapter IV claimed that despite anti-Communism being a central element in the military regime, Geisel's government succeeded in the implementation of a slightly more pragmatic stance towards the Castro regime. In so doing, I shall ask if the same has happened towards other foreign policy issues involving Communist regimes. And if so, how that was possible, since Geisel's government was supposed to be a continuation of the "revolutionary process" inaugurated by the military coup in 1964<sup>450</sup>, in which anti-Communism was a central characteristic. The decision to restore diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) taken just three months before Brazil abstained in the vote to lift sanctions against Cuba, on August 15, 1974 is a case to be scrutinized.

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450 Geisel's speech on the ceremony of sworn in, March 15, 1974, pp. 27-30, pp. 29-30 in BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, Ernesto. *Discursos*, v. 1, Assessoria de Imprensa e Relações Públicas da Presidência da República, Brasília, 1975.

I have already mentioned the view stressing that whereas for global issues “Brazilian behavior could be ruled by pragmatic realism in the defense of the interests of the state”, since they did not put “the political survival of the regime (...) at stake”, in “Latin America, where the geographical proximity increases the impact of other countries’ domestic political processes on the Brazilian territory, the policy of ‘ideological frontiers’ appeared to be a more effective way of maintaining the political-ideological equilibrium of the region”<sup>451</sup>. Although this assumption is correct, as far as Latin America is concerned, the creed of the existence of a “pragmatic realism” for global issues overrode the actual opposition Geisel had to face in order to accomplish certain decisions, such as the normalization of relations with Beijing.

Likewise, there is no doubt that Beijing’s readmission to the United Nations (October 1971), and Washington’s rapprochement to the PRC as illustrated in the signing of the “Shanghai Communiqué” (February 1972)<sup>452</sup> very much contributed to the easing of relations between the US and the PRC, and as a result to a new approach towards Beijing from most Western countries. However, Brazil’s stance towards the US as taken by the Geisel government onwards did not automatically attach Brazil to US foreign policy. Indeed, as far as Beijing was concerned there were those who believed that Brasilia should restore diplomatic relations before Washington did so. As Azeredo da Silveira put it, if Brazil had restored its diplomatic relations with the PRC one day after the US, the decision would have lost much of its importance<sup>453</sup>.

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451 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazil Foreign Policy - Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Nashville, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, August 1986, p. 124.

452 YAHUDA, Michael. *Towards the End of Isolationism: China’s Foreign Policy after Mao*, London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1983, p. 40.

453 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 15, 1979, CPDOC.



It is also true that Brazil's policy of diversifying its dependence and of searching for a stronger position within the international system also accounts for the decision to normalize Brazil's relationship with the PRC. Indeed, the economic and political potential exhibited in the Chinese domestic market and Chinese position within the international community, turned the PRC into a very promising partner for Brazil. Nevertheless, although this fact was already clear to Brazilian decision makers during the Médici administration (1964-1974), that was not enough to move this government towards the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing. Moreover, even during Geisel's government, this fact was not sufficient to convince the entire government about the advantage of normalizing relations with the country. The years when the PRC adopted a foreign policy of encouraging revolution wherever possible<sup>454</sup> had to be overcome by the Brazilian authorities if the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries was to be implemented.

It is the hypothesis of this chapter that the above mentioned factors – which will be discussed later on – can indeed explain the feasibility and convenience of Brazil's new foreign policy towards China. In other words, it seems that by and large the effects of geographical distance on the impact of other countries political processes on Brazilian politics, Beijing's readmission to the UN and the Western rapprochement to the PRC, and Brazil's policy of diversifying its dependence were crucial for the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing. Nevertheless, although there were domestic and external elements stimulating and justifying a change in the course of Brazilian foreign policy, the analysis suggests

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454 HARRIS, Lilian C. & WORDEN, Robert L. "China's Third World Role" and HAMRIN, Carol Lee. "Domestic Components and China's Evolving Three Worlds Theory", pp. 34-52, p. 40 in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *China and the Third World - champion or challenger?*, London & Sidney, Croom Helm Limited, 1986, pp. 1-13, p. 3.

that, although necessary, those elements were not sufficient to endorse the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing. The truth is that the more conservative supporters of the regime had to be removed or have their power neutralized, as an essential requirement to the accomplishment of the rapprochement. I claim that it was necessary to intervene in the process of decision making so as to achieve such a result. Hence, President Geisel had to take the power of veto away from those who supposedly could prevent a change in the Brazilian position.

In order to examine this question, I will firstly set out the historical background of the Brasilia-Beijing relationship from the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949 to the end of Médici's government in March 1974, when the two countries made the first signs towards the restoration of diplomatic relations. Subsequently I shall discuss the international scenario of the 1970s that brought the rapprochement of Western countries to the PRC to the agenda, as well as scrutinize alleged advantages and shortcomings for Brazil in taking the same step. Then, the process of policy making, from the appraisal of the question to the endorsement of the decision to resume diplomatic relations with Beijing will be examined. In so doing, e.g., by looking inside the "black box", my aim is to explain the state behavior looking at the unit's behavior, since I claim that neither the international system can solely explain Brazilian state behavior; nor can the Brazilian decision be explained from the perspective that sees the state as a single agent responding rationally to the situation.

### **5.1. Historical Background (1949-1969)**

The proclamation of the PRC on October 1, 1949, did not immediately affect Brazil's relationship with Beijing which,

although amicable, was characterized by a very low profile<sup>455</sup>. Although the Brazilian Ambassador to China left the country for Japan two months after the Chinese Communist Party took over the control of the Chinese mainland, he alleged security, rather than political reasons in doing so<sup>456</sup>. In addition, despite Chiang Kai-shek resuming the presidency of China on March 1, 1950 in Taiwan, Brazil kept its representative to China in Tokyo until late 1952<sup>457</sup>. Despite lack of Brazilian support for the seating of Beijing in the UN at the expense of Taipei, it was only in December 1952 that the Brazilian Ambassador finally reassumed his position as Brazilian representative to the Chinese government<sup>458</sup>. He was then in Taipei. From then on Brazil was clearly and totally committed to Nationalist China.

The main reason for Brazil finally taking this attitude can be ascribed to the US involvement in the Korean War. In spite of Getúlio Vargas's (1951-1954) resistance against US pressures for Brazilian participation in the Asiatic conflict<sup>459</sup>, his government could not avoid taking an unequivocal position against the government of Beijing, since Brazil was strongly committed to the United States within the Cold War framework.

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455 The only two significant agreements signed by the two countries were those that substitute the current Commerce and Maritime Agreement of 1881 by a new and larger Friendship Agreement, in 1943 and those signed in 1946, after the visit of First Lady Mrs. Chiang Kai-shek to Rio de Janeiro, concerning Cultural Relations. RODRIGUES, José H. *Interesse Nacional e Política Externa*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Civilização Brasileira, 1966, p. 131.

456 AMADO, André Mattoso Maia. *O Reconhecimento Diplomático da República Popular da China*. Ministério das Relações Exteriores, VIII Curso de Altos Estudos, 1984, p.16.

457 RODRIGUES, José H. *Op. cit.*, p. 132.

458 Telegram no.1, Brazilian Embassy to Taipei, December 18, 1952, Apud AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, p.25

459 For more information about this episode see Maria Celina S. D'Araújo. *O Segundo Governo Vargas (1951-1954) - democracia, partidos e crise política*, Rio de Janeiro, Zahar Editores, 1982, pp. 148-159. CHEIBUB, Zairo B. *A Guerra da Coreia e as Relações Brasil-Estados Unidos (1951-1953)*, Niterói, Departamento de Ciências Sociais, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1980, paper.

However, President Jânio Quadros's aim of pursuing a pattern of foreign policy less attached to a Western approach in general and to the United States in particular, in addition to his plans to enlarge Brazilian commercial partners<sup>460</sup>, prompted the search for a better relationship with Beijing at the outset of the 1960s. As a result, this government decided to modify the position held since 1951 of opposing the inclusion of the question of Beijing's readmission to the United Nations on the agenda<sup>461</sup>, and supported the resolution presented to the XVI General Assembly to do so<sup>462</sup>. As much as other decisions on foreign policy taken under Quadros's government, the latter faced domestic opposition. According to some critics it was not advisable to be identified with an "expansionist" country which would probably not become a very profitable commercial partner, at the expenses of a more trustworthy relationship with Taiwan<sup>463</sup>. As for those whose argument was concerned not with the convenience of changing the Brazilian position regarding the two Chinas, but rather with the appropriate time to do so, the suggestion was to wait for the time when this question could be solved without the need to expose the country to any misleading interpretation of its stance regarding the Cold War<sup>464</sup>.

As part of President Quadros' decision to strengthen Brazilian ties with the PRC, he authorized his deputy, João Goulart, to go to Beijing escorted by a large group of officials and private sector representatives (August, 1961). Once there, João Goulart signed a Trade and Payments Agreement with Beijing, which led to the

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460 RODRIGUES, José H. *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

461 *Idem*, p. 150.

462 "O Brasil quer que a ONU estude a admissão da China". *O Estado de São Paulo*, February 23, 1961.

463 "As duas Chinas", by M. Paulo Filho. *O Globo*, February 25, 1961.

464 Telegram from Brazilian Ambassador to Taipei, João Batista Pereira to the Foreign Office, February 06, 1961; Official letter from Minister Counselor of Brazilian Embassy to Tokyo, João Augusto de Araújo Castro, February 09, 1961, Apud AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, pp.53-54.

visit of a commercial delegation to Brazil in 1962<sup>465</sup>. In addition, he declared to the press that Brazil was going to vote in favor of the proposal supporting the admission of Beijing to the UN which, eventually, Brazil did not do<sup>466</sup>.

Eventually the overthrow of President João Goulart (March 1964), who had taken over the presidency as a result of Quadros' renunciation in August 1961, led to a radical change in the position regarding the PRC. Together with all the other steps taken by the new military regime to expurgate the Independent Foreign Policy which Goulart had continued after Quadros, Chinese officials in charge of setting up a commercial representation and of preparing a Chinese economic and trade exhibition in Brazil, as well as journalists from the Hsinhua News Agency (nine in total), were arrested accused of espionage and subversive activities on national territory<sup>467</sup>. Indeed, there were even those who claimed that the strikes held during 1963 in Brazil, were organized and inspired by the Chinese Communist Party<sup>468</sup>. By adopting such a policy towards

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465 RODRIGUES, José H. *Op. cit.*, pp. 136-137.

466 *Idem*, pp. 148-149.

467 Despite several messages sent both by Chinese government and Chinese organizations, as well as by several newspapers all over the world, the Brazilian government took five weeks to make public the alleged evidence for the accusations against the Chinese officials. Amongst other items was a letter giving instructions to them about who to contact in Brazil for the interest of the revolution, a guide explaining how to prepare and use invisible ink and a pistol with a silencer. Following that, the Chinese were sentenced to 10 years in prison, in December 1964. This led Beijing to issue its strongest complaint to the Brazilian government against what it considered a frame-up against the Chinese. In April 1965, they were finally expelled from Brazil by a presidential act. *Idem*, p. 140 and 154. "Anti-China Outrage in Brazil". *Peking Review*, April 24, 1964, v. VII, no. 17, pp. 9-12. "In Solidarity with Chinese Victims in Brazil". *Peking Review*, May 1, 1964, v. VII, no. 18, pp. 23-25. "Forgery in Brazil". *Peking Review*, May 29, 1964, v. VII, no. 22, pp. 11-13. "China protests to Brazilian Authorities". *Peking Review*, January 1, 1965, v. VII, no. 1, pp. 22-23.

468 RODRIGUES, José H. *Op. cit.*, p. 154. For an account of the actual Chinese influence on Brazilian political parties and organizations, which was basically restricted to the Communist Party of Brazil (Partido Comunista do Brasil/PC do B), a dissident group of the Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro/PCB), see QUARTIM, João. *Dictatorship and Armed Struggle in Brazil*, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 137-209.

the PRC as part of the Cold War inspired foreign policy of the military regime<sup>469</sup>, the new government halted the path towards the normalization of relations between the two countries<sup>470</sup>.

In the following years the Sino-Brazilian relationship did not change. Indeed, the lack of international inputs in favor of a reassessment of the Chinese regime aggravated by the years of Cultural Revolution (1966-1968), and the maintenance of the same Brazilian pattern of foreign policy did not move the Castello Branco (1964-1967) and the Costa e Silva governments (1967-1969) to take any steps towards improving the relationship with Beijing. However, the outcome of US rapprochement to the PRC and the increasing similarities between Beijing and Brasilia on some important international issues, paved the way for a possible change in Brazil's position towards the Chinese Communist regime. It is to those two aspects that I will now turn.

## 5.2. Beijing and the international relations in the 1970s

As I have mentioned in the preceding chapters, several adjustments in the international arena were taking place at the beginning of the 1970s. Amongst them, the dramatic reversal of the relationship between the PRC and the US, and those countries relationship with the USSR, are points to be highlighted. Indeed, the worsening of Beijing's relationship with Moscow, which was intensified after the invasion of Prague (August 1968) and the clashes on the Sino-Soviet border (March 1969), led the PRC to approach the United States as a way of inhibiting Soviet

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469 MARTINS, Carlos E. "A Evolução da Política Externa Brasileira na Década de 64-74". *Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 12, Apr./May/Jun. 1975, pp. 55-98, p. 58, 66 and 68.

470 For an example of Beijing's account of the Brazilian military coup see *Renmin Ribao Observer* editorial published on April 30, 1964 and translated by *Peking Review*. "Lessons from the Reactionary Military Coup in Brazil". *Peking Review*, May 8, 1964, v. VII, no. 19, pp. 29-32.

expansionist threats<sup>471</sup>. In so doing, Beijing could improve its position in Asia, and reestablish the balance of power in the region. Moreover, the fulfillment of the post-Cultural Revolution plans for the modernization of the Chinese economy was strongly dependent on the enlargement of the PRC foreign relations.

Likewise, Washington's move towards Beijing also had Moscow as a "hidden actor". Since the Korean War, US policy towards the PRC had been based on a strategy of isolationism and containment<sup>472</sup>. Once the tension in the Sino-Soviet relationship became irreversible in the late sixties, Washington saw the rapprochement to Beijing as a means for pressuring Moscow into collaborating with their plans for détente<sup>473</sup>. In addition, Washington's rapprochement to Beijing was a product as well as a cause of the *Vietnamization* program embraced by the Nixon government, e.g., the process of disengagement of American forces from Indochina. Indeed, "the American pursuit of a *rapprochement* with China was regarded by Nixon and Kissinger as the necessary complement to their policy of politico-military retrenchment in Asia. (...) Thus the improvement of relations on the great power level, in this case China, was perceived as fostering the stable regional conditions so as to permit an orderly devolution of American power to nascent 'middle powers'"<sup>474</sup>. In other words, US extrication from Indochina was the basis for a new pattern of

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471 SUTTER, Robert G. *China-Watch: toward Sino-American reconciliation*, Baltimore & London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, pp. 83-102.

472 FREEDMAN JR., Chas W. "The Process of Rapprochement: Achievements and Problems" in Gene T. Hsiao & Michael Witunski (Eds.), *Sino-American Normalization and its Policy Implications*, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1983, pp. 1-27, p. 1.

473 BARON, M. "The United States and China" in Robert C. Gray & Stanley J. Michalak, Jr. (Eds.) *American Foreign Policy since Détente*, New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1984, pp. 38-53, pp. 40-41.

474 LITWAK, Robert S. *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine - American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability (1969-1976)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 133-134. Italics in the original.

relationship with Beijing, as much as the latter was a requisite for the success of the US disengagement. It is within this framework that we shall view Washington policy towards Southeast Asia, which ambiguously combined significant escalation of air war over North Vietnam, and military incursion in Cambodia and Laos, with the strength of the South Vietnamese Army as a counterbalance for US combat forces disengagement<sup>475</sup>.

Hence, after a period of initiatives taken by both sides towards a new pattern of relations<sup>476</sup>, Washington and Beijing signed the “Shanghai Communiqué” during Nixon’s visit to China in February 1972. In this joint statement, despite their differences on issues such as the political status of Taiwan, to say nothing about ideological divergences, both sides committed themselves to not seeking hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region as well as to opposing any attempt at such a policy by any country or group of countries<sup>477</sup>.

Another important event in the period concerns the change of the Chinese stance towards the Third World. Indeed, trying to take advantage of the split with the Soviet Union and to avoid likely isolation due to the policy of détente between the latter and the United States, the PRC sought to become closer to the Third World countries through a nationalist posture rather than through socialism<sup>478</sup> or through professed support for what she considered wars of national liberation, as she used to do until the late 1960s<sup>479</sup>. In summary, by definitively abandoning her policy

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475 *Idem*, pp. 117-135.

476 FREEDMAN JR., Chas W. *Op. cit.*, pp. 2-6.

477 YAHUDA, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

478 HAMRIN, Carol L. “Domestic Components and China’s Evolving Three Worlds Theory” in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

479 For more information about the different phases of Chinese foreign policy see YAHUDA, M. *Op. cit.*, pp. 25-43.



of support for revolutionary movements around the world<sup>480</sup>, the PRC increased her chances of achieving a rapprochement with Western countries.

There are no doubts that the new US policy towards China together with the ensuing PRC readmission to the UN (October, 1971), helped to legitimize Beijing's government in the eyes of Western countries. In fact, between October 1971 and December 1972, a group of 23 countries recognized Beijing to the detriment of Taipei<sup>481</sup>. As far as Brazil is concerned, in addition to the likely influence this scenario might have had in its appraisal of Beijing, I shall also examine more closely the variables which touch upon Brazilian interests. Indeed, despite ideological differences, it is possible to point to the somewhat similar stances taken by Brazil and the PRC regarding issues in the international agenda.

### 5.3. Brazil and China in the 1970s

It is worth noting that both Brazil and the PRC used to embrace, even if only as a platitude, the three Ds principle – Disarmament, Decolonization and Development – as a precept of their foreign policies<sup>482</sup>. In addition, it is possible to trace a correspondence between the two diplomacies by comparing Brazilian condemnation of the freezing of world power, e.g., against a kind of condominium of power whose aim was to

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480 HARRIS, Lilian C. & WORDEN, Robert L. "China's Third World Role" in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

481 On this order, Belgium, Peru, Lebanon, Rwanda, United Arab Republic, Island, Cyprus, Malta, Mexico, Argentina, Greece, Guiana, Togo, Japan, Federal Republic of Germany, Maldives, Madagascar, Luxembourg, Jamaica, Zaire, Chad, Australia and New Zealand.

482 On the Brazilian side, these principles were firstly addressed in 1963 in the XVIII UN General Assembly by Ambassador Araújo Castro. ARAUJO CASTRO, J. Augusto de. "Desarmamento, Descolonização e Desenvolvimento" in AMADO, Rodrigo. (Org.) *Araújo Castro*, Brasília, Ed. UnB, 1982, pp. 25-42. On Chinese side, see Samuel S. K. *China, the United and World Order*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 169-170.

freeze the current distribution of power and wealth<sup>483</sup>, and the Chinese anti-hegemony posture adopted against North-American and Soviet world policies<sup>484</sup>. Furthermore, it is also possible to draw a connection between the Chinese thesis of self-reliance (which could be read as “China’s policy of not becoming attached to any nation or bloc of nations”<sup>485</sup>), and the Brazilian thesis of not being a “satellitable” country, that is, the position of not being committed to any country beyond Brazil’s so called national interests<sup>486</sup>.

Regarding both countries’ stances on particular issues under debate by the international community during the seventies, their views on nuclear policy, sea law, environment and human rights are worth noting.

With regards to the nuclear issue, the Chinese position was similar to Brazil’s, despite the PRC having nuclear capability since 1964<sup>487</sup>. Like Brazil, the PRC had refused to sign the Non-

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483 ARAUJO CASTRO, J. Augusto de. “O Congelamento do Poder Mundial”. *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Políticos*, 33, Janeiro 1972, pp. 7-30 and ARAÚJO CASTRO, João Augusto de. “The UN and the freezing of the international power structure”. *International Organization*, 26, 1972, pp. 158-166, p. 163.

484 SMITH, Sarah-Ann. “China’s Third World Policy as a Counterpoint to the First and Second Worlds” in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 53-74, p. 71.

485 *Idem*, p. 79.

486 “According to Silveira’s words, in broadcasted speech, March 28, 1974”. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, no. 1, Brasília, Mar./Apr. 1974, p. 24.

487 In this respect, it is worth noting that Beijing tried to give other Latin American countries, who unlike Brazil had signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty, her assurance regarding the absence of any intentions of employing her nuclear capabilities against them: “Sensing among the Latin American countries strong support for and apprehension about China’s stand on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the then Foreign Minister Chi P’eng-fei issued an official statement on November 14, 1972, declaring: ‘China will never use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear Latin American countries and the Latin American nuclear weapon-free zone, nor will China test, manufacture, produce, stockpile, install or deploy nuclear weapons in these countries or in this zone, or send her means of transportation and delivery carrying nuclear weapons to traverse the territory, territorial sea or territorial air space of Latin American countries’”. PR, no. 47 (November 24, 1972), p. 7. Quoted by Samuel S. K. “China, the United and World Order”. *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

Proliferation Nuclear Treaty (NPT) using the argument that this treaty had been “designed only to disarm the non-nuclear countries while maintaining the arms of the fully equipped nuclear countries”, according to an official Chinese statement at the United Nations<sup>488</sup>. Moreover, along with Brazil the PRC adopted an apparently contradictory position simultaneously opposing the NPT while strongly supporting the nuclear-free zone thesis<sup>489</sup>. In spite of the different motives which led Brasilia and Beijing to embrace this position, at the end of the day such a stance simultaneously constituted a positive attitude taken in favor of the arms control and disarmament issues and a counterbalance to their strong opposition to the NPT.

Likewise, China's stance on the issue of territorial waters was similar to that of Brazil. Based on her own Declaration Regarding Territorial Waters issued in 1958, the government of the PRC strongly supported the sea reform law embraced by all Latin American coastal countries, which claimed a 200-mile limit for territorial waters. In so doing, Beijing embraced the struggle against the so-called maritime hegemony of the superpowers, in calling a United Nations Conference on the Law, finally held in Chile in 1974<sup>490</sup>.

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488 UNDoc. A/C. 1/PV. 2095 (November 21, 1975), p. 38. Quoted by *Idem*, p. 172.

489 For Brazilian nuclear policy see GRANDI, Jorge Alberto. *Regime Militaire et Politique Extérieure du Brésil: l'Accord de Coopération Nucleaire Germano-Brésilien du 1975*. Ph.D. Thesis, Paris, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, 1985. Maria Regina Soares de L. *Op. cit.* and WROBEL, Paulo S. *Brazil, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Latin America as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone*. Ph.D. Thesis, King's College, University of London, London, 1992. As for the Chinese position towards this issue, see Samuel S. K. “China, the United and World Order”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 172-173 and WORDEN, Robert L. “International Organizations: China's Third World Policy in Practice” in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 75-99, pp. 86-87.

490 For more information about Chinese policy of sea, see GRENFIELD, Jeanette. *China and the Law of the Sea, Air and Environment*. NOORDHOFF, Sijthoff J. *Alphen aan den Rijn*, 1979, pp. 51-81. WORDEN, Robert L. “International Organizations: China's Third World Policy in Practice” in Lilian C. H. & Robert L. W. (Eds.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 75-99, p. 87. KIM, Samuel S. “China, the United and World Order”. *Op. cit.*, p. 169 and for Brazil sea policy, see ARAÚJO CASTRO, Luiz Augusto. *O Brasil e o Novo Direito do Mar, Mar*

Another important aspect concerning the two countries' agreement on the international debate was related to the environmental issue. During the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, June 1972), both countries strongly supported those theses arguing that the environmental problems of less developed countries stemmed mainly from their economic underdevelopment. Hence, they should firstly develop their economies, build their modern industry, and safeguard their sovereignty and independence to solve their own environmental problems. Moreover, Brazil and the PRC came together when both strongly opposed the allegation that the population growth was, by itself, a cause of environmental deterioration<sup>491</sup>.

A further similarity regarding the position of both countries on the international agenda might have strengthened Brazil's interest in becoming closer to the PRC. According to Beijing's policy of keeping a good relationship with General Pinochet government (1973-1990) due to her interest in building up an anti-Soviet coalition<sup>492</sup>, and also due to her own problems on the subject, the PRC refused to support any UN resolution against Chilean human rights abuse<sup>493</sup>. This Chinese position would also have benefitted Brasília since the latter was a potential target for criticism from the international community due to the systematic

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*Territorial e Zona Econômica Exclusiva*, Instituto de Pesquisa de Relações Internacionais, Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Brasília, 1989. MORRIS, M. *International Politics and the Sea: the case of Brazil*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1979.

491 For Chinese policy see KIM, Samuel S. "China, the United and World Order". *Op. cit.*, p. 489. GREENFIELD, J. *Op. cit.*, pp. 205-227. As for Brazilian stance, see ARAÚJO CASTRO, Luiz Augusto. "Environment and Development: the case of the less developed countries". *International Organization*, 26, no. 2, Spring 1972, pp. 401-416. SANDERS, Thomas G. "Development and Environment: Brazil and the Stockholm Conference in *American University Field Staff (East Coast South America Series)*, XVII, no. 7, June 1973.

492 YAHUDA, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

493 KIM, Samuel S. "China, the United and World Order". *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

violations of human rights, in addition to favoring the Brazilian military regime because of its similarities to the rightwing military Chilean government.

It is within this scenario that the first signs of a possible change in Brazilian stance were signaled. Indeed, despite the strong anti-Communist stance that characterized the government of President Médici, a sort of “behind the scenes” reappraisal of Beijing’s position in the international system was inaugurated. However, as I shall demonstrate, this was not yet enough to move Brazil towards a real change in its stance towards Beijing.

#### 5.4. On the direction of a change

Behind the stance of maintaining opposition to Beijing’s readmission to the UN, a movement towards a new assessment of the question and, possibly, towards a future rapprochement can be identified during the Médici government. As a matter of fact, this reappraisal can be chiefly assigned to the studies made by Itamaraty which took the leadership to redirect Brazilian foreign policy. From 1969 to approximately 1971, the Brazilian Consulate in the British colony of Hong-Kong produced a series of reports about Beijing’s domestic politics and the consequences on her foreign policy<sup>494</sup>. The so-called “Hong-Kong Reports” asserted that despite the ideological radicalism sponsored by the Cultural Revolution (1966-1968), Beijing’s government had backed down from its former objective of sponsoring revolutionary movements around the world. Moreover, the reports pointed to the fact that with the end of the internal factional conflicts within the Chinese decision making arena, the way towards the adoption of a policy of developing relations with other countries regardless of their ideological stance, had been opened.

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494 ALMEIDA, Miguel Osório de. “Relatórios sobre a China”, Official letter no. 20, Brazilian Consulate in Hong Kong, January 1969, Apud. AMADO, André, *Op.Cit.*, pp.98-100.

As far as Brazil was concerned, the report of May 1971 pointed to the possibility of Beijing planning an implementation of a rapprochement policy towards Brasilia, as part of its new international strategy<sup>495</sup>. In addition, the report described the PRC's interests in Latin America, claiming that Beijing should not be seen as a threat to the political stability of the continent any longer.

Likewise, Itamaraty was also trying to “lay to rest the ghosts” of the conservative military in Brazil's domestic arena<sup>496</sup>. By giving lectures at the Higher War College and by publishing articles in the *Revista do Clube Militar* (a periodical issued by and mainly for the military class), Itamaraty intended to “prepare the ground” for the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing<sup>497</sup>. By way of example, Counsellor Bettencourt Bueno, who had been working on Asian issues for some time, once noted that even the more strongly anti-Communist countries would have to evaluate their national interests and to abandon their purely ideological position towards Beijing due to the new situation<sup>498</sup>. On another occasion, Bettencourt pointed to the Chinese decision of abandoning her policy of support for revolutionary movements around the world as evidence of the different stance taken by Beijing in her international relations<sup>499</sup>.

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495 Official letter no. 70, Brazilian Consulate in Hong Kong, May 05, 1971, *Idem*, pp. 101-102.

496 Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, former Head of the Asia, Africa and Oceania Department of Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

497 *O Estado de São Paulo*, March 31, 1974. BUENO, Carlos Antonio B. “O Panorama Asiático”. *Revista do Clube Militar*, Nov./Dec. 1973, pp. 8-9, p. 9; “O Conflito Leste-Oeste: Negociação e Confrontação”. *Revista do Clube Militar*, Jan./Feb. 1973, pp. 6-7 and “Política Exterior na República Popular da China”. *Revista do Clube Militar*, Jan./Feb. 1974, pp. 6-9.

498 BUENO, Carlos Antonio B. “O Panorama Asiático”. *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

499 BUENO, Carlos Antonio B. “Política Exterior na República Popular da China”. *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

The consequences of this campaign on the actual official stance taken by the government about Beijing are hard to establish. Some steps were indeed taken towards a more sympathetic behavior towards the Chinese government. Nevertheless, the Médici government did not move towards an actual rapprochement to China. As a result Brazil displayed rather contradictory behavior. At least two episodes illustrate this fact.

The first alteration to be noticed in the Brazilian position is related to its attitude towards China's readmission to the UN<sup>500</sup>. At the XXVI General Assembly (1971), when the PRC was finally readmitted to the organization, Brazil decided not to co-sponsor the North American "important question" resolution as it had been doing since 1961. In other words, Brazil did not back the US strategy of hampering the admission of Beijing through the resolution which considered the decision to change the representation of a country an "important question". By doing so, according to Article 18 in the UN Charter, the only way to carry out the change was with a two thirds majority which the PRC did not have<sup>501</sup>. To a certain extent the Brazilian decision not to support the North-American strategy can be explained by the negative prospects of this resolution then being accepted. Indeed, if we look to the Third World stance on the issue, the support for Beijing increased from 5% in 1955 to 23% in 1970<sup>502</sup>. Therefore, although the Brazilian government maintained its opposition to seating Beijing in the UN at the expense of Taipei, in contrast to other Latin American

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500 It is worth noting that although President Jânio Quadros had supported the inclusion of the issue of the PRC's readmission to the UN into the agenda, the Brazilian delegation voted against the resolution on seating Beijing and removing Taipei during the XVI UN General Assembly (1961).

501 WANG, Kuo-Chang. *United Nations voting on Chinese Representation*, Taipei, Institute of American Culture, Academia Sinica, 1984, pp. 59-61.

502 *Idem*, p. 85.

countries (Peru, Chile, Mexico and Ecuador)<sup>503</sup>, it sought to save itself from the vulnerable position of co-sponsoring a resolution predestined to fail<sup>504</sup>.

On the eve of this UN debate, however, when Brazil opposed the readmission of Beijing, the Brazilian Counsellor to Hong-Kong, Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, was authorized by the government to join a private commercial mission on its trip to the PRC. The mission was led by the entrepreneur Horácio Coimbra, President of Cia. Cacique de Café Solúvel, who Counsellor Holanda Cavalcanti knew from the time he used to work at the Brazilian Institute of Coffee (Instituto Brasileiro do Café/IBC)<sup>505</sup>. The presence of the Brazilian diplomat in the delegation had a strong significance, since he joined a mission which had been invited to take part at the half-yearly Canton Fair by the official Chinese organization, the China Export Commodities Fair (October/November 1971)<sup>506</sup>. In this sense, although Holanda Cavalcanti had gone on the trip as a “special guest”, e.g., without diplomatic qualification, it is indisputable that this episode denoted a Brazilian interest in examining the possibilities of a rapprochement with Beijing.

After Horácio Coimbra’s pioneering mission, a second one was sent to China in the following year (October, 1972). Led by the president of Association of Brazilian Exporters (Associação Brasileira dos Exportadores), businessman Giulite Coutinho, this

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503 *Idem*, p. 94.

504 By finally getting the necessary two thirds majority to reject the “important question” resolution – 59 against, 55 in favor (including Brazil) and 15 abstentions – it was finally possible to proceed to the simple majority vote which accepted Beijing readmission to the UN – 76 in favor, 35 against and 17 abstentions. *Idem*, pp. 136-137.

505 Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

506 “O Pragmatismo Sorridente”. *Veja*, August 21, 1974, p. 28.



mission was strongly supported by the then Secretary of Planning João Paulo dos Reis Velloso<sup>507</sup>.

In fact, Brazilian entrepreneurs strongly supported a rapprochement with Beijing<sup>508</sup>. Their pursuit for new markets concurred with the governmental policy of enhancing Brazilian exports. As a result – and also as a consequence of the US indication of wanting to improve their relationship with the PRC<sup>509</sup> – the General Secretariat of the National Security Council issued a report authorizing the lifting of the prohibition on Brazilian vessels from docking at Chinese harbors and vice-versa. By this time it was understood that as long as those activities were properly controlled, they would not threaten Brazilian “national security”<sup>510</sup>.

Nevertheless, those economic initiatives towards the PRC were not entirely endorsed by all Brazilian decision makers. By way of example, the then Finance Minister, Delfim Netto, declared that economic relations with China “1) were not practical because the Communist Chinese economy is controlled by the state; and 2) were not possible because the two countries do not have political relations”<sup>511</sup>.

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507 SILVA, Ricardo L. P. da. “Relacionamento Brasil-China: uma dimensão histórica”. *Ensaios de História Diplomática do Brasil (1930-1986)*. Cadernos do IPRI, no. 2, Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Instituto de Pesquisa de Relações Internacionais, Brasília, 1989, pp. 193-200, p. 197. Interview with João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1992. “O Brasil e a China Comunista”. *Jornal do Brasil*, October 1, 1972.

508 SILVA, Ricardo L. P. da. *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

509 In July 1969, Nixon eased travel and trade restrictions towards the PRC. COHEN, Warren I. *America's Response to China - a history of Sino-American relations*, New York, Columbia University Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1990, p. 196.

510 The process which led to this decision is reported on the following official documents: Note no. 6, Ministry of Transport, June 27, 1972; Report no. 247, Foreign Ministry, July 17, 1972; Note no. 151, NSC General Secretariat, December 17, 1972; Note no. 31, NSC General Secretariat, January 17, 1973; Note no. 312, NSC General Secretariat, October 18, 1973, Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, pp.112-116.

511 JOHNSON, C. “China and Latin America: new ties and tactics”. *Problems of Communism*, 21, no. 4, July-August 1972, p. 64.

In addition, there was a strong position in favor of the maintenance of relations with Taiwan. Indeed, at the same time Giulite Coutinho was on his mission to the PRC in October 1972, an official mission led by the Brazilian Chief of Staff, General Artur Duarte Fonseca, went to Taipei<sup>512</sup>.

Despite the commercial and political attractions, the ideology of national security still did not allow the normalization of relationship between Brazil and the PRC. As reported by the press, the decision to resume diplomatic relations with Beijing was still dependent on a “green light” coming from *Palácio do Planalto* (the presidential office), which was not switched on during Médici government<sup>513</sup>. Actually, even when Geisel took over and announced his plans to diversify and to make Brazilian international relations more pragmatic<sup>514</sup>, the political and economic prospects of a rapprochement with Beijing were not yet sufficiently positive to prompt the change. The analysis of the process which finally led to the resumption of diplomatic relations with the PRC reveals that it was indeed within the decision arena where the last bastion of resistance against a change on Brazilian relations with China had to be overcome. Hence, the resumption of relations between Brasilia and Beijing can be actually explained by the perspective which “sees the state’s behavior as the outcome of bargains (and other manoeuvre) among bureaucratic agencies”<sup>515</sup>, e.g., within the second debate proceeding “bottom-up” (nation State vs. bureaucracy).

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512 Telegrams no. 156 and 163, Foreign Ministry, September 14<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, pp.111-112.

513 “Revolução busca linha diplomática coerente”, by Luiz Barbosa. *Jornal do Brasil*, January 19, 1976.

514 “President E. Geisel speech during the 1<sup>st</sup> Cabinet Meeting, March 19, 1974” in BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, E. *Discursos*, v. 1, Assessoria de Imprensa e Relações Públicas da Presidência da República, Brasília, 1975, pp. 31-60, pp. 37-38.

515 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 9.

## 5.5. The moment of decision

According to the analyses presented so far, Brazil's decision to restore diplomatic relations with the PRC was taken after president Geisel obtained the approval from the majority of the National Security Council members<sup>516</sup>. Hence, it might be assumed that it was the latter who ultimately defined the course of Brazilian foreign policy regarding the two Chinas. Moreover, that they had done so based on the tenets of the National Security Doctrine to the extent that the Council was supposed to assist the president in the formulation of Brazilian policy of national security based on this Doctrine's precepts<sup>517</sup>. However, a more rigorous examination of the developments which led to this decision suggests that the consultation of the NSC members actually functioned as a form of "ritualizing" a decision already taken. Hence, it is in the preceding stages of the decision making process where we should search for the explanation of the decision which indeed inaugurated the Pragmatic foreign policy of Geisel's government.

The first official sign given to Geisel's government from a Chinese representative regarding Beijing interest in Brazilian recognition of the Communist government was made in March 1974. During an official ceremony on neutral ground – a party at the Greek Embassy in Moscow – a Chinese official expressed to a Brazilian diplomat the interest of his government in expanding and developing its relations with Brazil beyond the commercial field<sup>518</sup>. Almost as an answer to this message, the Brazilian

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516 ABREU, Hugo de. *O Outro Lado do Poder*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1979, p. 40. CÔES, W. de. *O Brasil do General Geisel - estudo do processo de tomada de decisão no regime militar burocrático*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1978, p. 32.

517 Decree-Law no. 200, February 25, 1967, cited by the entry *Conselho de Segurança Nacional* in FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS, CPDOC. *Dicionário Histórico-Biográfico Brasileiro (1930-1983)*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Forense Universitária, FGV/CPDOC, FINEP, 4 vs., v. 2, pp. 897-898.

518 Telegram no. 132, from Brazilian Embassy to Moscow, March 22, 1974, Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, p. 120.

government authorized a group of governmental representatives to go to Beijing and Canton, on official duty, as part of a second commercial mission led by the entrepreneur Giulite Coutinho – April 10-15, 1974. Among them was the then substitute Head of the Africa, Asia and Oceania Department of Itamaraty (1973-1974), counselor Bettencourt Bueno<sup>519</sup>. On this occasion, in addition to the gratitude expressed by Bueno to the Chinese Prime Minister Deputy Li-Hsien-nien for his support of the thesis of Latin American denuclearization and the Latin American demand for stretching the extension of territorial waters to 200 miles<sup>520</sup>, he also handed over an official invitation from the Brazilian government for a Chinese commercial mission to come to Brazil<sup>521</sup>. Moreover, he suggested that Beijing should include a representative from the Foreign Ministry on the mission in order to study reciprocal interests<sup>522</sup>. Finally, Itamaraty's instructions to Bettencourt included the suggestion that he stressed that his visit to Beijing should be understood as part of Brazilian efforts towards the establishment of the necessary conditions for the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries, in the event of the subject being raised<sup>523</sup>. Beijing's answer was, as expected, very positive. According to its new strategy of normalizing its relations with the international community, Beijing reasserted

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519 The other two envoys were Victor Nogueira de Magalhães from the Planning Secretary and Omar Montealegre from the Industry and Commerce Ministry. "Imprensa chinesa destaca visita dos brasileiros". *Jornal do Brasil*, April 14, 1974.

520 "Brasil e China estudam reatamento de relações". *Jornal do Brasil*, April 15, 1974.

521 SILVA, Ricardo L. P. da. *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

522 "Instruções para o Conselheiro Carlos Antonio Bittencourt Bueno durante sua missão na República Popular da China", April 02, 1974, MRE Archives – DAOC II. Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, p. 121.

523 *Idem, ibidem*.

Chinese interests in restoring diplomatic relations with Brasilia<sup>524</sup>. Obviously it would be necessary for Brazil to deny Taiwan as the legitimate representative of the Chinese people<sup>525</sup>.

Itamaraty's instructions to Counsellor Bettencourt date from April 2, 1974. Nevertheless, Azeredo da Silveira's report to Geisel, in which he suggested the restoration of diplomatic relations with the PRC, dates from April 9, 1974<sup>526</sup>. This gap could lead us to believe that Itamaraty was instructing Bettencourt to initiate negotiations with Beijing towards the restoration of diplomatic relations before, or even without, Geisel's consent. In other words it might suggest that Itamaraty took action on such a delicate subject on its own. This was indeed a conceivable hypothesis, given that Itamaraty had taken a decisive position on the issue since the previous government. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the relative autonomy of the Foreign Ministry, the latter did not have sufficient independence to take such a step without consulting the president in the first place. In this sense, what actually happened was that since, as usual, the issue had already been settled by Geisel and Azeredo da Silveira<sup>527</sup>, it was necessary to formulate a document in which the reasons for taking this decision were displayed in order to obtain endorsement from the other members of the government.

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524 "Relações Brasil-República Popular da China. Relatório da Missão Governamental Brasileira a Pequim", April 20, 1974, MRE Archives – DAOC-II. Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, p. 122.

525 Although this statement could be seen as unimportant since neither Taiwan nor the PRC accepted the thesis of two Chinas, it is indeed worth noting that for a certain period of time the alternative was under examination by some Brazilian authorities as a means of downgrading the impact of the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing would have on the Brazilian military class. Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

526 SILVEIRA, A. F. Azeredo da. "Exposição de Motivos", G/110/920 (B46) (E33). July 09, 1974. Apud. AMADO, A. *Op.Cit.*, pp. 122-126.

527 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 10, 1979, CPDOC.

In fact, the discussions on the subject between Geisel and Silveira took place at the end of 1973–beginning of 1974, when the latter was called by the President-elect for deliberations in Geisel’s office in Rio de Janeiro<sup>528</sup>. At the time, Geisel seemed to be quite aware of the advantages of the rapprochement with Beijing due to the similarities between the foreign policies followed by the two states<sup>529</sup>. It is in this sense that it is possible to understand the fact that when Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro arrived from Geneva (he had been Head of Brazilian permanent representation since 1969) to take over the post of General Secretary of Itamaraty, on April 8, 1974, he was told by Azeredo da Silveira that the resumption of diplomatic relations with the PRC had already been decided. Moreover, according to what Silveira told Guerreiro, the decision had been taken in terms “not open to further discussion”<sup>530</sup>.

## 5.6. Consensus building

After the decision was actually made, the stage of deliberations about how to make it consensual then started. Supporters of the decision attempted to create a positive mood for its implementation by strongly emphasizing the economic aspects associated with the resumption of relations with Beijing. Hence, despite the political advantages to be derived from a change of Brazilian position towards the PRC, the economic aspects favoring the rapprochement had to be particularly emphasized as a means of avoiding opposition. In Azeredo da Silveira’s words, “We had to

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528 *Idem*. “Decisão vem da posse de Geisel”. *Jornal do Brasil*, August 16, 1974. “Política Externa”. *Jornal da Tarde*, January 30, 1979.

529 Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

530 As Guerreiro put it, “Net varietu”. Interview with Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, Rio de Janeiro, November 12, 1991.

emphasize the economic angle in order to make the resumption more palatable. However, the problem was exclusively political. The economic [effects] would come in time. (...) the intention was political”<sup>531</sup>.

It is during this phase that an inter-ministerial committee was created. Made up of the Ministries of Industry and Commerce, Transport, Communications among others, the group's aim was to gather elements, opinions and data which “supposedly, would lead to a better evaluation of the benefits of resuming commercial relations with the PRC”<sup>532</sup>. The creation of this group was intended to provide a more solid justification for a decision which had indeed already been taken. As a top diplomat put it, “the unrevealed aim was much more ambitious. What did occur was the restoration of diplomatic relations (...) Nonetheless, this sort of procedure is... let's say, an artifice (...) when it is aimed at underpinning a certain decision”<sup>533</sup>. This being so, the conclusion reached by this inter-ministerial group was that the prospects of boosting the commerce between the two countries were gloomy<sup>534</sup>. Even so the strategy of stressing the economic advantages of having a closer relationship with Beijing seems to have been rather efficient<sup>535</sup>.

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531 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 15, 1979, CPDOC.

532 Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, former Head of Africa, Asia and Oceania Department of Itamaraty under Azeredo da Silveira (1974-1977), Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992 and *Jornal do Brasil*, August 17, 1974.

533 *Idem*.

534 Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 02, 1992.

535 At the interview with the Head of Armed Forces Staff during Geisel's government, General Antonio Jorge Correa, he asserted that the commercial aspect had carried a lot of weight in the final decision. In fact, this feature was responsible for the reevaluation of the anti-Communist aspects involved in the subject, since the maintenance of such a stance could deprive Brazil of “gaining access to a high valuable market”, Rio de Janeiro, March 18, 1992.

As part of this process of making the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing a consensual decision, Geisel himself addressed the National Security Council. He had the report prepared by Azeredo da Silveira mentioned above, as well as Counsellor Bettencourt's account of his mission to Beijing. That was in May 1974<sup>536</sup>. In so doing, Geisel tried to secure the endorsement of the military class for a decision previously made using the formal instruments of the decision making process<sup>537</sup>.

In opposition to Geisel's apparently optimistic expectations based on the fact that the Chinese question was gradually becoming accepted by the military class – remember the note from the General Secretary of the NSC, allowing Chinese vessels to dock in Brazilian harbors and vice-versa – three military members, from a total of 10 military and 11 civilians, of the National Security Council voted against the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing<sup>538</sup>. In order to secure military support for his decision, President Geisel then decided to persuade them through a special envoy<sup>539</sup>. Nevertheless, the decision lacked unanimous approval: the Army Minister, General Sylvio Frota, maintained his opposition<sup>540</sup>.

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536 ABREU, Hugo de. *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

537 LIMA, Maria R. Soares de & Moura, G. "A Trajetória do Pragmatismo - uma análise da política externa brasileira". *Dados - Revista de Ciências Sociais*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 25 no. 3, 1982, pp. 349-363, p. 360. "Política Externa". *Jornal da Tarde*, January 30, 1979.

538 Minister of Navy, Azevedo Henning, the Head of the Air Force Staff, Brigadier Paulo Ribeiro Gonçalves. Minister of Army, Sylvio Frota "CSN - Um super ministério, mas aparece pouco". *Jornal do Brasil*, August 22, 1982. Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, June 07, 1979, CPDOC.

539 It is presumed that Geisel commissioned the Head of his Military Staff, General Hugo de Abreu, to do so, since he was the link between the presidency and the military class. However, the sources are not definitive on this aspect. *Idem, ibidem*. Interview with Walder de Góes, Brasília, November 19, 1991.

540 Interview with General Ernesto Geisel, by Maria Celina Soares D'Araújo and Celso Castro, Rio de Janeiro, February 1994. CPDOC/FGV.

On October 12, 1977, when Frota was sacked from the government due to his difference with Geisel, he issued an open letter in which he confirmed his opposition to the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing, saying: "The resumption of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of



There is no precise account on how the final consensus was eventually reached, or rather, compelled. It is said that when Geisel was informed about the persistence of the veto, e.g., that the necessary unanimity was still missing, he instructed the Head of the Military Staff, General Hugo de Abreu, to tell the members of the NSC that he, Geisel, was not asking their opinion about the subject, but just ordering them to sign the minute of a supposed National Security Council meeting which would have approved the restoration of diplomatic relations with Beijing<sup>541</sup>. In its turn the *Jornal da Tarde* gave a different and even more dramatic version. This journal says that “during a meeting held between Geisel and his more influential colleagues, he banged his fist on the table and finished the conversation saying: ‘I am not here to ask you for permission, but rather to notify you that Brazil is going to restore diplomatic relations with Communist China’<sup>542</sup>. Despite these different versions, it is clear that what had been initiated as an attempt of getting the NSC members’ endorsement for a decision already taken<sup>543</sup>, turned into an imposition from the president.

Finally, Brazil resumed diplomatic relations with Beijing, recognizing the People’s Republic as the sole and legitimate representative of the Chinese people. In addition, Brazil decided to take note of Beijing’s position affirming that Taiwan was an inextricable part of the territory of the PRC; as well as agreeing

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China, who embraces precisely antagonistic values to ours, was done under conditions against our sovereignty and by so doing, this decision constituted the first step of the socialist escalation towards the domination of the country”. Translated by the author. *Veja*, October 19, 1977, p. 22.

541 Interview with Walder de Góes, Brasília, November 19, 1991.

542 “Política Externa”. *Jornal da Tarde*, January 30, 1979. Translated by the author.

543 It is worth noting that these consultations a posteriori seemed to have been a routine during Geisel’s government. Interview with João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1992. Interview with Colonel Kurt Pessek, assistant to General Hugo de Abreu at the Military Staff Cabinet, Brasília, November 21, 1991.

that the restoration of relations between the two countries was based on the Five Pacific Coexistence Principles of Chinese foreign policy<sup>544</sup>. This note, dated August 15, 1974, followed the arrival of the Chinese commercial mission to Brazil led by the External Commerce Minister's Deputy, Chen Chieh, on August 7, 1974, who actually had been counting on the Brazilian decision being announced<sup>545</sup>.

### 5.7. Conclusion

It is not the aim of this work to claim that the anti-Communist stance embraced by Brazilian military regime since the 1964 coup was of such intensity that the country could not have amicable relations with Communist regimes. Indeed, since the first military government, trade relations with the Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe were developed significantly<sup>546</sup>. Rather, my aim was to appraise the elements which overcame the opposition towards the expansion of Brazilian relations with other Communist regimes.

I have argued that, since the beginning of 1970s, some aspects enhanced a new stand towards the PRC and pointed to the international reassessment of Beijing shown by her admission to the UN, and to the effects of the US rapprochement on the Western

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544 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year I, no. XI, Brasília, Jul./Aug./Sept. 1974, p. 71. The five principles were: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.

545 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst and Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985. Interview with Chen-Chieh conducted by *Veja*, when, after being asked if the Chinese delegation came to Brazil conscious of the imminence of the restoration of relations, he answered that the dialogue towards this step had been initiated when Counsellor Bettencourt went to Beijing in April 1974. *Veja*, August 21, 1974, p. 27.

546 For a brief account of Brazilian trade relations with the Communist bloc, see HURRELL, Andrew J. *The Quest for Autonomy: The Evolution of Brazil's Role in the International System (1964-1985)*. Ph.D. Thesis, Oxford, University of Oxford, 1986, p. 87, pp. 117-118, pp. 174-176.

countries. In addition, I examined the political and economic aspects that favored the normalization of relations between Brasilia and Beijing.

In spite of those good prospects, a redirection of the Brazilian stance towards Beijing was still rejected by an important and powerful faction of the government, namely the more conservative military men for whom China was still a threat to the stability of the regime. By way of example, when Brazil restored diplomatic relations with the PRC, military writings still expressed their opposition to this conduct<sup>547</sup>. Indeed, this opposition was not only expressed in statements, but, as I have shown, in the actual positions taken within the decision arena.

Despite this fact, Geisel succeeded in changing the policy towards Beijing. Therefore, it is my view that Brazil's decision to restore diplomatic relations with Beijing cannot be correctly explained either only within the first debate proceeding "top-down" (International system vs. nation state) or within the second debate also proceeding "top-down" (nation state vs. bureaucracy). Indeed, neither the Western countries' positive stance towards Beijing nor the supposed benefits a closer relationship with Beijing would bring about were enough to make the resumption of diplomatic relations feasible. Indeed, this study showed that there was serious resistance within the decision arena to be crushed in order to proceed to its implementation.

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547 MYIAMOTO, Shiguenoli & GONÇALVES, William da S. "Militares, Diplomatas e Política Externa no Brasil pós-64". *Primeira Versão*, no. 36, IFCH/UNICAMP, 1991, p. 11.

## 5.8. Appendix IV

### Chronology

**October 1, 1949** – The People’s Republic of China is proclaimed.

**November 24, 1949** – Brazilian ambassador to China leaves the country for Japan.

**March 1, 1950** – Chiang Kai-shek resumes the Presidency of China in Taiwan.

**December 18, 1952** – Brazilian ambassador notifies Itamaraty that he had reassumed his position as Brazilian representative to the Chinese government, in Taipei.

**August 1961** – Brazil declares its support for the resolution presented to the XVI General Assembly to include on the agenda Beijing’s readmission to the United Nations.

**August 1961** – Brazilian vice-president João Goulart goes to Beijing escorted by a large group of government officials and private sector representatives. Once there, he signs a Trade and Payments Agreement with Beijing.

**April 1964** – Nine Chinese officials are arrested on the accusation of performing espionage and subversive activities in Brazil.

**April 1965** – The Chinese officials arrested one year earlier are expelled from Brazil.

**October 1971** – Brazilian Counsellor to Hong-Kong, Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, joins a private commercial mission to the PRC, led by the entrepreneur Horácio Coimbra.

**October 25, 1971** – The XXVI General Assembly approves the PRC readmission to the UN. Brazil votes against.

**February 1972** – Nixon's visit to Beijing where he signs the "Shanghai Communiqué".

**October 1972** – A second Brazilian private mission is sent to China led by the president of Association of Brazilian Exporters (Associação Brasileira dos Exportadores), the businessman Giulite Coutinho.

**October 1972** – An official mission led by the Brazilian Chief of Staff, General Artur Duarte Fonseca, goes to Taipei.

**October 1973** – The General Secretariat of the National Security Council issues a report authorizing the lifting of the prohibition on Brazilian vessels from docking at Chinese harbors and vice-versa.

**March 1974** – During a ceremony at the Greek Embassy in Moscow, a Chinese official expresses to a Brazilian diplomat the interest of his government in expanding its relations with Brazil beyond the commercial field.

**April 10-15, 1974** – A commercial mission led by the entrepreneur Giulite Coutinho goes to Canton.

**April 2, 1974** – Itamaraty gives instructions to Counsellor Bettencourt to take the necessary steps towards the rapprochement with Beijing.

**April 8, 1974** – The Foreign Minister's Deputy, Ambassador Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, is told by Azeredo da Silveira that the resumption of diplomatic relations with the PRC had already been decided.

**April 9, 1974** – Azeredo da Silveira's report to Geisel suggests the restoration of diplomatic relations with the PRC.

**May 1974** – Geisel consults the National Security Council about the resumption of diplomatic relations with Beijing. Three military members vote against. After some negotiations, Geisel compels the Council to endorse his decision.

LETICIA PINHEIRO

**August 7, 1974** – A Chinese commercial mission led by the External Commerce Minister's Deputy, Chen Chieh, arrives in Brazil.

**August 15, 1974** – Brazil and the PRC restore diplomatic relations.

## 6. THE RECOGNITION OF ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE

On November 11, 1975, the date agreed between Portugal and the Angolan groups, Angolan independence was declared and Brazil recognized the government installed in Luanda. In so doing, Brazil automatically recognized the Cuban-Soviet backed government of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola/Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA). In spite of the alterations in Brazilian foreign policy proposed by President Geisel, of which a policy of significant rapprochement to the African continent was a landmark<sup>548</sup>, this decision was a breakthrough in the pattern of Brazilian foreign relations. Indeed, for a government which did not follow their regional partners on the lifting of sanctions against Cuba, and had to impose the normalization of relations with Beijing over the internal military opposition, it is hard to believe that the decision in favor of a Cuban-backed government had been taken without a good deal of internal conflict.

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548 Minister Azeredo da Silveira's broadcasted speech, March 28, 1974, in BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year I, no. I, Brasília, June 1974, pp. 23-24.

True, there were strong forces that favored and indeed made feasible the taking of such a step. As far as domestic interests are concerned, the Brazilian need for new international markets and for guaranteeing oil supplies must be taken into account. Therefore, it was crucial for Brazil to free itself from years of support for Portuguese colonialism by adopting an indisputably pro-independence stance so as to enhance its relations with African countries. Likewise, the fact that Washington seemed to be prepared to accept Brazilian policy towards Luanda also might have encouraged Geisel to go ahead with his plans of recognizing Angolan independence regardless of the group in power. Nevertheless, I argue that it is indeed in the analysis of the decision making process that we can find a complete account of the episode, since it was there where the final obstacles were overcome.

Firstly, this chapter aims to give a brief account of the political, economic and strategic reasons behind the Brazilian policy towards African colonialism from the end of World War II to the inauguration of Geisel's government. Then the role of Africa within Geisel's foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism" will be examined. Finally, the process which led to the final decision to recognize Angolan independence, which comprises an overview of Brazilian interests in doing so, will be scrutinized.

As I will be working from a decision making perspective, once again I will have to deal with the problems related to the reliability of sources or even to the complete lack of them. This problem is particularly serious because the decision under analysis in this chapter touches upon the involvement of Cuban troops in the Angolan civil war, a fact surrounded by great controversy. As Sola Soremekum put it, "how much reliability do we have on sources in an atmosphere so charged with propaganda, rumors, false and genuine news and opinions, all mixed together? (...) Another problem which bothered observers was that of the chronology



of events. (...) No one should really be surprised that dates of events could become tools of political and diplomatic manoeuvre. At such, some of the dates of events were conveniently distorted by their adversaries. The result had been that for the present few researchers could answer seemingly simple questions. [Like] (...) When did the Cubans first come into Angola in small batches, and in larger groups? (...)”<sup>549</sup>.

In addition, as far as Brazilian public sources are concerned, any question associated with Havana used to be immediately classified. Therefore, what follows is an attempt to retrieve the role of the decision making process for the contents and for the enforcement of a certain decision, rather than a complete assessment of all steps taken during the whole process<sup>550</sup>. Although I am aware that some important information might be missing, I argue that the available material is sufficient to appraise the importance of the decision making process for the explanation of the final outcome.

### **6.1. Brazilian Foreign Policy towards African Colonialism – a historical perspective, 1946-1974**

From the end of World War II, when the decolonization issue reached the international agenda, to the inauguration of Geisel’s government, Brazil’s position towards the question was very ambiguous, since it was a mixture of: 1) condemnation of the economic exploitation of the colonies and its consequences for the less developed countries; 2) general declarations in favor of autonomy and self-government; and 3) actual support for the colonial powers, based on the need to constrain the

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549 SOREMEKUM, S. *Angola: the road to independence*, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, University of Ife Press Ltd, 1983, pp. 177-178.

550 For the sake of clarity a chronology of events is included at the end of this chapter (Appendix V).

alleged Communist expansion and of endorsing Luso-Brazilian friendship<sup>551</sup>.

Although always present in Brazil's stance on the issue, these aspects had different weight throughout the period. For instance, during the governments of Eurico Dutra (1946-1951) and Getúlio Vargas (1951-1954), in spite of advocating the principle of independence, Brazil actively supported the colonial powers by voting against or abstaining from voting on anti-Colonialist resolutions in the United Nations (UN) sessions. In order to balance these contradictory positions, declarations in defense of "the creation of an atmosphere of patient moderation and tolerance within which the administering powers themselves would best promote the eventual autonomy of colonial people"<sup>552</sup>, were repeatedly stated.

The reasons behind such a policy were both the commitment to an international anti-Communist policy bound by Brazil's relationship with the United States<sup>553</sup>, and the strong attachment to European values in general, and Portuguese in particular, held by Brazilian elites. Indeed, the impassioned belief of the existence of a so called "Luso-Brazilian Community" which linked Brazil to its former master by means of a "traditional friendship" induced the idea that Brazil should cooperate with Portugal in its "civilizing mission"<sup>554</sup>. According to this view, Brazil was itself the best and

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551 For an analysis of those elements on the Brazilian position towards African colonialism from 1946 to 1960, see PINHEIRO, Leticia. *Ação e Omissão: a ambiguidade da política brasileira frente ao processo de descolonização africana (1946-1960)*. Master's Thesis, Rio de Janeiro, IRI/PUC, 1988.

552 SELCHER, Wayne A. *The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)*, Gainesville, The University of Florida Press, 1974, p. 145.

553 For an analysis of United States role in the Brazilian foreign policy from 1946 to 1954, see MOURA, Gerson. *O alinhamento sem recompensa: a política externa do governo Dutra*, Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC/FGV, 1990 and HIRST, Monica. *O Pragmatismo Impossível: a política externa do segundo governo Vargas (1951-1954)*, Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC/FGV, 1990.

554 For a complete account of the "Luso-Brazilian Community", see Gilberto FREYRE, Gilberto. *O Mundo que o Português Criou*, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1940 and FREYRE, Gilberto. *Um Brasileiro em Terras Portuguesas*, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1953.

most successful example of Portuguese colonial policy. In so doing, as Selcher put it, “for Brazil to join the anti-colonialist chorus condemning Portugal would be [as far as the supporters of such belief were concerned, the] equivalent to its rejection of the valuable Portuguese heritage it enjoys”<sup>555</sup>.

From this period dates the signature of the Treaty of Friendship and Consultation between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro (November 16, 1953). In this agreement the two countries agreed to consult each other in advance on international matters of common interest. Furthermore, the Treaty stated that both parties would give a special treatment to each other’s nationals, making them equal to their own, as far as commercial and financial aspects were concerned. Moreover, both countries would provide free entry and exit for their nationals and would make themselves “to study, whenever opportune and necessary, means of developing the progress, harmony and prestige of the Luso-Brazilian Community in the world”<sup>556</sup>.

As far as the economic aspects were concerned, African colonialism basically portrayed the role of a potential competitor with Brazil in terms of the exports of primary products (particularly coffee and cocoa), and of foreign investment<sup>557</sup>. Despite these

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555 SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

556 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Divisão de Atos, Congressos e Conferências Internacionais. *Brasil-Portugal: Tratado de Amizade e Consulta*. Coleção de Atos Internacionais, no. 357. Serviço de Publicações do Ministério das Relações Exteriores, Rio de Janeiro, 1955, quoted by *idem*, p. 149. It is worth noting, however, the existence of the so called “Interpretative Notes” (Notas Interpretativas), a document signed by the two countries in 1958 in the regulation of the Treaty. These classified notes stated that whilst “Brazil” should be understood as including all Brazilian territory, the so called “overseas provinces” should not be included in the meaning of Portugal. In so doing, the government of Prime-Minister Oliveira Salazar prevented Brazil from having any access to the Portuguese colonies. PINHEIRO, L. *Op. cit.*, p. 99.

557 The so called “Point IV”, a plan of economic assistance for underdeveloped countries, proposed by President Harry Truman (1945-1953) in early 1949, not only gave priority to technical assistance and to private investment, but favored the Afro-Asian countries in particular, to the detriment of Latin

shortcomings, however, Brazilian lusophilia and alliance to the Western bloc was strong enough to justify a non-commitment towards African decolonization<sup>558</sup>.

During the subsequent government (Juscelino Kubitschek, 1956-1961), Brazilian stance towards African colonialism continued to be defined by the same reasoning. Indeed, although Brazil had supported Resolution no. 1,514 (Declaration on Independence for Colonial Countries and Peoples) at the XV UN General Assembly (1960), it simultaneously abstained from voting on Resolution no. 1,573 asking for Algerian self-determination, and voted against Resolution no. 1,542, which obliged Portugal to make available information on her colonies to the UN. In short, Brazil endeavored to accommodate its need to follow the international majority, with its loyalty to Portugal.

However, the signature of the Treaty of Rome (1957) and its prospects of enhancing African opportunities in international trade through the European Common Market, increased Brazilian fears of African competition. Therefore, notwithstanding Kubitschek's support for Portuguese colonialism in particular, Brazil co-sponsored the UN Resolution no. 671 (XIII General Assembly, 1958) creating the Economic Committee for Africa (ECA). Brazilian delegates stated that the ECA would increase international control over the African economy, and would enhance fair competition between Brazil's and Africa's similar export products, by exposing and, as a consequence, by abolishing the exploitation of African workers, which was responsible for the low prices of African products<sup>559</sup>.

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America. MOURA, G. *Linhas de pensamento e ação da política externa brasileira - o governo Dutra (1946-1950)*. Relatório, Convênio MRE/CPDOC-FGV, Rio de Janeiro, 1983, p. 103.

558 According to Brazil's Foreign Minister Raul Fernandes (1946-1951 and 1954), the Brazilian delegates at the UN should avoid giving the impression that the "organized anti-communist front" was divided, by not opposing the colonial powers. Letter from Raul Fernandes to Brazilian delegation at UN, August 12, 1950. Brazilian Foreign Ministry, Archives/ONU/Of./August/December 1951.

559 PINHEIRO, L. *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

Over the following years, the so called Independent Foreign Policy (1961-1964) inaugurated a shift in Brazil's position towards the African continent. As noted by Selcher, "Quadros consciously sought to use an anticolonial posture as an ideological instrument to increase Brazilian prestige among African nations for cooperation in development"<sup>560</sup>. Indeed, in his first address to the Congress, President Jânio Quadros (1961) proposed a policy of enhancing common Afro-Brazilian interests in the international system, as well as condemning colonialism and racism<sup>561</sup>. Therefore Brazilian embassies in Accra, Dakar, Lagos, and Porto Novo, and consulates in Nairobi and Salisbury, as well as in Portuguese Africa were created; scholarships for African students to receive training in Brazilian universities were sponsored by the Foreign Ministry and steps were taken towards economic cooperation in common export products, like the establishment of the Cocoa Producers Alliance with Nigeria, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Togo and Cameroon, etc<sup>562</sup>.

During Quadros's government, Brazil also played down its support for Portugal in international organizations, even abandoning its traditional opposition to any resolution condemning Portuguese colonialism. By way of example, Brazil backed the terms of the UN Resolution no. 1,603, which called upon the Portuguese government to take the necessary steps to bring independence to Angola. In spite of this initial support for the resolution, however, Brazil finally abstained, alleging that the second part of the resolution, which created a special committee

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560 SELCHER, Wayne A. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

561 BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. QUADROS, J. *Mensagem ao Congresso Nacional*. Departamento de Imprensa Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, 1961, pp. 91-101, p. 96.

562 SELCHER, Wayne A. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

to conduct enquiries into Angola, was “inoperative, excessive, and conducive to useless complications”<sup>563</sup>. Regardless of the fact that by doing so Brazil was again trying not to upset Portugal, the abstention *per se* represented some evolution in Brazil’s position on the issue.

Nevertheless, those attitudes lacked a more solid basis, or perhaps, a wider consensus, on which a long-standing or a more consistent policy could be built. By way of example, only one month after having almost voted in favor of the above mentioned resolution, the Brazilian Ambassador to Lisbon, Negrão de Lima, publicly praised Portugal for what it had accomplished in Angola<sup>564</sup>. It must be emphasized that these statements were made after Negrão de Lima’s visit to Luanda in May 1961, precisely when the Portuguese government was brutally repressing the Angolan armed rebellion which started in February 1961.

Despite the fact that the subsequent government of João Goulart (1961-1964) maintained Brazil’s support for decolonization and development in Africa, the priority of domestic problems, and the remaining links with Portugal hindered the deepening and the improvement of the Afro-Brazilian relationship. Thus, notwithstanding the vote in favor of at least two anti-Colonialist Resolutions<sup>565</sup>, during this period Brazil kept stressing its special

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563 *Idem*, p. 158.

564 *Idem, ibidem*. HIRSON, Zenaide S. *O Brasil e a Questão Colonial Portuguesa: o caso angolano*. Master’s Thesis, Brasília, UnB, July 1979, pp. 87-88 and RODRIGUES, José Honório. *Brazil and Africa*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1965, pp. 319-320.

565 On July 31, 1963, Brazil not only refused to support the Portuguese formula of considering its colonies around the world as “overseas provinces”, but moreover it voted in favor of Resolution no. S/5,380, considering Portuguese policies in Africa a threat to peace and security, and requested that all states avert giving to Portugal any assistance, arms, or military equipment which could be used to wage colonial wars. RODRIGUES, José H. *Op. cit.*, p. 327, p. 334. SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 162-163. And on January 30, 1962, Brazil voted in favor of UN Resolution no. 1,742, which, among other points, regretted the lack of Portuguese cooperation with the Sub-committee for Angola and asserted the Angolan people’s

ties with Portugal<sup>566</sup>. As Selcher argues, by trying to maintain a “friendship with Portugal, yet defending the independence of Portuguese Africa, to which Lisbon did not concede the remotest probability, Brazil was running the risk of alienating both Portugal and Black Africa”<sup>567</sup>.

The military takeover in 1964 strengthened the Brazilian commitment to the Western bloc. In addition, the traditional friendship with Portugal was reinforced by the similar authoritarian profile of Portugal’s and Brazil’s new regime. As a result, the more progressive Brazilian stance towards African decolonization taken during the years of Independent Foreign policy was halted. As far as the colonies were concerned, the interests of their masters should be the only aspect to be taken into account. According to President Castello Branco (1964-1967), “a realist policy of anti-colonialism can ignore neither Portugal’s case nor the dangers stemming from a premature detachment from the West”<sup>568</sup>. In so doing, Brazilian military ideologues and strategists strongly stressed the importance of keeping the Communist threat at bay, by increasing the protection of the South Atlantic region<sup>569</sup>. Nevertheless, the

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rights of self-government and independence. SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

566 HIRSON, Zenaide S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 104-106.

567 SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 160.

568 BRANCO, Humberto de A. C. *A Diplomacia da Revolução Brasileira*. Speech delivered to the Instituto Rio Branco graduates, Rio de Janeiro, July 31, 1974. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Departamento de Administração, p. 10. Translated by the author.

569 According to Golbery do Couto e Silva, “Combating underdevelopment in backward areas in Brazil and the rest of the continent, cooperating also in the immunization of the young African countries to the fatal infection of Communism, being vigilant and attentive to any Soviet advance toward the Atlantic coast of Africa where the advanced and decisive frontier on our own national security is situated, collaborating by all means to keep it totally free of Communist domination – these are, more or less well-delineated, in a tentative order of decreasing priority, the principal directives which seem to us to be non-deferrable in a Brazilian geopolitics adequate to the present agitated and cataclysmic period, in a struggling world in the throes

interest and the possibility of Brazilian participation in the creation of SATO (South Atlantic Treaty Organization) – a treaty analogous to NATO, seen as a redoubt against a possible Soviet presence in the South Atlantic by creating a military alliance between Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and South Africa – was constantly rejected<sup>570</sup>. Although the military regime paid a lot of attention to the region, it did not bestow it with a more effective military policy, mainly because of the lack of support for the idea from the US. Rather, Castello Branco opted for the strength of the “Luso-Brazilian Community” as a way of ensuring control along the Brazilian coast without committing the country to a military alliance which would incur higher costs than benefits.

In addition, the independent African states lost their importance in Brazilian foreign relations. From then on, Africa was seen as belonging to the outer circle of Brazilian interests, after Latin America, the Western Hemisphere and the Western Community as a whole<sup>571</sup>. This was what became known as the

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of a most brutal collision of antagonistic civilizations”. SILVA, Goldbery do Couto e. *Geopolítica do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1967, p. 137. As translated and quoted by SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 72-73. And as once clearly and straightforwardly put by general Carlos de Meira Mattos, “The moment a military power hostile to Brazil occupies Africa’s Atlantic coast, at any point from Morocco to the Republic of South Africa, we will begin to feel in our country a climate of intranquillity and bellicose pressure without precedent in our history... In the framework of continental defense and Western strategy today Africa concerns Brazil much more than any other area of the universe. It will be there that we will have to protect our own territory from the horrors of war”. MEIRA MATTOS, Carlos de. *Projeção Mundial do Brasil*, São Paulo, Gráfica Leal, 1961, p. 25, quoted by Wayne A. S. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

570 For an analysis of Brazil’s position on this subject, see HURRELL, Andrew. “The Politics of South Atlantic Security: a survey of proposals for a South Atlantic Organization”. *International Affairs*, v. 59, no. 2, Spring 1983, pp. 179-193, pp. 188-189 and HURRELL, Andrew. “Nato and the South Atlantic: a case-study in the complexities of out-of-area operations” in COKER, Christopher (Ed.). *The United States, Western Europe and Military Intervention Overseas*, London, Macmillan, 1987, pp. 61-84, pp. 78-82.

571 BRANCO, Humberto de A. C. *Op. cit.*, p. 6.



principle of “concentric circles of solidarity”, which was supposed to establish priorities for Brazilian foreign relations. The exception was South Africa, Brazil’s chief commercial partner on the continent<sup>572</sup>. In trying to explain the maintenance of its strong economic links with Pretoria, notwithstanding condemning South Africa’s presence in Namibia and Rhodesia, and denouncing the apartheid regime<sup>573</sup> based on Brazil’s alleged racial democracy, Brasilia made use of conciliatory explanations, by asserting that “international isolation would not help the conditions of the blacks of the country”<sup>574</sup>. In summary, by exercising a declaratory policy of opposing the apartheid regime and, simultaneously, keeping its trade links with South Africa, Brazil took part in the general outcry against the Pretoria regime without actually damaging its economic interests.

During the subsequent government of Costa e Silva (1967-1969), a slightly greater interest in Third World countries led to a more critical stand regarding the colonialism issue – a position usually ascribed to the influence of anti-colonialist groups in Itamaraty<sup>575</sup>. As a consequence of this renewed interest in the issue, which encompassed intentions to explore new trade opportunities, to strengthen contacts with African coffee-exporting states, and to promote general political and economic activities in the region, new diplomatic and consular posts were created throughout Africa. In addition, the Division on Africa and the Middle East was finally

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572 MARTINIERE, G. “La Politique Africaine du Brésil (1970-1976)”. *Problèmes d’Amérique Latine (Note et Études Documentaires)*, Paris, v. XLVIII, no. 4,474, Juillet 1978, pp. 7-64, p. 7.

573 *Idem*, p. 14.

574 SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive ‘Luso-Brazilian Community’”. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, v. 18, no. 1, February 1976, pp. 25-58, pp. 34-35.

575 SELCHER, Wayne A. “The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)”. *Op. cit.*, pp. 172-173.

detached from Itamaraty's Western European Bureau. From then on, African and Middle Eastern affairs were handled by a special division (Secretaria-Geral Adjunta para a África e Oriente Médio).

However, the complaints of the Salazar government against Brazilian attempts to approach Africa directly, led Costa e Silva to turn back to a traditional support for Portugal<sup>576</sup>. As a result, Brazil ratified some treaties with Portugal, allowing the country to benefit from Portuguese economic concessions and privileges in Angola, as well as in Mozambique<sup>577</sup>. From then on, Angolan high quality petroleum became a possible alternative source for Brazil. Indeed, in September 1968, Brazil's state oil company, PETROBRAS, considered the possibility of taking part in the Angolan petroleum prospect and drilling<sup>578</sup>. Although still on a small scale, Brazil was, step by step, becoming more and more involved with Angolan, as well as Mozambiquean colonial status.

The subsequent administration (Garrastazú Médici, 1969-1974) kept the same kind of relationship. 1972 was declared by both nations to be the "Year of the Luso-Brazilian Community", one of the various ways of celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Brazilian independence. New agreements allowing Brazilian firms to operate in all Portuguese colonies were signed<sup>579</sup>. As a consequence, on the one hand Brazilian business in Portuguese Africa, mainly in Angola and Mozambique, blossomed<sup>580</sup>; on the other, Brazil also hoped to benefit economically, technically and

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576 *Idem*, pp. 171-174.

577 *Idem*, p. 174.

578 *Idem*, p. 176.

579 ABREU, Fernando J. Marroni de. *L'évolution de la politique africaine du Brésil*. Memoire redige sous la direction de M. le Professeur Georges Couffignal, University Pantheon Sorbonne (Paris I), Novembre 1988, p. 54 and HIRSON, Z. S. *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

580 By way of example, Brazilian exports to Angola increased from US\$ 700,000 in 1971 to US\$ 4,500,000 in 1973. MARTINIERE, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

politically from Portuguese membership of EFTA and, eventually, of the EEC<sup>581</sup>.

It is clear that this policy reflected the lack of a long-term view envisioning that the eventual independence of the Portuguese colonies would make the new African leaders hostile to Brazil because of the latter's strong association with the colonial regime. It is also true, however, that this pro-Lisbon position was no longer consensual in the Brazilian decision making arena. The worsening of the pro-independence struggle in the region led to some disagreements regarding the best way to satisfy the so called national interests<sup>582</sup>. The quarrel between the Finance Minister, Delfim Netto, and the Foreign Minister, Mário Gibson Barboza, is a case to be noted. Whilst the former favored the maintenance of access to Africa through Portugal and the maintenance of strong trade links with South Africa, ignoring its political implications, the latter favored a more independent and anti-colonialist stance to improve the relationship with the continent as a whole, by directly approaching the independent African states<sup>583</sup>. In the end, the Foreign Minister's visit to Africa (October 25 to November 20, 1972)<sup>584</sup>, which was initially thought to be a way to improve relations with Africa, though not necessarily a reproach to the

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581 SELCHER, Wayne A. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.*, p. 181.

582 According to Selcher, during the Médici government the "national interests" were interpreted as being the aim of easing "in all possible ways the rapid development of economic and political potential" towards the accomplishment "the dream of major power international status". SELCHER, Wayne A. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

583 SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, pp. 27-28 and SELCHER, Wayne A. "The Afro-Asian Dimension of Brazilian Foreign Policy (1956-1972)". *Op. cit.*, p. 194.

584 Minister Gibson Barboza visited nine countries - Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Zaire, Ghana, Dahomey and Gabon.

Portuguese colonialist policy<sup>585</sup>, strengthened the view that the time for ambiguities was running short<sup>586</sup>.

Indeed, from then on the government started to evaluate the actual political and economic advantages of keeping its “special relationship” with Portugal. Not being able – or perhaps to a lack of will – to change its own policy towards the issue without Portuguese support, Brasilia started to pressure Lisbon to do so following President Médici’s visit to Portugal (May 1973)<sup>587</sup>. Eventually, not being able to convince the Portuguese government to change its policy, Brazil finally decided to play down its connections with Portuguese Africa as a way of decreasing Brazilian commitment to the colonial administration<sup>588</sup>.

Finally the “oil shock” in late 1973, and the sudden Afro-Arab unity, turned Brazil’s declaratory stance against apartheid and colonialism in general, but sympathetic position towards

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585 Angolan independence movements kept being censured by Brazilian delegation in the General Assembly. On November 14, 1972, along with United States, Great Britain, Spain and South Africa, Brazil voted against Resolution no. 2918/XXVII, which proclaimed the Angolan, Ghinea Bissau and Mozambiquean liberation movements as “authentic representatives” of their respective native population. MARTINIERE, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

586 By way of example, during his visit to Africa Minister Gibson Barboza was questioned by the President and the Foreign Minister of Kenya about Brazil’s intentions in Africa. Moreover they were reported to have declared that “Brazilian policies should contribute to the end of colonialism in Africa and advance the independence of all African countries”. “Gibson afirma Kenyatta que Brasil não discrimina”. *Jornal do Brasil*, November 20, 1972, quoted by GLASGOW, R. “Pragmatism and Idealism in Brazilian Foreign Policy in Southern Africa”. *Munger Africana Library Notes*, February 23, 1974, pp. 4-20, p. 15. Another interesting example of how Africans were interpreting Brasilia’s apparent rapprochement with Africa, is given by Anani Dzidzienyo who, after giving evidence of Brazil’s traditional preference for Portugal in colonialist issues throughout history, argues: “It will require much more than a whistle-stop trip by the Brazilian Foreign Minister through some African countries to convince black Africa that Brazil and Brazilians have come to grips with the realities of Black Africa”. DZIDZIENYO, Anani. “Brazil’s view of Africa: 2”. *West Africa*, November 20, 1972, pp. 1556-1557, p. 1557.

587 SELCHER, Wayne A. “Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive ‘Luso-Brazilian Community’”. *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

588 *Idem*, pp. 31-32.

Portuguese colonialist policy<sup>589</sup> into an obstacle for Brazilian development. On the one hand, being dependent on imported oil to fulfill its demands to the extent of nearly 80% of its needs, the rise in petroleum prices jeopardized Brazilian economic growth due to its effects on the balance of payments and anti-inflation program. On the other, due to the Afro-Arab unity – which exchanged African support for the isolation of Israel for Arab oil boycotts against South Africa, Portugal and respective supporters –, to say nothing about the role of Nigeria itself which was then an important oil supplier to Brazil, the possibilities of Brazil being punished by Arab oil producers were very strong. Indeed, on November 24, 1973, a resolution signed by 17 countries from Central and East Africa included Brazil as one of the six countries recommended for diplomatic and economic sanctions unless they immediately ceased their support for white-minority governments in Southern Africa<sup>590</sup>. Therefore, Brazil took some steps towards the moderation of its Portuguese backing in the UN<sup>591</sup>, as well towards the adoption of a more incisive language when publicly referring to African colonialism.

Nevertheless, due to the remaining opposition towards a radical withdrawal of Brazilian support for Portugal from the more conservative elements of the government<sup>592</sup> and due to the

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589 In spite of Brazilian decision of downplaying its backing for Portuguese colonialism, on November 2, 1973, Brazil voted again with Portugal against Resolution no. 3,061/XXVIII which welcomed the independence of Guinea-Bissau and condemned Portugal for “illegal occupation” of areas of the country. *Idem*, p. 35.

590 *Idem*, p. 37 and 43.

591 From then on, Brazil started to adopt either abstention or absence on UN resolutions about Portuguese questions. *Idem*, p. 38.

592 According to Selcher, “dubious about the effectiveness of international organizations such as the United Nations, proponents of the Community believed that Brazil was giving up concrete advantages for the illusory prospect of counting African votes on resolutions with little practical effect”. *Idem*, pp. 32-33.

conspicuous Marxist connections held by most of the African liberation movements which were antagonistic to the strong Brazilian anti-Communist military regime, it was still not possible – or rather, perceived as still not desirable – to enforce a more assertive policy towards the end of colonialism. Once more, the decision towards a substantive change on Brazil's stance was left for the following government, when the regime's ideological stand was finally challenged by a distinct view about changing Brazilian national interests held by the ultimate decision makers.

## **6.2. Changing course – Brazilian Pragmatic Policy towards African colonialism**

In his first Cabinet meeting, Geisel spelled out his aim to give priority to Latin America and Africa saying that the foreign policy of his government would give priority Brazil's relationship with neighboring sister nations on this and the other side of the ocean<sup>593</sup>. Moreover, Geisel stated that he was prepared to make the necessary political realignments towards the fulfillment of Brazilian interests<sup>594</sup>, which in terms of policy towards Africa indicated the end of Brazilian compliance with Portuguese colonialism.

The reasons for such a remarkable change of direction were several. Indeed, the need for new markets for Brazilian products as well as the need for strengthening relations with oil producing countries<sup>595</sup>, and the search for potential supporters for many political and economic demands in the international system,

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593 BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, E. *Discursos*, v. 1, Assessoria de Imprensa e Relações Públicas da Presidência da República, Brasília, 1975, p. 37.

594 *Idem*, p. 38.

595 In comparison to the first two months of 1973, during January and February of 1974 Brazil spent 550% more on oil. It had done so even though the quantity purchased had risen just 37.8%. SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

were strong reasons in favor of a new stand on the issue<sup>596</sup>. It finally became clear to Brazilian decision makers that a new and more positive policy towards African decolonization should be implemented.

Therefore, following the inauguration of Geisel's government – and, moreover, previous to the Portuguese Revolution – a secret circular accounting for the Brazilian new stance towards African issues was sent to the Cabinet members<sup>597</sup>. It is interesting to note that this circular was signed solely by Azeredo da Silveira, even though we can be sure of the total acquiescence of President Geisel<sup>598</sup>. This may have been a strategy to assess the Cabinet reaction towards the issue without exposing the President<sup>599</sup>. According to Azeredo da Silveira, whilst all civil and some military ministers responded to the note quite positively, other military sectors remained silent<sup>600</sup>.

It was then that the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement/Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA) on April 25 helped Brazil to accomplish the change in its position towards African

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596 By way of example, it is worth mentioning the impact on the Médici government in November 1973 of the African countries' support for Argentina against Brazil in their dispute over the utilization of Paraná River, by voting in favor of UN Resolution no. 3,129 which demanded prior consultation for cooperative exploitation of resources shared by two or more states. *Idem*, p. 37. For Brazil-Argentine dispute over the issue, see LIMA, Maria Regina Soares de. *The Political Economy of Brazilian Foreign Policy: Nuclear Energy, Trade and Itaipu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Vanderbilt University, Tennessee, August 1986, particularly, pp. 356-372.

597 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC. The general ideas expressed in this circular were restated some months later in a speech delivered by the Head of the Department of Africa, Asia and Oceania of Itamaraty, Minister Ítalo Zappa, in the Higher War College (Escola Superior de Guerra/ESG), on July 3, lately published by a military periodical: "O Brasil e a África Subsaariana" in *Segurança e Desenvolvimento*, ano XXIV, no. 158, 1975, pp. 35-51. Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

598 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC and interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

599 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, June 7, 1979, CPDOC.

600 *Idem*.

colonialism. Indeed, the announcement that the new Portuguese government was ready to give self-determination to the African colonies (April 26, 1974) relieved Brazil of its commitment to support Portuguese colonialism. However, it would not be correct to ascribe the effective change of Brazilian policy solely to the Portuguese political shift. In fact the unexpected initial resistance from the new Portuguese regime to working on the issue along with Brazil<sup>601</sup> and Africa's equal recalcitrance due to Brazil's past stance on the question<sup>602</sup> pushed the country towards a more autonomous and pro-independence attitude. As a result, Brazil recognized the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on July 18, 1974<sup>603</sup>, e.g., seventeen days before the announcement that Portugal was prepared to sign an agreement with this country for the immediate transfer of power<sup>604</sup>.

Nevertheless, as Monica Hirst put it, "although the chief political point was Brazil's anti-colonialist position, the rapprochement with African colonies also had specific political implications due to the prevailing ideological options within the African

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601 According to Selcher, Portuguese Foreign Minister Mário Soares ignored the possibilities of Brazil playing a mediatory role on the issue, by choosing to consult European partners, as well as to talk directly to the African guerrilla leaders. SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

602 It is worth noting that Brazil's efforts to collaborate with both parts expressed in the statement sent to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on June 8, 1974 in response to the OAU request, were totally fruitless. No significant step or even answer seems to have come from the African countries in reply to the Brazilian declaration. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year I, no. I, Brasília, June 1974, p. 67. SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 49. Nevertheless, the clearly ineffective OUA chairmanship of Idi Amin and its consequences for the OUA's ascendancy over the African countries as a whole, should not be ruled out as a reasonable explanation for the low impact of this exchange of letters.

603 SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 51 and MARTINIÈRE, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

604 This announcement followed UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim visit to Lisbon for talks with Portuguese leaders, between August 2-4, 1974. SOBEL, Lester A. (Ed.) *Portuguese Revolution (1974-1976)*, New York, Facts and File, Inc., 1976, p. 70.



national liberation struggle”<sup>605</sup>. Thus, in spite of the new positive mood towards the rapprochement with Africa, it is not the same as saying that this rapprochement would happen regardless of the ideological implications involved. It is really surprising that there is no evidence of complaints from the conservative supporters of Brazilian government against the recognition of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, a Marxist-backed state. The reasons are various. Amongst them, the fact that, as posited by the then Head of Asian, African and Oceanic Department, Ambassador Ítalo Zappa (during a lecture in the ESG), in spite of the socialist countries’ support for the PAIGC (Partido Africano de Independência da Guinea e Cabo Verde/African Party of the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde), this group knew how to avoid an excessive commitment to the extreme left<sup>606</sup>. Secondly, not only had the UN already issued a resolution in favor of Guinean sovereignty (Resolution no. 3,061/XXVIII), but the OAU, as well as 84 individual states, had already recognized the new Republic. Finally, due to the Portuguese resistance in accepting Brazilian mediation, and due to the need for Brazil to demonstrate its good intentions towards African decolonization so as to ensure the necessary rapprochement on the Continent as a whole, the prompt recognition of Guinea-Bissau, regardless of its ideological profile, seemed an imperative gesture for Brazil to make.

In the Angolan case, however, the conditions were very different. Brazil recognized the MPLA government on the day of its independence; it did so before all Western countries and, moreover, it supported the Cuban-Soviet-backed group to the detriment of two pro-Western possible rulers, FNLA (Frente

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605 HIRST, Monica. *Pesos e Medidas da Política Externa Brasileira*. IV Reunião dos Centros Membros do RIAL, Universidad Simón Bolívar, Caracas, October 4-6, 1982, p. 16 (paper). Translated by the author.

606 ZAPPA, I. *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

Nacional para Libertação de Angola/National Front for Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola/Nation Union for Total Independence in Angola). It is to the specificities of the Angolan case that I shall now turn.

### 6.3. Brazil defines its position towards Angola: “To the winner, the potatoes”<sup>607</sup>

The decision to recognize Guinean independence opened up a new era of Brazilian policy towards African colonialism. Therefore a special tour around Africa was scheduled. Following Azeredo da Silveira’s visit to Dakar (November 25-29, 1974), Ambassador Zappa went to Africa to start talks with the leaders of the national liberation movements. Then Silveira left Africa for Lisbon for talks with his colleague, Foreign Minister Mário Soares (December 2-4, 1974)<sup>608</sup>.

Silveira’s visit to Senegal could be basically interpreted as a symbolic gesture towards the African continent<sup>609</sup>, notwithstanding the concession of a US\$ 10 million credit to Senegal to finance the import of Brazilian products and the signature of an agreement for technical cooperation<sup>610</sup>. It should also be noticed, however, that during his visit Silveira met all Brazilian representatives in Africa in order to orchestrate the new foreign policy towards the continent<sup>611</sup>.

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607 This expression was originally coined by the Brazilian novelist Machado de Assis, in one of his most famous novels. It is nowadays employed to indicate a pre-commitment taken by the adversaries and/or by the observers of a dispute, towards the winner being awarded the object of dispute. ASSIS, Machado de. *Philosopher or dog? (Quincas Borba)*, Nova York, Noonday Press, 1954, pp. 11-12.

608 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year I, no. III, Brasília, December 1974, pp. 45-49.

609 Actually, the fact that Silveira had started his tour by Africa and only after had gone to Portugal was regarded as “significant” by the Senegalese Foreign Minister, Assane Sekk. “Neopragmatismo”. *Vêja*, December 4, 1974, p. 25.

610 MARTINIERE, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 52.

611 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Relatório*, Brasília, 1974, p. 75 and interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC.

As for Silveira's visit to Lisbon, that should be seen as an attempt to update both Brazil's and Portugal's respective positions<sup>612</sup>. By this time, both countries had finally decided to formulate a cooperative – although not necessarily common – policy towards Angolan and Mozambiquean decolonization, as a result of the previous talks held between Silveira and Mário Soares in New York on September, 1974<sup>613</sup>, when in response to a Portuguese request, it was settled that Brazil would send a special representative to Luanda<sup>614</sup>.

Before that, however, Ambassador Zappa, who was known for his ability to combine political and diplomatic skills, had been invited by Silveira to head the Africa, Asia and Oceania Department. Indeed, even before he showed such skills abroad, Zappa worked on behalf on the new Brazilian policy towards African decolonization by giving speeches at the Higher War College as well as by preparing official documents to be sent to Brazilian embassies and consulates on this matter. By way of example, on July 4, 1974, Zappa gave a speech at the Higher War College stating Brazilian interests (and even obligations) in having a say in favor of African decolonization<sup>615</sup>. Hence, a few months later it was time for

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612 The Portuguese revolution was by then under the third Provisional Government, led by Prime Minister General Vasco Gonçalves, a leftist who was the senior ideologist of the AMF. Moreover, General Antonio de Spínola, a well-known moderate, with old connections with the Portuguese colonialism had already resigned (September 30, 1974), leaving power almost exclusively in the hands of leftist military officers and civilians who were very much in favor of the African independence.

613 STUMPF, André G. & PEREIRA, M. *A Segunda Guerra: sucessão de Geisel*, São Paulo, Ed. Braziliense, 1979, p. 82.

614 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC. In fact, according to Ovídio de Melo, who was later named Brazilian Special Representative to the Angolan transitional government, he was informed about the possibility of being sent to Luanda as such, before Silveira departed to Lisbon in December. Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992 and interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

615 ZAPPA, I. *Op. cit.* and interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

him to make the first direct contacts with the leaders of African liberation movements towards the establishment of a normal relationship with the future new African states<sup>616</sup>. Furthermore, the aim of his mission – which was performed with Geisel’s permission – was to clarify that Brazil would recognize whoever came to power, refusing to single out any group or committing support to anyone<sup>617</sup>. As appropriately put by Ovídio Abreu de Melo, it was then that the implementation of the policy of “To the winner, the potatoes” (“Ao vencedor, as batatas”) was decided<sup>618</sup>. For Zappa met Agostinho Neto (MPLA), Holden Roberto (FNLA), Wilson Santos (UNITA) and Samora Machel (FRELIMO – Frente de Libertação de Moçambique/Liberation Front of Mozambique)<sup>619</sup>.

As a result of this trip, and following the signature of the Alvor Agreements<sup>620</sup>, the then Brazilian General Counsellor to London, Ovídio de Andrade Melo, was designated to go on a special mission to Angola and Mozambique to propose the creation of a special representation before the transitional governments<sup>621</sup>. In the case of Melo succeeding in his endeavor, Brazil would be the first country to establish a diplomatic representation before the future states, and as a result, Brazil would make a symbolic

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616 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Relatório*. Departamento de Administração, Brasília, 1974, pp. 8-9.

617 Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

618 Interview with Ovídio Abreu de Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

619 “Um bom início”. *Veja*, December 18, 1974, p. 29.

620 Following the Mombasa Summit (January 3-5, 1975) when the three Angolan liberation movements agreed on a common platform of negotiation with the Portuguese government, the so called Alvor Agreement was signed between Portugal and the three Angolan liberation movements, on January 15, 1975 in the Portuguese province of Algarve. Under the terms of this agreement, a transitional government to be run by the three groups was established, the duties of the Portuguese High Commissioner were spelled out, free elections within nine months were scheduled, and the Independence Day to be proclaimed on November 11, 1975 was finally settled. For the complete text of Alvor Accord see Sola S. *Op. cit.*, Appendix II, pp. 228-235.

621 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

gesture towards Africa by showing its commitment to make up for the loss of time<sup>622</sup>. At that moment, however, things developed in a more complicated way than it had been initially expected.

In spite of Geisel's continuous efforts to free Brazil from its historical opposition to African decolonization, by supporting the struggle for independence and recognizing Guinean independence even before Lisbon had done so, deep and old wounds could not be cured by a treatment started so recently. Hence, whilst the Angolans were too split to snub such an offer, Mozambique could count on FRELIMO's strength exemplified by its control of the Mozambiquean transitional government<sup>623</sup>, to express its less than delight with Brazil's fresh anti-colonialism<sup>624</sup>. Thus, whereas Melo was well received by the three Angolan movements, FRELIMO representatives denied Brazil the creation of such a representation, on the grounds of Brazil's past positions on African decolonization<sup>625</sup>.

At this moment it became clear to Ovídio de Andrade Melo – if not yet to all Brazilian main decision makers – that an exemplary Brazilian stance regarding the Angolan independence process had become almost a prerequisite for a good relationship with Mozambique<sup>626</sup>. FRELIMO was acting as a self-appointed custodian of Angolan liberation movement. Actually, despite the

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622 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, former Head of Minister Azeredo da Silveira Cabinet, Rio de Janeiro, December 5, 1991.

623 ANDRESEN-GUIMARAES, Fernando J. C. C. *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War*. Ph.D. Thesis, London School of Economics, London, March 1992, p. 269.

624 Indeed, in his first press conference, provisional Prime Minister Joaquim Chissano "criticized Brazil for its lack of support in the liberation struggle and placed future relations with Brazil on the same undecided and uneasy plane as those with South Africa". *O Globo*, September 18, 1974, p. 28, quoted by SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

625 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

626 *Idem*.

fact that Mozambiquean independence was proclaimed on June 25, 1975, and that Brazil had actually tried to establish diplomatic relations with Maputo before those with Luanda<sup>627</sup>, they were only achieved on November 15, 1975, i.e. almost five months after Mozambiquean independence, and not by coincidence just four days after Brazilian recognition of Angolan independence.

Hence, by having the situation resolved in this way, Brazil now had to work on the alternatives at stake in the Angolan case. Therefore, taking the view that Brazil should do whatever possible to avoid Communist penetration in Africa<sup>628</sup>, the Brazilian government decided to contribute to the agreed transference of power from Portuguese to Angolan rulers as a way of helping the new state to achieve political and, as a result, economic independence. What Brazil had not counted on was the possibility of a civil war starting during the process, and, moreover, of the MPLA being the winner<sup>629</sup>. So, it is to Ovídio de Andrade Melo's mission in Angola, and to the period when Brazilian decision makers had to detect and to ponder on its options, that I shall now turn.

#### 6.4. The weighing up of costs and benefits

The document communicating the designation of Brazil's Special Representative to the Angolan Transitional Government dates from February 26, 1975<sup>630</sup>. From then until the beginning of November, Ovídio de Andrade Melo was supposed to follow the

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627 Interview with Geraldo Holanda Cavalcanti, São Paulo, January 14, 1992.

628 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst and Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985.

629 It should be noted that the MPLA was in an inferior position when this decision was taken. SOREMEKUM, *S. Op. cit.*, pp. 80-92.

630 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year II, no. IV, Brasília, March 1975, p. 92.

process of transition on fair and impartial grounds. He was also supposed to work on behalf of future Brazil-Angola cooperation, by offering humanitarian aid to the leaders of all three liberation groups. Nevertheless, the apparent routine work of accompanying a transitional period which was supposed to end in a peaceful and institutional choice of a government, turned to be a confusing and risky job with limited options, when clashes between the three rival groups started.

According to Melo's testimony, from his first meetings with the leaders of the three liberation groups it was clear which was the most prepared, although not necessarily the most likely group, to run the new state, i.e., the MPLA<sup>631</sup>. In fact, a similar opinion about the MPLA's capabilities was shared by the Admiral Leonel Cardoso, the last Portuguese High Commissioner<sup>632</sup>, by some Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers<sup>633</sup> and by US diplomats in Luanda<sup>634</sup>. Hence, Melo recalls that he gave full evidence of this superiority in his reports to Itamaraty<sup>635</sup>.

However, the overall profile of each group, including their ethnic, social and ideological contours had also to be taken into consideration by the Brazilian government. The first two aspects were very important in terms of assessing how much representativeness each of them was within the country<sup>636</sup>.

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631 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

632 "As derradeiras palavras de Portugal". *Veja*, November 19, 1975, p. 36.

633 STOCKWELL, J. *In Search of Enemies - a CIA story*, London, Andre Deutsch, 1978, pp. 63-64.

634 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

635 *Idem*.

636 MPLA was the organization with the strongest support amongst Angolan intellectuals and in the musseques (slums) surrounding Luanda, as well as ethnically related to de Mbundu movement. As for the FNLA, it was basically supported by the Bakongo tribe in North-western Angola and in Zaire. Finally, UNITA, the smallest group, had the Ovimbundu tribe as its supporters, mainly based in the Central and Eastern Angolan plateau. For an account of Angolan movements social and

Nevertheless, as far as Brazil was concerned, those aspects did not touch upon matters of Brazilian national interest. The latter feature, however, was a crucial element to be assessed. Indeed the political and ideological affiliation of each group indicated their likely international supporters and, as a consequence, it touched upon Brazil's political as well as strategic concerns.

Therefore, Brazil had to ponder on the FNLA's links with the United States – basically through the covert action performed by the CIA –, with Zaire and with South Africa, to say nothing about China; UNITA's initial links with China, and then with the United States and South Africa; and MPLA's connections with the Soviet Union, Cuba and Eastern Europe<sup>637</sup>.

Although Geisel had made clear that the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism” would no longer be determined by “automatic alignments”, he did not mean that Brazilian foreign policy should be formulated regardless of Brazil's association with the Western alliance. In so doing the involvement of Western countries, the United States in particular, had to be taken into account, particularly due to the strong pro-Western stance espoused by the Brazilian military class.

The indirect US involvement in the Angolan civil war, by means of CIA action and financial support to FNLA and later to UNITA, was conspicuous<sup>638</sup>. However, as long as this policy was being enforced unofficially, e.g., by covert means, Brazil could

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ethno-linguistic origins, see MARCUM, John. *The Angolan Revolution - The anatomy of an explosion*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969, v. 1, Chapter 1-3, pp. 13-120.

637 For an account of Angolan liberation movement's connections abroad see ANDRESEN-GUIMARÃES, F. *Op. cit.*, pp. 57-91. NEWSUM, H. E. & ABEGUNRIN, Olayiwola. *United States Foreign Policy Towards Southern Africa*, London, The Macmillan Press, 1987, p. 32 and pp. 56-61. STOCKWELL, J. *Op. cit.* SOREMEKUM, S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

638 LITWAK, Robert S. *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine - American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability (1969-1976)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 175-190.



maintain its policy of neutrality with respect to the Angolan rival groups<sup>639</sup>. In addition, the indication that Washington did not want to be directly and openly involved in the conflict, due to its recent involvement in Vietnam, and its aim to avoid direct confrontation with Moscow<sup>640</sup>, helped to give the Brazilian position a stronger and more solid basis.

Nevertheless, Geisel's government could not disregard Cuban support for the MPLA. The main aspect to consider was Castro's foreign policy doctrine of support for revolution around the globe. Hence, the possibility of Cuba getting a safe base in Angola, opposite the Brazilian coast, was an important factor in shaping Brazilian stance towards this group.

However, the Brazilian government had also to consider the control of the oil rich enclave of Cabinda when defining its position<sup>641</sup>. Indeed, as earlier mentioned, the effects of the oil crisis on the Brazilian economy were very much responsible for the adoption of a new stance on African decolonization. In addition, since the late sixties, when PETROBRAS was chaired by General Geisel (1969-1973), Brazil had been developing oil exploration plans in Angola<sup>642</sup>. Hence, the developments of the civil war and the assessment of the latter by the Gulf Oil Corporation – the most important company in operation in Cabinda – eventually favored

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639 It is worth noting that US attempts to convince Brazil to send black soldiers to Angola to help them in their covert military action against the MPLA, all failed. Both Minister Azeredo da Silveira and President Geisel himself totally refused to collaborate. Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC and interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

640 For US policy towards Angola, see ANDRESEN-GUIMARÃES, *F.Op. cit.*, pp. 369-407.

641 Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, Rio de Janeiro, December 5, 1991 and HURRELL, Andrew. *Brazil and the Third World - New Directions in Brazilian Foreign Policy*. Master's Thesis, St. Antony's College, University of Oxford, April 1982, p. 48.

642 SELCHER, Wayne A. "Brazilian Relations with Portuguese Africa in the context of the elusive 'Luso-Brazilian Community'". *Op. cit.*, p. 32.

taking the side of the MPLA's as far as Geisel was concerned. Indeed, by mid-1975 the MPLA had secured control of Cabinda<sup>643</sup> and not only were Gulf sure that the MPLA was the likely successor to the Portuguese rule, due to its position as the most popular group in Angola, but furthermore the company had got the MPLA's word that it would not start a nationalization process which would have affected Gulf's business in the region. As the ultimate concern of Gulf was to stay in business in Angola<sup>644</sup>, it supported the MPLA during the transitional period from Portuguese rule<sup>645</sup>.

Likewise, Brazil also had to guarantee the possibility of access to the Angolan oil resources. Therefore, I shall now reconstruct the steps taken by Geisel and his closest advisers in their assessment of the best policy to be pursued, considering the expected political problems stemming from support of the MPLA, and the likely economic benefits of doing so.

Following a visit made by the Head of the Africa, Asia and Oceania Department, Ítalo Zappa, to Luanda, Ovídio de Andrade Melo was called back for consultation in Brasilia. That was in early August<sup>646</sup>, when the situation in Angola was relatively calm with no significant change in the general balance, which was inclined to favor the MPLA<sup>647</sup> and when there were doubts about Lisbon's intentions to honor the Alvor Agreements. According to Melo, at this moment Zappa proposed the closure of the Brazilian Special Representation. The motives being not only the precarious situation under which Melo was working in Luanda, but also

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643 MARCUM, J. *Op. cit.*, v. II, pp. 261-262 and LITWAK, R. S. *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

644 Only on December 21, did Gulf finally temporarily suspend its operations in Cabinda.

645 NEWSUM, H. E. & ABEGUNRIN, O. *Op. cit.*, p. 31. In September 1975, Gulf paid US\$ 116 million in royalties into an MPLA bank account. LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 217.

646 Minister Ítalo Zappa was on his way back from the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, in Kampala from July 28, 1975 to August 1, 1975.

647 ANDRESEN-GUIMARAES, F. *Op. cit.*, p. 84.

the presumed domestic difficulties that the likely recognition of Angolan independence would bring about, given the MPLA supremacy<sup>648</sup>. Although I could not confirm the accuracy of this information – indeed the latter has been denied by Ambassador Zappa himself<sup>649</sup> –, the fact is that the call for consultation indicates a moment of indecision, or even of retreat, in Brazilian attitude towards Angolan process of independence.

However, following talks between Lisbon and Brasilia<sup>650</sup>, and notwithstanding Lisbon's decision to suspend the Alvor Agreement in August 29<sup>651</sup>, Brazil kept its initial policy for the sake of saving Brazilian future relations with Angola, Mozambique and all other Black African countries, sending Ovídio de Andrade Melo back to Luanda in early September.

From then until early November, however, the situation became even worse. The escalation of the Angolan civil war after the South African action inside the country to “protect” the Cunene River hydroelectric project<sup>652</sup>, brought the question of external intervention, and moreover the suspicions of Cuban presence in Angola, to the forefront of the international debate.

Robin Hallet gives us several examples of reports claiming Cuban presence in Angola, long before the date of independence<sup>653</sup>. For instance, on October 19, Jonas Savimbi was quoted in *Le Monde*, claiming that 750 Cuban soldiers had landed on the south coast of Angola to serve in the ranks of the MPLA, along with

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648 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992.

649 Interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

650 “Brasil ajudará a pacificar Angola”. *O Estado de São Paulo*, August 24, 1975.

651 SOBEL, Lester A. (Ed.) *Op. cit.*, p. 128.

652 ANDRESEN-GUIMARAES, F. *Op. cit.*, p. 84.

653 HALLET, Robin. “The South-African Intervention in Angola (1975-1976)”. *African Affairs*, v. 77, no. 308, July 1978, pp. 347-386.

10,000 tons of war material<sup>654</sup>. Four days later, another report carried by *Le Monde* allegedly based on a “reliable source”, stated that 1,500 Cubans were fighting in the ranks of the MPLA or were on the point of arriving in Luanda for this purpose<sup>655</sup>.

Other public indications of Cuban direct involvement in Angolan civil war were published in *The Observer* in London on November 9, 1975. Then it was reported that MPLA had been assisted by Cuban “commando specialists with small naval assault vessels” in their successful assault in Lobito and Benguela<sup>656</sup>.

Finally, even in the Brazilian press it was possible to read reports on the issue, even if somewhat delayed<sup>657</sup>.

Having listed these examples, I argue that although the disclosure of Cuban presence in Angola by Washington occurred only on November 24, 1975<sup>658</sup>, indeed coming in the wake of the US domestic debate about the disclosure of American covert assistance to the FNLA & UNITA<sup>659</sup> and in spite of Henry Kissinger himself having criticized the inefficiency of US Intelligence on this respect<sup>660</sup>, it is a matter of fact that reports about the likely Cuban action in Angola were available

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654 *Idem*, p. 364.

655 *Idem, ibidem*. Although it is not my objective to scrutinize these reports, it is indeed noticeable that many details present in the latter coincide with those later published on which is perhaps the most reliable source on the subject so far, e.g., Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s chronicle of the so called “Operación Carlota”. MARQUEZ, Garcia. *Operación Carlota*, Lima, Sabueso Contemporáneo, Mosca Azul & Horizonte Editores, 1977.

656 HALLET, R. *Op. cit.*, p. 355.

657 “De olho no Brasil”. *Jornal do Brasil*, November 10, 1975, refers to the recent news published by *The Daily Telegraph* reporting the landing of over 1,000 Cuban mercenaries in Angola.

658 MARQUEZ, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

659 LITWAK, Robert S. *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

660 It is worth noting that Kissinger himself had declared in a speech on a visit to Venezuela that “our intelligence services have grown so bad that we only found out that the Cubans were being sent to Angola after they were already there”. *Idem, ibidem*.

long before<sup>661</sup>. In other words, it is hard to believe that Cuban involvement was not subject of Brazilian suspicions, even if its escalation happened after November 11<sup>662</sup>. Indeed, according to perhaps the most reliable source on the subject, Geisel himself was quite aware of Cuban presence in Angola before Brazilian recognition was accomplished<sup>663</sup>. Nevertheless, even if it was not the case, I claim that the Brazilian stance should not be appraised only on the basis of a possible unawareness of the fact, but on the assumption of its continuous assessment of the question, since the process of involvement should not be seen solely as the result of a single decision, but rather as a slowly escalating process<sup>664</sup>. Nevertheless, supposing the question of Cuban troops had been assessed separately from the implementation of the recognition of the MPLA, the dismissal of the fact would be expected, due to its startling cumulative effect<sup>665</sup>. Therefore, Itamaraty's note to the *O Estado de São Paulo* dated November 9, denying knowledge of the question<sup>666</sup>, reveals a strong desire not to encourage debate about the issue. Therefore, it is my hypothesis that the news about Cuban presence in Angola was deliberately played down by Brazilian decision makers – Geisel and Silveira in particular – in order to stick to their intention to recognize Angolan independence. Another question, however, is to what extent they misperceived the impact of this fact on the more conservative members of the government.

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661 Litwak says that in August 1975, reports were issued of significant Cuban involvement in support of the MPLA, as well as South African involvement in support of the FNLA & UNITA. *Idem*, p. 183.

662 HALLET, R. *Op. cit.*, p. 371.

663 Interview with General Ernesto Geisel, by Maria Celina Soares D'Araújo and Celso Castro, Rio de Janeiro, February 1994. CPDOC/FGV.

664 HALLET, R. *Op. cit.*, p. 365.

665 For a discussion about the implications of fragmentation of issues within incremental processes, see BRAYBROOKE, D. & LINDBLOM, C. E. *A Strategy of Decision*, New York, Free Press, 1970.

666 "Diplomacia suspeitosa". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 11, 1975.

## 6.5. Brazil honors its word: the recognition of Angolan independence

Eventually the moment arrived when the final decision had to be announced. In late October/early November, Brazil's Special Representative began to send messages to Itamaraty asking for instructions, since the MPLA leaders were demanding a decision from Brasilia<sup>667</sup>. Azeredo da Silveira was aware of the delicacy of the situation and, obviously, his responsibility was to give the best advice possible to President Geisel<sup>668</sup>. It was then that the Brazilian Foreign Minister decided to consult other countries.

Aware of the seriousness of the question, Azeredo da Silveira tried to get international backing for presenting his suggestion to Geisel. Thus in early November he had talks with Great-Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, and, not surprisingly, with the United States. Despite those countries doubts regarding their own positions, all of them seem to have understood Brazil's intention to recognize Angolan independence<sup>669</sup>. Or, at least, that was the impression Azeredo da Silveira got and the one he delivered to President Geisel.

In possession of this information, and also of two documents presenting the reasons in favor of the recognition of the MPLA – one prepared by Ítalo Zappa and the other by the then General Secretary of Itamaraty, Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro<sup>670</sup> – Azeredo

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667 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

668 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst and Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985.

669 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro, May 24, 1979, CPDOC and interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst & Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985.

670 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst and Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985.

da Silveira called President Geisel. Then, following the common procedure observed by Geisel and Silveira of consulting each other on urgent matters by phone, they finally reached a decision<sup>671</sup>. Subsequently, just two days before the date of Angolan independence, Ovídio de Andrade Melo was finally informed of his country's decision<sup>672</sup>.

Distinct versions account for the way this issue was contemplated by the members of the National Security Council, if so. There are those who say that Geisel addressed the Council by letter and all its members voted in favor of the recognition of the MPLA government<sup>673</sup>. Whilst others say that the decision did not rest on the unanimity of the members, but on a sufficient (sic) number of votes being in its support<sup>674</sup>. Whatever the case, the decision was fundamentally made on the grounds of Itamaraty's reports, since it was based on the papers made by Melo, Ítalo Zappa and Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, all handed in by Silveira to President Geisel<sup>675</sup>, which asserted "the MPLA's unquestionable capabilities to enforce its control over the country"<sup>676</sup>. Given the strong reaction against the decision soon after it had been announced, and moreover, after the confirmation of the presence of Cuban troops in Angola, I argue that this particular and, indeed, fundamental information was deliberately played down or even suppressed in the reports sent to the NSC members.

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671 Interview with Ambassador Italo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, January 7, 1992 and February 10, 1992.

672 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

673 STUMPF, André G. & PEREIRA, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

674 "Itamaraty foge ao parecer de militares para decidir", by Carlos Marchi. *Jornal do Brasil*, July 2, 1979.

675 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst & Leticia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985 and GÓES, Walder de. *O Brasil do General Geisel - estudo do processo de tomada de decisão no regime militar burocrático*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1978, p. 38.

676 ABREU, Hugo de. *O Outro Lado do Poder*, Rio de Janeiro, Ed. Nova Fronteira, 1979, p. 55. Translated by the author.

It is in this sense that I claim that it was precisely 1) because of the outstanding prestige of Itamaraty in the eyes of the military regime, which used to give this agency a considerable amount of autonomy; 2) due to Geisel's autocratic style and to the strong influence his Foreign Minister had over foreign issues, both aspects able to keep possible obstacles at bay; and 3) due to a likely misperception by Geisel/Azeredo da Silveira of the eventual reaction of the more conservative supporters of Brazilian regime about the Cuban presence in Angola, that a decision which, in fact, did not fully fulfill the expectations of the military regime was finally implemented.

Having said that, I shall move to the reasons presented for recognizing the Angolan independence, despite direct Cuban involvement with the MPLA. As stated earlier, the *Machadiana* rationale was the core of Geisel's policy on the issue. Moreover, as later stated in an official document, in so doing Brazil intended to secure a good relationship with the rest of Black Africa<sup>677</sup>. I have already mentioned the Mozambiquean resistance to accepting the Brazilian new policy towards Africa without proof of good will. Therefore, only after Brazil decided to send Ovídio de Melo back to Luanda in September, did Azeredo da Silveira succeed in making arrangements with Joaquim Chissano over the establishment of diplomatic relations between Brasilia and Maputo<sup>678</sup>. Moreover, only after Brazil honored its commitment to Angola, by recognizing its independence on November 11, did

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677 "The recognition of Angolan independence on the very same day as its declaration positively contributed to the development of the relationship between Brazil and the group of Portuguese speaking African countries". Translated by the author. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Realizações do Governo Geisel (1974-1979)*. Relatório, s/d, p. 87. Translated by the author.

678 This agreement was made when both met during the UN General Assembly in September. "Brasil terá Embaixador em Moçambique". *Jornal do Brasil*, November 15, 1975 and "O governo da FRELIMO define relações com o Brasil". *O Globo*, September 18, 1974.



Mozambique normalize its relations with Brazil, on November 15, 1975<sup>679</sup>.

Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that by recognizing the MPLA, Geisel assured that a good relationship with Angola would be guaranteed even if the situation was later reversed. In other words, it was thought that due to the other two groups' pro-Western profile, it would be easier for Brazil to repair possible damage with them resulting from the recognition of the MPLA, than the contrary<sup>680</sup>. Therefore, Brazil should not fear any possibility of having harmed its economic and political interests in Angola, even if the final outcome of the waging civil war happened to favor other groups than the MPLA.

### 6.6. The impact of the decision

Brasilia recognized Angolan independence on the same day it was proclaimed<sup>681</sup>. Indeed, in order to relay its decision as soon as possible, the note was issued in Brasilia at 8 p.m. on November 10, to coincide with Angolan time<sup>682</sup>. Portugal, in its turn, only announced the transfer of sovereignty to the "Angolan people" (November 10), through its High Commissioner in Angola, without actually recognizing any formal ruler of the new state. In so doing,

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679 "Brasil terá Embaixador em Moçambique". *Jornal do Brasil*, November 15, 1975. "Resistência à política externa supera previsão". *Visão*, December 8, 1975, p. 30. "Angola: recuo pode ser total". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 25, 1975. BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year II, no. VII, Brasília, Oct./Nov./Dec. 1975, p. 131.

680 Interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, by Aspázia Camargo, Monica Hirst & Letícia Pinheiro, Petrópolis, March 23, 1985.

681 Likewise, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe, Congo Republic, Guinea, Algeria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Mali, Mauritania and Mongolia recognized the Angolan Independence. Later in February, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, Austria, Finland, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Japan and Zaire followed them. SOBEL, Lester A. (Ed.) *Op. cit.*, p. 125 and 130.

682 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

Lisbon indicated that it was not yet recognizing the authority of any of the national liberation groups, which were still waging war throughout Angola<sup>683</sup>.

A deliberate effort was made by Itamaraty towards drafting a note of recognition which would not result in the government being criticized for having favored one particular side, i.e., the MPLA<sup>684</sup>. It was phrased in such a way that Brazil recognized the government *installed* in Luanda, and there was no mention of the MPLA:

*On the date established for the declaration of Angolan independence – November 11, 1975 – the Brazilian Government recognizes the Government installed in Luanda (...). Since the creation, on January 31, of the Transitional Government of Angola, the Brazilian Government, absolutely neutral and determined not to intervene in the Angolan domestic affairs, maintained a Special Representation in Luanda, which will be converted to an Embassy by the establishment of diplomatic relations. By aiming to strength the natural links between the two countries, the Brazilian Government adopts the position of rigorously respecting the internal political process of this country<sup>685</sup>.*

A similar artifice in recognizing the government installed in Luanda, instead of the government of the MPLA, was also employed by Sweden, The Netherlands, Italy and Egypt<sup>686</sup>. On

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683 SOBEL, Lester A. (Ed.) *Op. cit.*, p. 125. In fact, Portugal recognized the government formed by the MPLA only on February 22, 1976 and severed bilateral relations just three months after, on May 19.

684 "Para o Brasil, o poder é do MPLA" by Carlos Conde. *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 12, 1975. Interview with Ambassador Luiz Augusto Pereira Souto Maior, Rio de Janeiro, December 5, 1991 and interview with Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, Rio de Janeiro, February 10, 1992.

685 BRASIL. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Realizações do Governo Geisel (1974-1979)*. Relatório, s/d, p. 88. Translated by the author.

686 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Autoritarismo e Democracia na Argentina e Brasil - uma década de política exterior (1973-1984)*, São Paulo, Ed. Convívio, 1988, p. 49.

contrary, the Soviet government bluntly declared the USSR's recognition of the independence of the People's Republic of Angola, which had been "gained under the leadership of the MPLA"<sup>687</sup>. Other countries, however, such as Turkey, Cyprus, Zambia, Zaire and Luxembourg, actually recognized the FNLA and UNITA government<sup>688</sup>.

However, despite Itamaraty's ability to produce an impartial note of recognition, this fact did not succeed in inhibiting subsequent criticisms of Brazil's final decision from several voices within the country.

Following the announcement of the recognition, several newspapers spelled out their opposition<sup>689</sup>. No doubt this opposition came from the more conservative groups, especially from those directly or indirectly related to the Luso community in Brazil and from the military within and outside the government<sup>690</sup>. Although the criticisms were largely addressed to Azeredo da Silveira, who was accused of being the main responsible for the decision<sup>691</sup>, some of them also demanded direct explanation from President Geisel himself<sup>692</sup>. The criticisms were directly related to deep concerns over Brazilian security due to the Cuban involvement in the conflict on MPLA side – either as an autonomous actor or as a Soviet proxy. Moreover, the alleged hastiness by which the decision had been taken, which disregarded the existence of other

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687 "Soviet Union has recognized People's Republic of Angola". *Soviet News*, no. 5,810, November 18, 1975, p. 398.

688 CAMARGO, Sonia de & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

689 "Dize-me com quem andas e dir-te-ei quem és". *Jornal da Tarde*, November 13, 1975. "Má Companhia". *Jornal do Brasil*, November 15, 1975. "A palavra que falta". *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 16, 1975.

690 STUMPF, André G. & PEREIRA, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 81. "O holandês do Itamaraty". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 24, 1975 and interview with General Carlos de Meira Mattos, Rio de Janeiro, February 1992.

691 "No gelo". *Relatório Reservado*, December 23-29, 1975, year IX, no. 483.

692 "A palavra que falta". *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 16, 1975.

alternative groups to run the new Angolan state, was also an object of reproach<sup>693</sup>.

Within the military circles, it is worth mentioning the speech made by the Head of the Navy School (Comandante da Escola Naval), Admiral Ibsen Gusmão, which stated, in Geisel's presence, that Brazil's "most legitimate interests would be affected if the control of the South Atlantic should fall into the hands of a superpower traditionally foreign to the ocean area contiguous to our territory"<sup>694</sup>. Following that, other important military representatives also stressed their apprehension over the decision<sup>695</sup>. Presumably this concern was very much influenced by the similar stance the US military were spelling out, although there is no evidence of the Pentagon having actually worked on its links with Brazil's Armed Forces.

This outcry was reinforced by another controversial Brazilian decision in the foreign policy area. Also on November 11, the Brazilian delegation in the UN confirmed the vote previously taken in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee in mid-October, voting in favor of Resolution no. 3,379/XXX which defined Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination<sup>696</sup>. Together these decisions led to a strong questioning of how Brazilian foreign policy was being handled<sup>697</sup>,

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693 "Independência Dividida". *Jornal do Brasil*, November 11, 1975.

694 "Saúde e Política". *Veja*, December 31, 1975, p. 23.

695 "Quem determina a nossa política externa". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 20, 1975, cites General Azir Benjamin Chalub, Head of High Command of the Armed Forces School, General Paulo Cesar Pinheiro de Menezes, Head of Military Engineering Institute, and Fritz Manso, Head of the Army Staff, as also having spelled out their regards on the issue.

696 UN. GENERAL ASSEMBLY. *Resolutions and Decisions Official Records*. Thirtieth Session (September 16 to December 17, 1975). United Nations, New York, 1976, pp. 83-84.

697 "Vitória do Racismo". *O Globo*, November 12, 1975. "Diplomacia e Democracia". *Folha de São Paulo*, November 14, 1975. "Para Senador Brossard, um voto de extrema infelicidade". *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 15, 1975. "Na defensiva". *Veja*, November 19, 1975, p. 24. "Resistência à política externa supera previsão". *Visão*, December 8, 1975, pp. 28-30.

especially as both decisions touched upon the Brasilia-Washington relationship.

Whilst the US government immediately put a lot of pressure on the Brazilian government to change its vote on Zionism<sup>698</sup>, US criticisms of Brazilian recognition of the MPLA government, took a little longer. They started only in mid-December both by the US Ambassador to the United Nations, and by the Secretary of State himself. Ambassador Moynihan's comments about the danger to Brazilian security as a result of a possible Soviet base being installed in Angola<sup>699</sup>, which very much coincided with Brazilian conservative military fears, were promptly dismissed by the Brazilian authorities who steadily reaffirmed the recognition of the MPLA government<sup>700</sup>. Kissinger's strong criticisms of Brazilian policy towards Angola, made to Azeredo da Silveira during the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (Paris, 16-18 December, 1975)<sup>701</sup>, were refuted by Silveira, who reaffirmed Brazil's decision and stressed the autonomy of Brazilian foreign policy<sup>702</sup>. Moreover, he declared that Brazil would not remove its representative in Luanda unless the US decided to intervene in the conflict by military means<sup>703</sup>.

In spite of those immediate replies, Brazil's chief decision makers could not avoid taking some steps in order to calm the

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698 "Itamaraty estranha nota de Washington sobre sionismo". *Jornal do Brasil*, October 25, 1975. "Itamaraty reage à nota oficial de Washington". *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 25, 1975. "Moynihan volta a criticar o Brasil". *Jornal do Brasil*, October 29, 1975.

699 "Angola poderá ameaçar o Brasil", by Sergio Motta Mello. *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 16, 1975. "Moynihan faz lembrar geopolítica de Golbery". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 17, 1975.

700 "MPLA não é ameaça ao Brasil". *O Estado de São Paulo*, November 17, 1975.

701 "Política Externa: autonomia difícil". *Relatório Reservado*, year IX, no. 484, Rio de Janeiro, January 6-12, 1976, p. 1.

702 *Idem*.

703 Interview with Azeredo da Silveira, by Maria Regina Soares de Lima & Monica Hirst, Rio de Janeiro and interview with Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro (General Secretary of Itamaraty from 1974 to 1978) by Monica Hirst, Aspázia Camargo and Leticia Pinheiro. Petrópolis, March 23, 1985. CPDOC/FGV.

critics. Whatever was decided, however, had to be done in accordance with Geisel's determination of: 1) not having Brazilian development hindered by overstated concerns about Brazilian security<sup>704</sup>; and – as the anti-Zionist vote episode indicates<sup>705</sup> – 2) not behaving solely according to Washington's views.

It was at this point that Geisel and Silveira reached the point of deliberating about the decision recently taken. Therefore it was necessary to outline the alternatives at stake.

### **6.7. The lesser of two evils: pondering alternatives**

Insofar as the Brazilian decision to recognize Angola's independence had already paid off by the improvement of the relationship between Brazil and Mozambique – the establishment of diplomatic relations dates from November 15 – and with prospects of significant improvements in Brazil-Africa relations as a whole, it was time to face its impact on the domestic environment. Therefore, Geisel and Silveira had to work out on how to placate the domestic opposition for the sake of the government's stability, without actually changing the direction of the "Pragmatic" foreign policy. In other words, the struggle to build a consensus by means of merging different points of view was initiated.

Amongst the possible alternatives there was the simple closing of the Brazilian Special Representation in Angola without taking any step towards the creation of a substitute post. This option, however, would mean the immediate halt of diplomatic relations with Luanda, which, after so much effort, was not an appealing

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704 Geisel's speech during his first meeting with the Cabinet. BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, E. *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

705 It is reported that after having assessed its miscalculation in voting in favor of the Resolution in the UN Committee, the Brazilian government indeed thought about stepping back in the General Assembly. Nevertheless, due to the public pressures exerted by Washington, Geisel decided to keep the original vote in order to preserve Brazilian autonomy. GÓES, Walder de. *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

option. Furthermore, this attitude would certainly be interpreted as a submission to internal and external pressures, leaving the door open for subsequent demands.

At the same time, the maintenance of the initial plans of immediately transforming the Special Representation into an Embassy, without making any efforts to appease domestic opposition, did not seem to be advisable, since it could hinder Geisel's future plans regarding the Brazilian foreign policy. Since he had taken office, Geisel was particularly concerned with the implementation of a "slow, gradual and safe" re-democratization as much as he was aware of the need to pursue a "responsible" pragmatic foreign policy, e.g., a policy which did not have too strong an impact on the conservative supporters of the regime<sup>706</sup>.

The first step to be taken was to lower the profile of Brazil's relationship with Luanda. Thus, Azeredo da Silveira instructed Ovídio de Melo not to have any further contact with the MPLA government<sup>707</sup>. By not observing Itamaraty's instructions and attending a meeting with the Angolan Foreign Minister<sup>708</sup>, Melo signed his own sentence. Nevertheless, the issue was too delicate to allow a pure and simple substitution of the Brazilian Representative. Since Melo had developed outstandingly good relations with the new Angolan rulers, his substitution could damage the Brasilia-Maputo relationship, subsequently damaging Brazil's image in Africa<sup>709</sup>. In addition, it was necessary to make arrangements to accomplish Ovídio's substitution in a way which,

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706 SOUTO MAIOR, Luiz Augusto P. "O 'Pragmatismo Responsável'" in *60 Anos de Política Externa Brasileira*. Programa de Relações Internacionais, USP/IPRI, p. 6, Forthcoming.

707 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

708 *Idem*.

709 In fact, Brazil had to cope with MPLA complaints when it finally decided to substitute Ovídio de Melo. Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Vassouras, January 10, 1992 and "Angola: recuo pode ser total". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 25, 1975.

while mollifying opposition within and outside Brazil, would not suggest compliance with them. It was then that the request made by Ovídio de Melo to be temporarily substituted for medical reasons<sup>710</sup> turned out to be the best way of solving the deadlock<sup>711</sup>.

Immediately after the announcement of Ovídio's replacement, the Brazilian press started to speculate about the reasons behind it. It was claimed that he had been removed due to Geisel's personal evaluation of his partisan conduct<sup>712</sup>. In addition, rumors were on the increase alleging that some governmental circles had started to admit a possible alteration in the Brazilian position regarding the support for the MPLA<sup>713</sup>. In response to this speculation, on December 22, with Geisel's approval<sup>714</sup>, Itamaraty issued an official note praising Melo's work and stating that his removal was a "temporary" measure, and was only due to his need for urgent medical treatment<sup>715</sup>. In spite of this note, however, press conjectures surrounding Melo's substitution were not immediately halted<sup>716</sup>. Finally, when Azeredo da Silveira forbade Ovídio de Melo to give any interview to the press when he came back to Brazil<sup>717</sup>, and when the former avoided further comments upon

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710 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

711 Interview with José Nogueira Filho, Special Advisor to the Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira (1974-1979), Brasília, November 20, 1991.

712 To be more precise, an article published in the *O Estado de São Paulo* stated that following the criticisms about the recognition, Geisel had decided to read Melo's reports to Itamaraty. It was then that Geisel probably came to the conclusion that the information sent by him to Itamaraty was clearly in favor of the MPLA, which would have led the Brazilian government not only to hurry its final decision, but moreover to do it based on false information about the MPLA's supremacy. "Afastado diplomata brasileiro em Luanda". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 23, 1975.

713 "Brasil pode rever posição em Luanda", by Luiz Barbosa. *Jornal do Brasil*, December 22, 1975.

714 "Saúde e Política". *Veja*, December 31, 1975, p. 23.

715 "Itamaraty chama a Brasília o Ministro em Luanda". *O Globo*, December 23, 1975.

716 "Relações Brasil-Angola podem esfriar". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 24, 1975 and "Angola: recuo pode ser total". *O Estado de São Paulo*, December 25, 1975.

717 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.



the recognition of the MPLA<sup>718</sup>, the crisis seemed to be temporarily solved. In fact, by refusing to give further explanations, Itamaraty made Ovídio de Melo a scapegoat. In other words, deliberately or not, Itamaraty brought about the interpretation that within the policy towards African decolonization, the recognition of the MPLA government could be seen as the result of a human – and, therefore, punishable – misinterpretation.

### **6.8. Adhering to the decision despite negative feedback**

Although the decision to remove Ovídio de Melo from Luanda was meant to cool off the Brazil-Angola relationship, Geisel did not actually change his government policy towards the supporting the new independent African states. On the contrary, after having somehow answered domestic and external opposition without actually accepting its overall viewpoint, Geisel stressed his full commitment to the policy of rapprochement with Black African countries, Communist or not.

On December 9, 1975 Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, who was totally identified with the new Brazilian stance towards Africa, was promoted to the highest post in the diplomatic career hierarchy. Moreover, before the end of Geisel's administration, he was designated to be the first Brazilian ambassador to Maputo (1977-1981).

In addition, it is worth taking into account Geisel's words during his speech at the end of the year:

*Special commendation must be credited to the policy of rapprochement with the new Portuguese speaking nations, within which, loyal to the principle of non-intervention*

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718 SELCHER, Wayne A. *Brazil's Multilateral Relations - between the first and the third worlds*, Boulder, Westview, 1978, p. 116.

*and respect to the people's self-determination, Brazil established diplomatic relations with all former Portuguese colonies*<sup>719</sup>.

In this sense, although the ultimate decision makers had actually responded to the negative feedback which followed the recognition of the MPLA, by removing Ovídio de Melo from Luanda, they did so under a sort of disguise which, due to its ambiguity, could please all sides. Therefore, despite having cooled off the Brasilia-Luanda relationship for a while, it could be said that at the end of the day Geisel kept to his initial decision despite negative feedback. On December 31, 1975, the decree creating six new Brazilian embassies in Africa – Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho, São Tomé e Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau and Upper Volta – was signed<sup>720</sup>.

As for Ovídio de Melo, he was finally sent as Brazilian Ambassador to Bangkok (1976-1982), according to his own wish, after having been offered a position in Paramaribo<sup>721</sup>, both of which were then considered posts of less importance. For reasons that only the need to ostracize him can explain, his promotion to the highest echelons in the diplomatic career hierarchy, which was expected to be shortly promulgated, was only signed ten years later, after the end of the military regime.

## 6.9. Conclusion

It is hard to maintain whether the recognition of the MPLA government was a product of an ingenious calculation from Geisel and Silveira's partnership which, by ignoring presumed resistance,

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719 BRASIL. PRESIDENCIA DA REPUBLICA. GEISEL, E. *Discursos*, v. II, Assessoria de Imprensa. Presidência da República, February 1976, pp. 307-308. Translated by the author.

720 Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Resenha de Política Exterior do Brasil*, year II, no. VII, Brasília, Oct./Nov./Dec. 1975, p. 132.

721 Interview with Ovídio de Andrade Melo, Rio de Janeiro, February 3, 1992.

secured the accomplishment of Geisel's foreign policy goal at first blow; or if it was, purely and simply, a result of Geisel and Silveira's misperception of the military regime's readiness to overcome the concept of "ideological frontiers".

In any case, the upholding of the recognition, in spite of US pressures and the domestic opposition that followed the disclosure of the presence of Cuban troops in Angola, shows once more that to explain certain decisions it is not enough to proceed "top-down" either within the first debate (International system vs. nation state) or within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy). As once posited by Ambassador Ítalo Zappa, the task of converting foreign policy principles into effective diplomatic actions leads to dissension, and as a result, to internal negotiations. Moreover, he continued, "those negotiations are usually more difficult and harsher than those of the external interlocutor. In other words, to practice diplomacy outside is quite easy; the difficulty is to enforce it within the country"<sup>722</sup>.

In addition, the analysis of the decision making process demonstrated how it was possible to bend to international pressure without actually losing face. If the information that the CIA indeed pressured Brasilia to remove Ovídio de Melo from Luanda is correct<sup>723</sup>, his substitution was done with a good deal of dexterity, providing that it did not enter into the history of Brazil-United States relations as a gesture of appeasement from the former. If, on the other hand, the information is not accurate, there is little doubt that Ovídio's removal helped to calm Washington down. Whatever the truth, it is worth noting that by keeping cordial

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722 ZAPPA, I. Speech delivered for the Rio Branco Institute graduates, on May 29, 1991, mimeo, p. 2.

723 "A verdade aparece". *Jornal do Brasil*, August 21, 1978. Quoted by CAMARGO, S. & OCAMPO, José Maria V. *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

relations with Luanda, Geisel's government was able to fulfill its initial plans to enhance relations with African countries<sup>724</sup>.

In conclusion, this episode shows that what was impossible to achieve at the level of argument (or persuasion), e.g., the dislodging of the “ideological frontiers” precept from Brazilian foreign policy, was finally accomplished thanks to the way in which the decision to recognize the MPLA government was finally formulated and implemented.

## 6.10. Appendix V

### Chronology

**November 16, 1953** – Brazil and Portugal sign the Treaty of Friendship and Consultation.

**1958** – Brazil and Portugal sign the “Interpretative Notes”, a complement to the Treaty of Friendship and Consultation.

**1958** – Brazil co-sponsors UN Resolution no. 671 (XIII General Assembly), creating the Economic Committee for Africa (ECA).

**1960** – During the XV UN General Assembly, Brazil votes for Resolution no. 1,514 (Declaration on Independence for Colonial Countries and Peoples); it abstains from voting on Resolution no. 1,573 asking for Algerian self-determination; and it votes against Resolution no. 1,542 obliging Portugal to make available information on her colonies to the UN.

**May 1961** – Brazilian Ambassador to Lisbon Negrão de Lima visits Luanda.

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724 MARTINIERE, G. *Op. cit.*, p. 51. SILVEIRA A. Azeredo da. *Política Externa do Brasil*. Lecture on September 20, 1978, Departamento de Estudos, T 150-78, ESG, 1978, p. 8, mimeo and BRASIL, Ministério das Relações Exteriores. *Realizações do Governo Geisel (1974-1979)*. Relatório, s/d, p. 92.

**January 30, 1962** – Brazil votes in favor of UN Resolution no. 1,742, asserting the Angolan people’s rights of self-government and independence.

**July 31, 1963** – Brazil refuses to support the Portuguese formula of considering its colonies around the world as “overseas provinces”, and votes in favor of Resolution no. S/5,380 considering Portuguese policies in Africa a threat to peace and security.

**1972** – Brazil and Portugal declare the “Year of the Luso-Brazilian Community”, one of various ways of celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Brazilian independence.

**October 25 to November 20, 1972** – Foreign Minister Mário Gibson Barboza visits nine African countries – Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Zaire, Ghana, Dahomey and Gabon.

**November 14, 1972** – Along with United States, Great Britain, Spain and South Africa, Brazil votes against Resolution no. 2,918 at the XXVII UN General Assembly, proclaiming the Angolan, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambiquean liberation movements as “authentic representatives” of their respective native population.

**November, 1973** – African countries support Argentina against Brazil in their dispute over the utilization of Paraná River, by voting in favor of UN Resolution no. 3,129 which demanded prior consultation for cooperative exploitation of resources shared by two or more states.

**November 2, 1973** – Brazil votes against Resolution no. 3,061 at the XXVIII UN General Assembly, welcoming the independence of Guinea-Bissau and condemning Portugal for “illegal occupation” of areas of the country.

**November 24, 1973** – A resolution signed by 17 countries from Central and East Africa includes Brazil as one of the six countries

recommended for diplomatic and economic sanctions unless they immediately ceased their support for white-minority governments in Southern Africa.

**April 25, 1974** – Portuguese Revolution.

**April 26, 1974** – Portuguese government announces being ready to give self-determination to the African colonies.

**July 4, 1974** – Ambassador Zappa gives a speech at the Higher War College stating Brazilian interests in having a say in favor of African decolonization.

**July 18, 1974** – Brazil recognizes the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

**August 4, 1974** – Portugal announces being prepared to sign an agreement with Guinea-Bissau for the immediate transfer of power.

**September, 1974** – Azeredo da Silveira meets Portuguese Foreign Minister Mário Soares in New York. As a result, Brazil and Portugal agree to formulate a cooperative policy towards Angolan and Mozambiquean decolonization.

**November, 1974** – UN issues a resolution in favor of Guinean sovereignty (Resolution no. 3,061/XXVIII).

**November 25-29, 1974** – Azeredo da Silveira visits Dakar, when he meets all Brazilian representatives in Africa in order to orchestrate the new foreign policy towards the continent.

**End/November, 1974** – Ambassador Zappa goes to Africa to start talks with the leaders of the national liberation movements – Agostinho Neto (MPLA), Holden Roberto (FNLA), Wilson Santos (UNITA) and Samora Machel (FRELIMO).

**December 2-4, 1974** – Azeredo da Silveira visits Lisbon for talks with his colleague, Foreign Minister Mário Soares. In response to

a Portuguese request, it is settled that Brazil would send a Special Representative to Luanda.

**January 3-5, 1975** – During Mombasa Summit the three Angolan liberation movements agree on a common platform of negotiation with the Portuguese government.

**January 15, 1975** – Portugal and the three Angolan liberation movements sign the Alvor Agreement, in the Portuguese province of Algarve. Under the terms of this agreement, a transitional government to be run by the three groups is established, the duties of the Portuguese High Commissioner are spelled out, free elections within nine months are scheduled, and the Independence Day to be proclaimed on November 11, 1975 is settled.

**February 26, 1975** – Brazil communicates the designation of a Special Representative to the Angolan Transitional Government, Ambassador Ovídio de Andrade Melo.

**June 25, 1975** – Mozambiquean independence is proclaimed.

**August, 1975** – Minister Ítalo Zappa visits Luanda, after taking part on the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, in Kampala (July 28 to August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975).

**August, 1975** – Ambassador Ovídio Melo is called by the Brazilian government for consultations.

**August 29, 1975** – Lisbon suspends the Alvor Agreement.

**September, 1975** – Following talks between Lisbon and Brasilia, Brazil sends Ovídio de Melo back to Luanda.

**October 19, 1975** – Jonas Savimbi is quoted in *Le Monde*, claiming that 750 Cuban soldiers had landed on the south coast of Angola to serve in the ranks of the MPLA, along with 10,000 tons of war material.

**October 23, 1975** – *Le Monde* states that 1,500 Cubans were fighting in the ranks of the MPLA or were on the point of arriving in Luanda for this purpose.

**October/early November, 1975** – Brazil's Special Representative sends messages to Itamaraty asking for instructions, since the MPLA leaders were demanding a decision from Brasilia.

**Early November** – Azeredo da Silveira talks with Great-Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and with the United States. Despite those countries doubts regarding their own positions, all of them seem to have understood Brazil's intention to recognize Angolan independence.

**November 9, 1975** – Ovídio de Melo is finally informed of Brazil's decision.

**November 9, 1975** – Itamaraty publicly denies knowledge of the Cuban presence in Angola.

**November 10, 1975** – Portugal announces the transfer of sovereignty to the Angolan people through its High Commissioner in Angola, without actually recognizing any formal ruler of the new state.

**November 10, 1975** – Brazilian newspaper, *Jornal do Brasil*, refers to the recent news published by *The Daily Telegraph* reporting the landing of over 1,000 Cuban mercenaries in Angola.

**November 11, 1975** – Brazil recognizes the government installed in Luanda.

**November 11, 1975** – Brazilian delegation in the UN confirms the vote previously taken in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee in mid-October, voting in favor of Resolution no. 3,379 at the XXX UN General Assembly, which defined Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.



**November 15, 1975** – Brazil establishes diplomatic relations with Mozambique.

**Mid-November/Mid-December, 1975** – Azeredo da Silveira gives instruction to Ovídio de Melo not to have any further contact with the MPLA government. Melo does not observe the instructions and attends a meeting with the Angolan Foreign Minister.

**November 24, 1975** – Washington acknowledges Cuban presence in Angola.

**December 9, 1975** – Minister Ítalo Zappa is promoted to the highest post in the diplomatic career hierarchy.

**Mid-December, 1975** – US government criticizes Brazilian recognition of the MPLA government.

**December 16-18, 1975** – During the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (Paris), Henry Kissinger criticizes Brazilian policy towards Angola.

**December 21, 1975** – Gulf Oil suspends its operations in Cabinda.

**December 22, 1975** – Itamaraty issues an official note praising Melo's work and stating that his removal is a "temporary" measure due to his need for urgent medical treatment.

**December 31, 1975** – Six new Brazilian embassies in Africa – Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho, São Tomé e Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau and Upper Volta – are created.

**February 22, 1976** – Portugal recognizes the government formed by the MPLA.

**May 19, 1976** – Portugal favors bilateral relations with Angola.



## 7. CONCLUSION

This work aimed to assess the role of the decision making process on the contents of three decisions taken during the first years of Geisel's government. It has done so through a systematic investigation of the foreign policy making process employing some important concepts of the Foreign Policy Analysis, such as bureaucratic role-player, foreign policy executive, and foreign policy redirection. In so doing, the present analysis has intended to contribute to bring to the area of studies about Brazilian foreign policy, a clear-cut picture of the need to take into account the process of consensus building in order to explain what ended up being seen as the national interest.

Firstly, a review of the literature on Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime situating it in the level of analysis debate was done. I claimed that the studies that explained Brazilian foreign affairs within which I have called here the first debate (international system vs. nation state) proceeding "top-down" present the following problems: either they did

not assess the effects of Brazil's alleged leeway in its regional sphere of influence on the country's foreign policy; or, on the contrary, they overemphasize Brazil's capabilities to have autonomous behavior in the international system, by freezing the international situation which supposedly has enhanced the country's aptitudes.

In addition, I examined the analyses made within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy) also proceeding "top-down". In this case, the problem relates to the fact that although the existence of different policy makers is acknowledged, these studies do not correlate this polarity with the policy contents. The reason why they do not do so is because those who take this standpoint believe in the existence of an ultimate consensus among the policy makers, which makes worthless the analysis of the decision making process. In so doing, they do not consider the process involved in consensus building, since they assume that the decision makers behave in response to the demands of the nation state, and assign to the latter a given national interest embodied in the National Security Doctrine (NSD).

In disagreement with those analysts, I do not believe that the option for the first level of analysis (international system vs. nation state), or for the second level (nation state x bureaucracy) both proceeding "top-down" are enough to explain foreign policy contents, particularly when a significant shift in the latter is implemented, as happened under Geisel's government<sup>725</sup>. Even if we take into account the political and economic conditions inherited by Geisel and the international situation as independent variables in the explanation of

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725 Taking Holsti's patterns of foreign policy orientation as *ideal types*, as he himself does, during Geisel's government Brazil re-oriented its foreign policy from a *dependent* to a *diversified* type. HOLSTI, K. J. "Restructuring Foreign Policy: a neglected phenomenon in foreign policy theory" in K. J. Holsti (Ed.), *Why Nations Realign*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982, pp. 1-20, p. 4.

the foreign policy of “Responsible Pragmatism”, in the final analysis, the latter’s achievement was still dependent on the way in which the decisions were formulated.

Hence, I claimed that it is not enough to state that Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime was based on the precepts of the National Security Doctrine as the expression of the national interest. Rather, I maintain that only a decision making analysis can answer by whom they were defined, how they were pursued, and what they ended up meaning. In other words, my aim was to explain state behavior, looking at the unit’s behavior, by analyzing Brazilian foreign policy under the Geisel government within the second debate (nation state vs. bureaucracy) proceeding “bottom-up”. In so doing, this work adds a dimension to the area of studies about Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime which, despite its admitted importance by the analysts, had not yet been taken as the leading perspective in the explanation of the decision contents.

Underneath these assumptions there was a strong belief that the Brazilian state should not be seen as a monolithic actor behaving according to a given doctrine. Hence, in the second chapter my aim was to scrutinize the thesis which considers the National Security Doctrine the main explanation for the Brazilian foreign policy contents. In so doing, I claimed that under the Geisel government, if not also under preceding administrations, the National Security Doctrine served as a device for the retroactive rationalization and/or legitimization of the decisions taken, rather than a pre-existing body of ideas from which the decisions emanated.

In so doing, I assumed the existence of a process by which ideas and concepts were adjusted to the conjuncture of events and to the interests involved. Therefore, I assumed that the Doctrine’s applicability to reality was made possible within

the very process by which these elements were incorporated. Thus, to the extent that talking about different interests is the same as talking about different actors sponsoring them, the composition of the decision making arena should be assessed. I then depicted the decision making arena under the Geisel government, where the President's strong hand, the autonomy of Itamaraty and the diminishing importance of the National Security Council as a locus for decision making were shown. Moreover, the solid partnership established by Geisel and his Foreign Minister, Azeredo da Silveira, since the very beginning of the government, is underlined.

Most of what is outlined above, accounts for my critique of the Realist approach, in particular the view that foreign policy positions are "primarily determined by the interplay of international forces"<sup>726</sup>, and the principle of the state as unitary, monolithic actor, searching for security. Nevertheless, before outlining the main aspects of the foreign policy implemented by the Geisel government, the third chapter of this work sets out the external and the domestic scenario surrounding the implementation of the foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism". In doing so, I sustained that just as I do not consider the international system and the state as all-determining, neither do I consider that the decision makers "choose in a vacuum".

However this can lead to a misunderstanding. The fact that I acknowledge a role to the international system and to the nation state for the explanation of the foreign policy contents does not mean that I have taken a typical Realist perspective. Rather, I claim that I am, so to speak, on the side of 'bounded Realism',

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726 HILL, Christopher J. & LIGHT, Margot. "Foreign Policy Analysis" in Margot Light & A. J. R. Groom. *International Relations - A Handbook of Current Theory*, London, Pinter Publ., 1985, pp. 156-173, p. 157.

to adapt an idea of Herbert Simon<sup>727</sup>. It is bounded because I tried to incorporate the opportunities and constraints of the international system, although I have not explained the Brazilian foreign policy positions primarily determined by them. Indeed, my aim was to follow wise advice, which says that Foreign Policy Analysis should not be isolated from International Relations, after all, it is “essential to consider the ways in which the external environment determines foreign policy, or at least conditions the possible choices”<sup>728</sup>.

Likewise, although I have taken the state-centric view (the state as the most important actor in the international system), I must emphasize, I did not take the state-as-actor view (the state as a monolithic actor). Indeed, I have not explained Brazilian foreign policy positions by any abstraction such as the “interests of the state”, just the opposite. My aim was to open the “box” in order to explain how certain interests were translated as the “national interest” within the process of decision making.

Going back to the Introduction of this work, other crucial aspects such as the applicability of the decision making approach to less developed countries, the concept of bureaucracy, and moreover the choice for *explaining* as opposed to *understanding* the decision contents through a decision making perspectives were discussed. In short, I recalled that the high level of complexity and institutionalization exhibited by Brazil’s foreign policy structure allows the analyst to employ the decision making approach without the fear of adapting the subject to the model. In addition, I have opted for working with the notion of bureaucratic role-player since, in so doing, I would take into account both the individual’s skills and the structure within which he operates.

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727 SIMON, Herbert A. *Administrative Behavior*, New York, Macmillan, 1959.

728 HILL, C. & LIGHT, M. *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

Finally, I expanded on my option for looking at the variables and correlations (*explaining*), rather than for perceptions, ideas, etc. (*understanding*), due to my aim of not overemphasizing the realm of choice and underemphasizing the realm of constraint.

That leads me to tackle a second crucial point which can also be a motive for discussion, that is, if when analyzing the decision maker's performance, a rational approach has been applied. Indeed, the 6 stage-scheme proposed as an analysis technique, and therefore, as a way to organize the variables involved with the decision finally taken, might have indicated that I took a rational model to explain my point. However, as I have said before, my aim was to explain rather than to describe the reality. In so doing, although I have logically explained the process of decision making, it does not mean that the process was logical in itself. Rather, my aim was to use the model as a way of retrieving from the reality its meaningful elements, not to try to convince anyone that the reality is identical to the model. Besides, taking a somewhat rational perspective, even if only for purposes of analysis, does not mean that the way by which the decision maker "defines the situation" does not count; likewise, I am not implying that non-rational variables, such as the decision maker's values, do not influence the decision contents<sup>729</sup>.

Hence the examination of the stages was a methodological resource for explaining the decision contents as they were formulated within the decision making process. In so doing, the alternatives examined were those supposed to be the most likely to be contemplated during the process, not an attempt to anticipate all alternatives which should be taken into account by

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729 For an assessment of the degree to which foreign policy decision making is grounded in rational processes, see VERBA, Sidney. "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System" in Klaus Knorr & Sidney V. (Eds.) *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 93-117.



the decision makers. It seems appropriate to repeat that “theories are not descriptions of the real world; they are instruments that we design in order to apprehend some part of it. ‘Reality’ will therefore be congruent neither with a theory nor with the model that may represent it”<sup>730</sup>.

However, not departing from a narrow view which presumes that the Geisel government had fixed objectives towards which its foreign policy was focused, does not mean that certain clear-cut objectives were not indeed advocated by the president and his advisers. Hence, if some degree of maximization of interests was implied – and it actually was – the hypothesis of searching for “satisficing” interests would better fit my analysis. Indeed, I have departed from the view that the decision makers have searched for alternative courses of action, until one was found which met certain minimum criteria previously defined<sup>731</sup>. Abstention on Cuba being the most obvious example. That does not mean the non-existence of a process of pulling and hauling. The search for a satisfactory decision could indeed be intermingled by different actors pursuing their personal views about what was more satisfactory. Moreover, by employing the category of bureaucratic role-player, I aimed to retrieve both the institutional loyalties and the individual characteristics of the decision maker. In other words, when working with “official decision makers” as Geisel, Silveira and the military in the inner-circle, I was simultaneously working with Geisel as the President and the military; Silveira as the Foreign Minister, the holder of a more independent view

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730 WALTZ, Kenneth N. “Theory of International Relations” in Fred I. Greenstein & Nelson W. P. (Eds.) *Handbook of Political Science: Macro-Political Theory*, v. 8, Addison, Wesley Publ. Co, 1975, pp. 1-15, pp. 8-9.

731 WHITE, Brian P. “Analyzing Foreign Policy: Problems and Approaches” in M. Clarke & Brian P. W. (Eds.) *Understanding Foreign Policy - The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*, Aldershot, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1989, pp. 1-26, p. 17.

of foreign policy and the career diplomat; and the military as government, and as institution. In short, I claim that the bureaucratic role-player category accounted satisfactorily for the relationship between the positions Geisel, Silveira and the military occupied and the choices they made<sup>732</sup>.

Finally, in the last chapters I presented my case-studies. The chapter on Cuba stated that although Geisel and Silveira promoted a standpoint in favor of the lifting of sanctions against the Castro regime, the opposition to Cuba was a “sacred cow” in the consistency of the Brazilian military regime. Therefore, abstention was the solution chosen in order to avoid damaging the Inter-American System, and at same time not to exacerbate domestic resistance. Nevertheless, what had been done mainly as an attitude of goodwill towards the Inter-American System and as a way to decrease Brazil’s isolation in the continent, turned into a step forward towards the normalization of relations with Cuba.

Following this, the chapter on China demonstrated that neither the positive Western stand towards Beijing, nor the expected advantages from a closer relationship with Beijing were enough for Geisel’s government to resume diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

Finally the chapter on Angola stated that the decision to recognize the MPLA government was taken thanks to a strategy of playing down or even suppressing information about Cuban presence in the country. In other words, it was due to the fact that Geisel deliberately played down the news about Cuban presence in Angola, that a decision which, in fact, did not wholly fulfill the expectations of the military regime could be maintained.

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732 HOLLIS, M. & SMITH, S. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 154.

The general conclusions of this work can now be stated. The belief that the way decisions are made contributes a good deal towards their contents has been maintained throughout this work. True, the situation within which those decisions occurred was a determinant of their activation. If there had been no *détente*, if the Salazar regime had not been overthrown and, as a consequence, a new policy towards Africa had not been formulated, if Brazilian economic policy was not strongly based on exports, etc., perhaps there would not have been favorable conditions for the decisions. Nevertheless, this study demonstrated that in order to accomplish a change in Brazilian foreign policy “resistance in political, administrative, and personality structures and processes”<sup>733</sup> had to be overcome.

In addition, I maintain as fundamental in this study the evidence that the partnership Geisel/Silveira was, in the final analysis, responsible for the achievement of those decisions. Indeed, thanks to its authority and, moreover, to its relative isolation from the other agencies within the decision arena, this “foreign policy executive”<sup>734</sup> was able to tackle the current military stance on foreign policy. However, despite the level of autonomy held by this partnership, it could not avoid provoking negative reactions in those who used to be the main basis of the regime.

Therefore, through a strategy of action that succeeded in overcoming the military veto, Geisel and Silveira secured the establishment of a more long-term view on the Brazilian foreign affairs. Indeed, the decisive aspect is the fact that a long-term evaluation of the role Brazil could play in the international arena

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733 HERMANN, Charles F. “Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy”. *International Studies Quarterly*, no. 324, March 1990, 34, 3, pp. 3-21, p. 8.

734 HILL, Christopher J. *Cabinet Decisions on Foreign Policy - the British Experience - October 1938/June 1941*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

was activated. In other words, although other crucial steps towards the enhancement of Brazil's role in the international system were also taken during this period, such as the disengagement from the US, the rapprochement to the Western European countries and Japan, the new policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, all of them important in strengthening Brazil's position within the international community, and moreover fulfilling the country's needs to diversify its markets, foreign financial sources and energy suppliers, the rapprochement with the PRC and the recognition of the MPLA government showed the strong concern with enhancing the country's solidarity with other developing countries which would reinforce Brazilian demands on the international community as a whole. Indeed, it was only by ousting the "ideological frontiers" precept, which was finally accomplished by Geisel's leadership along with a prominent performance by his Foreign Minister, that a pragmatic foreign policy could be implemented.

Certainly, in order to have this long-term view as predominant, as opposed to the short-term view of those attached to the NSD's prevailing precepts, an innovative decision making structure had to be set. Hence, considering the current period of continuing changes on the international relations, the importance of examining the conditions for foreign policy change is indisputable. Rather, it was Geisel's and Silveira's determination in overcoming the veto from the more conservative military within the decision arena which led to the normalization of diplomatic relations between Brazil and the PRC. If then we think about Latin American countries where new experiments with democracy are being made, the importance of emphasizing the possibilities of action within the decision making arena, which I have intended to demonstrate throughout this work, takes on a double political meaning. On one hand, it raises the need to be attentive to remaining authoritarian procedures which can overrule democratic chosen aims; on the

other, and this actually complements the first point, it strengthens the requirement for enlarging the decision making arena with respect to foreign policy.

This statement raises a very serious issue. The question regarding how much a foreign policy can better respond to the legitimate national interests is a matter of speculation, since no one can define the latter beforehand. Likewise, the degree of democracy does not immediately respond to the degree of efficiency, whatever this might mean, of the foreign policy. In this sense, what has been said above about a long term-view as opposed to a short-term view is obviously an *ex post facto* evaluation, considering the initial aims of the Geisel government and the decision's aftermath. The main aspect to be stressed then is the assumption that to explain foreign policy the analyst should not look solely at the nature of the regime, nor at the state's place in the international system hierarchy, although both variables are certainly important. In other words, although a developing country run by an authoritarian military regime has certain characteristics which could help to explain its foreign policy contents, they should not be seen as established causes for predictable effects. Rather, to these structural characteristics should be added a view which takes the actual decision making process as a dependent variable to explain the foreign policy contents. In so doing, I am not implying that in other similar situations, the decision making process would have had exactly the same influence and importance, that is, I had no intention of making a broad generalization from this case-study. What I am saying is that this perspective of analysis has a say and, although the hypothesis of revealing similar results for other case-studies is not guaranteed, it should not be discarded either. Analysts interested in examining the variables that shape the decision contents in countries of similar profile to that of Brazil under the Geisel government are invited to join me in studies to come.



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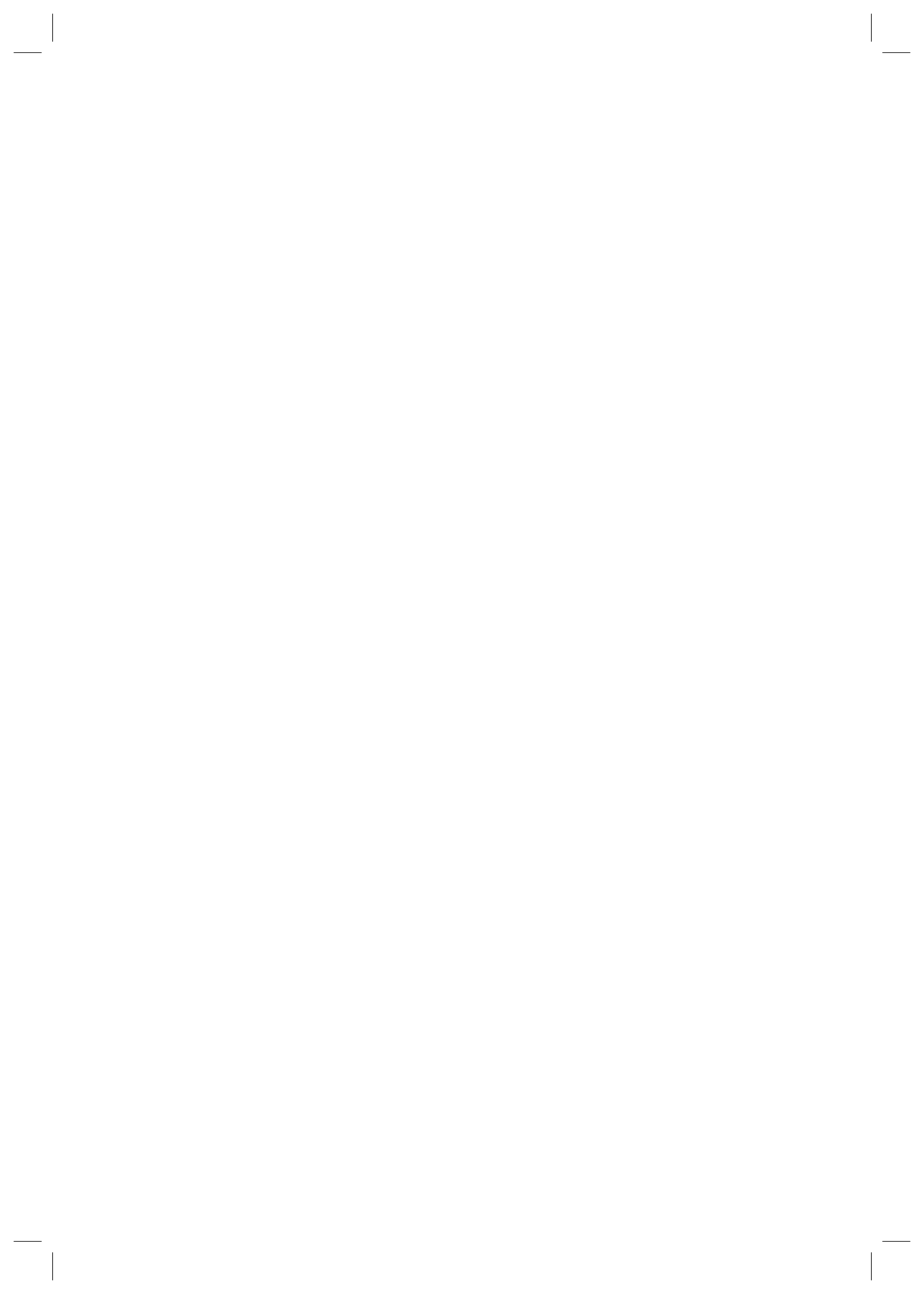
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This work seeks to provide an explanation for the contents of three foreign policy decisions implemented under the government of General Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979). It does so by analyzing the decision-making process which led Brazil: 1) to abstain in the Meetings of Consultation of American Foreign Ministers for voting the lifting of sanctions against Cuba; 2) to restore diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China; and 3) to recognize Angola's MPLA government. The central hypothesis of the work is that, although the doctrine of the regime (National Security Doctrine/NSD) has shaped the general conduct of the government, it is not enough to explain the changes in the main lines of foreign policy. It is necessary to analyze the decision-making arena where those changes were indeed defined. The first part of the work reviews the literature on Brazilian foreign policy under the military regime and presents the perspective of analysis. Then the origins and contents of the NSD, in particular its external components, are presented. In addition, it describes the general structure of the decision-making arena under Geisel's government, and the main aspects of the foreign policy implemented during this administration. The following three chapters then seek to reconstruct the decision-making process aiming to retrieve from the analysis of the bargains among the bureaucratic role-players, the meaningful elements of the decision contents. The conclusion then claims that it was President Geisel's leadership, along with his Foreign Minister, which was able to oust the "ideological frontiers" precept from the core of the NSD, in spite of its admitted importance during the Cuban case. Furthermore it disputes the premise which states that the existence of a given ultimate consensus among the decision-makers based on the Doctrine is able to explain, on domestic grounds, the foreign policy of "Responsible Pragmatism". It does so by maintaining that the way whereby a new consensus around foreign policy was developed within the decision-making arena is, in itself, a crucial element in understanding the decision contents.



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