

Brazil's Capitalists Protest Rocky's 'Economic Miracle'

by Daniel Sol

June 25 (IPS) — Key sectors of the Brazilian bourgeoisie this week finally let out a coordinated howl of protest at the gutting of their population and economy by Rockefeller. Over this same week, cornered rat Rockefeller stepped up his sales pitch for precisely this Brazilian model of "development" — the physical liquidation by starvation and disease of millions of human beings — as his latest and most incompetent "policy alternative" to the growing European and Third World tide towards the International Development Bank (IDB)

It is now clear to all that there are only two alternatives on the table: the IDB or Black Death.

The "Brazilian Miracle" In Action

Brazilian Health Minister Almeida Machado summed up the fear and recognition now dawning on the parasitic bourgeoisie — that they are sitting on top of a diseased hell-hole that can no longer maintain them. "We are going to do a complete sweep-up operation on all Brazil, using a fine tooth comb regimen," according to Machado. The weekly business magazine *Veja* of June 18 adds that the Health Ministry is planning to buy up all the DDT and BHC on the entire world market, in a desperate attempt to slow down the raging spread of malaria and chagas disease throughout Brazil.

Machado's hysteria is appropriate, even if his proposed solution is absurd. Over 20 per cent of Brazil's 100 million population is currently exposed to malaria, and the disease is spreading unchecked among Amazon work gangs in particular. There are already reports of cases of malaria having spread to the Amazon area of Venezuela. Chagas, a debilitating intestinal disease, affects 30 million Brazilians, while ten million have schistosomiasis. Intestinal diseases attack 50 per cent of the infant population. Meningitis,

which the government lies is now under control, has recently spread to Northern Brazil in a more virulent form that kills within 12 hours. Peasants there call it the Black Fever.

Tuberculosis and measles are today the most destructive diseases gutting the Brazilian population, but bubonic plague actually poses a far more serious danger for the immediate future. Although the actual number of cases of plague is still relatively small, the area affected by this killer disease is rapidly expanding towards the urban areas in the South. Once the plague does reach the cities, it will find an enormous and growing rat population of 400 million to carry it, and far more virulent strains will develop in the cities, as has historically been the case. Health Minister Machado again made the point: "In many cities, for example, a multiplication of rats threatens everyone, recalling in man's mind the hideous phantom, from some medieval grave, of a bubonic plague epidemic."

Today, almost half the labor force gets between 25 and 100 per cent of a minimum salary; and yet in order to feed a family of four a worker earning the full minimum wage must work 18 hours a day, six days a week — or over 100 hours a week! With such standards of living and levels of speed-up, the working class has not even been able to reproduce itself. The resulting shortage of skilled and semi-skilled labor has forced Rockefeller to turn elsewhere: from 1972 to 1973 urban child labor increased by 24 per cent and female labor by 15 per cent, and things are far worse now in 1975. The economy is starting to grind to a halt, with steel, auto and other key sectors all suffering major relative declines in production and employment.

This "Brazilian model" of Rockefeller's is also spreading to other parts of Latin America. Schistosomiasis-carrying water snails are being swept down the Parana river system into Uruguay and Argentina, and the

supposedly "contained" outbreak of meningitis is also moving in the same direction. Chile's home-grown brand of Brazilian genocide has already resulted in the mental retardation through malnutrition of a full third of the children born since the 1973 military coup. And drastic drops in wheat production and imports have brought Chilean per capita consumption to the level of 1500 calories per day — according to an editorial in the June 9 *El Mercurio*. If it has not broken out already, massive famine will strike Chile in the coming weeks and months, with the accompanying spread of Brazilian-style diseases.

As in Brazil, these Nazi levels of austerity have effectively destroyed the labor process. Three days ago the United States reported that it was returning \$1 million worth of imported Chilean foodstuffs — fully 50 per cent of its total yearly shipments to the U.S. — because it was spoiled and a health hazard. This is expected to be a deadly blow to the Chilean economy.

The ecological holocaust now gutting Brazil has reached such proportions that it can no longer be hidden or denied. A good example is the candid Brazilian mouthwash advertisement which reads: "Bacterial meningitis, pyorrhea, gingivitis, viral hepatitis, TB? Every day you must face these problems... Our mouthwash can prevent...," and so on!

The growing open admission of the uncontrolled spread of disease was also met this week by clear signs of panic among the Brazilian bourgeoisie. *Veja* carried a long article on June 18 bemoaning the state of the Brazilian labor force, as well as one detailing the uncontrolled spread of disease throughout the country. *Jornal do Brasil* carried similar scare stories, as did other Rio and Sao Paulo press.

Articles are now appearing in the press which, even a few weeks ago, would never have passed censorship. The June 19 *Folha de Sao Paulo*, mouthpiece of the strong Sao Paulo indus-

trialists, led the way with an article on Algeria which lauded President Boumediene as the "axis of political stability and intensive industrial development" in Algeria, and noted his "leadership of the Third World." This reference to an IDB-type alternative of expanded production is unmistakable; Algeria, along with Iraq, the Soviet Union, the ICLC and other forces, has spearheaded that drive.

Left-leaning Opiniao was even more to the point in a lengthy "objective" article entitled "OPEC, Comecon and the Transferable Ruble." And the June 19 issue of the respectable Jornal do Brasil even went so far as to put the following daring headline on an otherwise innocuous article: "Peruvian Communist Party Leads the Way."

Yet even in the face of broad capitalist resistance to Brazilianizing the globe, Rockefeller has pushed ahead with this latest retreat of his failed 1974 policy of "development." Over the last

month, planning meetings of Tri-lateral and other Rockefeller agents pushed the mass transference of industry from the advanced sector to the Third World, along with a special focus on Brazil as the model to be followed. Most capitalist layers responded to Rocky's suggestion with indifference and yawns. This week, Rockefeller used his last remaining allies to shove the Brazilian model down their throats anyway.

A State Department spokesman told IPS two days ago: Brazil is the "model of market-oriented development" for the world economy. "Brazil is a well-managed economy with a high degree of economic planning aimed at maintaining free enterprise."

Two days ago, West Germany's Schmidt regime signed a \$4 billion government to government deal with Brazil, under which the Germans will help build nuclear plants in Brazil in exchange for Brazilian uranium exports. The World Bank

also recently announced a \$200 million loan to the collapsing Brazilian steel industry, in an effort to spark a flow of private investment into the country. And Gianni Agnelli, Italian Fiat industrialist, announced that he will invest another \$200 million in the Brazilian auto industry — which is now cutting production under skyrocketing inventories and is laying off thousands of auto workers!

Agnelli also said that he planned to relocate various Italian Fiat plants, lock, stock and barrel, to Brazil, and if necessary would import labor to man them. But such enclaves of Rockefeller investment would within months be decimated by the same diseases that now ravage the Brazilian labor force — something which Rockefeller is either too stupid or too drunk to understand. A spokesman at his First National Bank of Boston, when asked about this destruction of the labor force, had only this to say: "Well, everybody has got their problems."