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**TUDO PELA PATRIA: THE BRAZILIAN NAVY'S DRIVE
TO BLUE WATER**

by

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TUDO PELA PATRIA: THE BRAZILIAN NAVY'S DRIVE TO BLUE WATER

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

The Brazilian Navy is unique among most world navies today. Since the end of the Cold War, most nations have reduced their naval power, yet Brazil has maintained a determination to possess a blue-water fleet. Brazil is also attempting to assert itself as the regional power in South America, in this case through the development of a modern yet modest naval force capable of projecting power beyond its shores.

This thesis seeks to explore Brazil's recent naval expansion through three points of view. First, Brazil is seeking possession of a blue water naval force as a likely means for it to achieve greater power and prestige amongst other powerful states in the world. Second, Brazil aspires for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, and is expanding its fleet to increase its chances of being chosen. Finally, domestic politics also have a great effect on Brazil's current drive to blue water. Creation of the civilian-led defense ministry, the expensive SIVAM surveillance system, and general public sentiment all work to favor naval expansion.

The thesis concludes by summarizing the three arguments and stating that each of the three arguments have collectively contributed to Brazil's naval expansion.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My interest in the Brazilian Navy was sparked by a suggestion by Dr. Trinkunas in mid 2004. After shortly thereafter discovering through preliminary research that Brazil's Navy had replaced its World War II-era aircraft carrier with the former French carrier *Foch*, I realized that this was the subject I wished to write on.

I wish to sincerely thank Dr. Trinkunas and Dr. Hagan for their guidance throughout the course of my research, and their expert review of my prose. Their devotion to my success made my job much easier.

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I. INTRODUCTION

*Sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!*

-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Building of the Ship*

A. BACKGROUND

In the past five years, the Brazilian Navy has been undergoing what could be considered a rebirth - a rebirth that if seen to conclusion would result in a naval force more capable of "blue-water" (i.e. away from the littoral, coastal regions and home waters) operations. Funding for the Navy has been increased, new shipbuilding and acquisition programs introduced, and additional units have been added to the fleet through foreign procurement. In a region that has enjoyed relative stability with respect to interstate relations, the current Brazilian drive to develop a blue water force seems an aberration in the Latin America.

Brazil has a long and proud naval tradition that began prior to the country's independence in 1822. Brazil served as the main base for the Portuguese Navy following the invasion of the Iberian Peninsula by Napoleon in 1807, and thus developed an indigenous shipbuilding industry to support it.¹ Later, after Brazilian independence and throughout the 19th century, when Brazil was an imperial monarchy, the Navy was involved in numerous operations, including three separate conflicts with Uruguay. In World War I, Brazil declared war on Germany in 1917, after

¹ Domingos P.C.B. Ferreira, *The Navy of Brazil: An Emerging Power at Sea*, Washington, National Defense University Press: 1983, 6.

repeated U-Boat attacks against its merchantmen; the Brazilian Navy was subsequently used in the South Atlantic, patrolling the African coast.² Similarly, World War II saw Brazil again operating against Germany in the South Atlantic.

By the 1980s, Brazil was one of only two nations in Latin America to have an aircraft carrier, the former British light carrier *Minas Gerais* (Argentina had the other, which was in such poor material condition by 1990 that it was withdrawn from service). Despite the limited utility of *Minas Gerais* and a law forbidding the Navy from possessing the fixed wing aircraft capable of operating from the ship,³ Brazil persisted with maintaining the expensive carrier, upgrading it constantly and neglecting other units of the fleet.⁴ The other ships in service at the time were mostly used destroyers inherited from the United States as well as some modern frigates.

B. CURRENT STATE OF THE BRAZILIAN NAVY

The Brazilian fleet today remains a hodgepodge of vessels, most handed down from other countries, and more recently, including some indigenously constructed units. In 1998, the long-standing rule governing naval aviation was finally done away with, clearing the way for the purchase in the same year of 23 A-4 Skyhawk aircraft from Kuwait.⁵ The Skyhawk is a light attack aircraft originally designed for operation from aircraft carriers, and thus

² Serviço de Relações Públicas de Marinha and Carlos Lorch, *The Brazilian Navy: Naval Power*, Rio de Janeiro: Action Editora Ltda., 1997, 32-33.

³ Ferreira, 31.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Anonymous, "Brazil establishes naval aviation," in *Military Technology* 22, February, 1998, 59.

gave Brazil its first ever carrier-borne attack aircraft. Two years later, Brazil bought the former French carrier *Foch*, renaming it *São Paulo*, for about \$42 million,⁶ and replacing the *Minas Gerais*, which had been in Brazilian service for 41 years.⁷

The table on the following page shows the current status of the Brazilian fleet, and including the country of origin of the various major units. Original class names are included, where applicable. Large units such as frigates and the carrier *São Paulo* tend to come from overseas sources, though they are not limited to these, as evidenced by the *Niterói* class, the last two ships of which were built in Brazil.

⁶ J.A.C. Lewis, "France sells Foch carrier to Brazil," in *Jane's Defence Weekly*, August 30, 2000.

⁷ Schleiffert, Rob and Corné Rodenburg, "Sao Paulo Rules the Waves," in *Naval Aviation News*, September-October 2003, 15.

Table 1. The Brazilian Navy Order of Battle (2005)

Type	Class (Original Name)	Number	Country of Origin
Aircraft Carrier (CV)	<i>São Paulo</i>	1	France
Frigate (FF)	<i>Greenhalgh (Broadsword)</i>	3	United Kingdom
Frigate (FF)	<i>Niterói</i>	6	United Kingdom ⁸ /Brazil
Frigate (FF)	<i>Pará (Garcia)</i>	1	United States
Corvette (FSGH)	<i>Barroso</i>	(1) ⁹	Brazil
Corvette (FSGH)	<i>Inháuma</i>	4	Brazil
Submarine (SS)	<i>Tikuna</i>	(1) ¹⁰	Brazil
Submarine (SS)	<i>Tupi (Type 209)</i>	4	Germany ¹¹ /Brazil
Amphibious Ship, Dock (LSD)	<i>Ceará (Thomaston)</i>	2	United States
Amphibious Ship, Tank (LST)	<i>Mattoso Maia (Newport)</i>	1	United States
Replenishment Tanker (AOR)	<i>Marajo</i>	1	Brazil
Replenishment Tanker (AOR)	<i>Almirante Gastão Motta</i>	1	Brazil

Source: *Jane's Fighting Ships*¹²

The table shows that Brazil is swiftly moving towards indigenous shipbuilding, especially in the area of submarines and small surface combatants. The *Tupi*-class submarines and *Inhauma*-class corvettes, for example, are all modern units, and are built domestically. In addition to the new carrier acquired from France, the new frigates acquired from Great Britain are highly capable anti-submarine escorts, and are used to screen the *São Paulo*.

The submarine program in particular warrants specific mention, as Brazil has long desired to construct a nuclear submarine. Brazil is the only state in Latin America capable of building submarines on its own, and has already

⁸ These ships are of a British design, and were built to order initially by yards in England, then the last two units were built in Brazil.

⁹ The first unit of the *Barroso* class was under construction in Brazil as of this writing.

¹⁰ The *Tikuna* is a new design under construction in Brazil, and according to *Jane's Fighting Ships* is viewed as an "intermediate step" prior to building a nuclear submarine.

¹¹ First unit completed in Germany, the remainder were built in yards in Brazil.

¹² *Jane's Fighting Ships Online*, found at: <http://www.janes.com>.

built several diesel-powered units. The first unit of the *Tikuna* class, a submarine built in Brazil, was launched on March 10, 2005, in a ceremony attended by President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva. The design is meant to be a stepping-stone towards the ultimate development of a nuclear submarine, a program that has been plagued by delays and barriers. Nevertheless, the desire is so great for such a unit in the Brazilian Navy that interest has never waned, and as of this writing the nuclear submarine is still planned to enter service around 2020.¹³

The current state of the Brazilian Navy is one that makes it the most capable in Latin America. Brazil may not have large numbers of ships, but the ships it has chosen to acquire are of higher quality than those operated in other countries in the region. No other country in Latin America has the means to operate an aircraft carrier, with all of the requisite maintenance and responsibility that goes along with such a unit. The recent acquisitions of the carrier *Sao Paulo*, the anti-submarine escort frigates from Britain, and the planned nuclear submarine all point Brazil's Navy towards blue water, and further from the shores it has traditionally clung to.

C. THESIS METHODOLOGY

Why would Brazil choose to pursue such a costly force? What are the causes and motivations that brought about the current situation with respect to the Brazilian Navy? These are both important questions arising from the recent naval developments in Brazil that will be addressed in this paper. There are three main veins of thought that

¹³ Rafael Cariello, "President Lula Helps Launch New Submarine," in *São Paulo Folha de São Paulo*, March 10, 2005, FBIS Document ID: LAP20050310000082.

contribute to explaining the answers to these questions, and this thesis is divided into three chapters to analyze each in turn.

In Chapter II, the concept of power and prestige will be discussed. The idea that naval power is interconnected with the desire for greater power and prestige with respect to the world community has helped to cause Brazil to maintain and expand its naval power. Earlier examples of nations, such as Ancient Rome's construction of a navy to gain additional power, Germany's building of a fleet to rival that of Britain in order to expand its influence, and the naval arms race that ended in the Washington Naval Treaty will all be mentioned. Finally, Brazil's own case will be compared to these, and shown as similar in scope.

Chapter III will discuss Brazil's desire for a seat on the United Nations Security Council, and why the maintenance of a blue-water fleet is relevant to achieving that goal. In recent years, there have been numerous calls for reform of the UN Security Council, many centering around the assertion that the body no longer represents the emergence of new powers around the world, including India and Brazil, among others. Brazil, which is as of this writing occupying one of the rotating seats on the Security Council, has taken several steps to prove that it is worthy of a permanent seat, when reform comes. Increased involvement in UN peacekeeping operations, especially in Haiti, where Brazil is the lead country is one main example. The naval rebirth that Brazil is currently undergoing, including the new naval aviation capability afforded by the carrier *São Paulo*, will provide a much greater ability to respond to crises. Brazil undoubtedly

views enhanced naval power as a means to achieving its desired end of permanent membership on the Security Council.

Chapter IV will focus on domestic politics in Brazil, and how it relates to the current naval situation in the country. The creation of the Brazilian Ministry of Defense will be introduced, and its relevance to military programs discussed. The SIVAM system, a hugely expensive military surveillance system meant to keep tabs on the vast Amazon region, was completed recently after many years of development and construction. At the same time SIVAM was being built, however, and despite its price tag topping \$1 billion, the Navy was also receiving the first of its new platforms, including the new aircraft carrier. The Navy was able to do this in light of the fact that SIVAM was primarily an Air Force and Army enterprise, and thus the Navy was able to lobby for compensatory funding. Finally, the concept of institutional emulation, the idea of a country essentially copying the institutions of another more successful country, will be introduced and its application to Brazil discussed.

The thesis concludes with the realization that while the three arguments presented each independently contribute to Brazil's naval expansion, in reality they are mutually dependent. For example, while it is true that Brazil's government wishes to expand the Navy in order to better its chances of gaining a seat on the UN Security Council, domestic politics in Brazil and public opinion are also in favor of this end. Civilians seem to wish to preserve Brazil's sovereignty and respect on the world stage, and as a result generally favor a Navy capable of doing more than

patrolling the coast of their country. In the end, Brazil has placed itself on a course that will be able to take its fleet far from its shores, into the blue water that countries before it have ventured into.

II. POWER AND PRESTIGE

A. INTRODUCTION

History has shown that nations throughout history associate the prestige of a given state to the relative amount of power it can wield. This is especially true of naval forces, which over the centuries have consistently been an instrument of power for states that can afford to possess them. For Brazil, maintaining a blue-water capable fleet is one of the keys to becoming the primary regional power in South America, as well as increasing its own level of prestige, both among its peers in Latin America as well as with the rest of the world.

Though there are many historical examples very similar to the Brazil case, there are several especially worthy of note. As it emerged from a small, solely land-oriented civilization to one that dominated the Mediterranean region, Ancient Rome required a navy in order to counter its rival, Carthage. After its victory over Carthage in the Punic Wars, the fleet created by Rome helped the fledgling empire become master of the Mediterranean region. A second case was when Germany became a state following the Franco-Prussian War in the late nineteenth century. The new state saw building a modern steel navy as the only way of countering British naval supremacy, as well as a way to attain greater esteem on the world stage amongst the other powers of the time. Both of these cases represent two previously land-oriented nations that pursued costly naval construction programs in an effort to gain more power. As will be shown, Rome's decision to do so made the

Mediterranean its own "pond," while the German pursuit of a navy disrupted world order, sparking an international arms race.

A discussion of the power and prestige argument would be incomplete without mention of the United States' fleet expansion at the end of the 19th Century, and thus is included here. What began initially as a modest shipbuilding program in response to the acquisition of battleships in South American countries ended with the United States committing itself to a blue water naval force. Finally, the early twentieth century in the post World War I years saw the resumption of a naval arms race, begun at the time Germany was creating its fleet in the last nineteenth century and paused around the time of World War I. Following World War I, the race resumed, abated only by the Washington Naval Treaty in 1921 between the major world naval powers. Each state attempted to possess the strongest fleet possible, both for the sheer power as well as the prestige of it.

In the realm of international politics, much as been written on why states pursue power. Of the several theories fielded, ranging from liberalism to realism, the theory of "offensive realism"¹⁴ as put forth by John J. Mearsheimer seems to best explain why Brazil is in pursuit of a blue water naval force. This chapter will explore Brazil's pursuit of greater power and prestige through its naval force, first by using Mearsheimer's theory to set a baseline. Additionally, historical examples of states pursuing similar strategies will be introduced for

¹⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 20-21.

comparison of Brazil's situation. The three included historical examples were selected both because of their focus on naval power, and their relevance to the theory of offensive realism that creates a common thread with the current Brazilian case.

B. OFFENSIVE REALISM

To help explain why states compete for power, various international relations experts have created several theories. Generally, these theories break down into either the field of liberalism or realism. Liberalism is in general a more optimistic approach to the issue, while realism tends to be more ominous or dark. One of the best examples of liberalism applicable to this case is the theory of defensive realism, where states seek to essentially preserve the status quo, and are not concerned with expanding their power in the interest of maintaining the balance of power.¹⁵ This seems logical, but unfortunately defensive realism does not take into account the fact that

The international system creates powerful incentives for states to look for opportunities to gain power at the expense of rivals, and to take advantage of those situations when the benefits outweigh the costs...¹⁶

It is this hypothesis upon which John Mearsheimer bases his theory of offensive realism, a somewhat more dreary view, yet one that fits in well with the theme of this chapter.

Mearsheimer believes there is a "compelling logic" in his belief that great powers seek to "maximize their share

¹⁵ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 20-21.

¹⁶ Ibid, 21.

of world power,"¹⁷ and in the end, have "hegemony as their final goal."¹⁸ His explanation for this lies in five fundamental assumptions concerning the international system. These assumptions are:

1. The international system is anarchic...the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them.¹⁹

2. Great powers inherently possess some offensive military capability, which gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other.²⁰

3. States can never be certain about other states' intentions...indeed, all of the states in the system may be relatively benign, but it is impossible to be sure of that judgment because intentions are impossible to divine with 100 percent certainty.²¹

4. Survival is the primary goal of great powers. Specifically, states seek to maintain their territorial integrity and the autonomy of their domestic political order.²²

5. Great powers are rational actors. They are aware of their external environment and they think strategically about how to survive in it.²³

These five assumptions, taken together, according to Mearsheimer, best explain why states pursue a strategy of increasing their level of power relative to other states.

¹⁷ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 29.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid, 30.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 31.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

The theory of offensive realism focuses mainly on great power states, which are defined according to Mearsheimer as states that must have "sufficient military assets to put up a serious fight in an all-out conventional war against the most powerful state in the world."²⁴ Arguably, however, offensive realism is not confined solely to these great power states, and could also be considered in a regional sense. Emerging powers such as China, India, and Brazil can all fit under this umbrella, as they are all seeking to increase their level of power relative to those around them in an attempt to dominate their particular regions. Since "the fortunes of all states—great powers and smaller powers alike—are determined primarily by the decisions and actions of those with the greatest capability,"²⁵ it only follows logically, then, that those with the *potential* for the greatest power in their respective regions would seek to attain that status.

Applied to the acquisition of prestige, generally a state with great power garners prestige on the international stage as a result of the requisite level of power it wields. For a state that, under the umbrella of offensive realism, is pursuing greater power, the reward of greater prestige is arguably one of the major goals of the state. Greater prestige for emerging powers means greater attention paid them by the great powers, and thus a larger role in the world as a whole. Thus, it is not surprising that a state that has the capability to attain greater power, does in fact in most cases pursue that end.

²⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 5.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 5.

The offensive realism theory is best applicable to Brazil for these reasons. The other main theories, defensive realism and liberalism, do not sufficiently explain Brazil's actions. Defensive realism focuses more on the idea that "states merely aim to survive,"²⁶ and are concerned with the relative balance of power. Brazil does not seem to be concerned with a balance of power in South America; rather, the reverse seems to be true. Liberalism on the other hand, is not applicable to Brazil's case primarily because it is too optimistic in its view of the world. One of the main tenets of liberalism, that "calculations of power matter little for explaining the behavior of good states,"²⁷ fails to explain Brazil's actions. Brazil is considered a "good state," in that it is not hostile towards others, and yet it seems sincerely concerned with its own power and status in the world, thus sparking such programs as the current naval expansion.

C. ANCIENT ROME

At first glance, the mention of Rome might seem rather strange, as the events that resulted in Rome's supremacy in the Mediterranean occurred so far in the past. It is, however, one of the first examples of the expansion of naval power for the purpose of enhancing a nation's power and prestige on record, and as such warrants a place here. The key point of reference for the Rome case is *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, originally written by the Greek historian Polybius over two thousand years ago. The major point of separation between the Rome case and the Brazilian case is

²⁶ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2001, 19.

²⁷ Ibid, 16.

that Rome was building its fleet during wartime, but the underlying reasons are the same.

In 261 BC, during the First Punic War, Rome was fighting with Carthage in the first of three wars that eventually resulted in Rome having control of the Mediterranean Sea. As several Roman coastal cities fell prey to Carthaginian raids while Carthage itself suffered no such attack, "[the Romans] were filled with desire to take to sea and meet the Carthaginians there."²⁸ The main problem for the Romans was that they had never had a need to venture into the sea prior to the war with Carthage, and thus had no knowledge of shipbuilding or of naval warfare. Were it not for a fortuitous grounding of an enemy warship that fell into Roman hands, "...they would have been prevented from carrying out their programme for sheer lack of the necessary knowledge."²⁹

Although the Romans had little experience in shipbuilding, they were able to produce innovative warships that made use of their own strengths. Since Romans were most experienced with land combat, the obvious step for them was to create warships that could attach themselves to their enemy and take the fight directly aboard their enemy's ship, using Rome's effective ground troops to defeat the opponent. Later, the Roman fleet was used in support of landings in Spain and Africa, and in some cases, notably against New Carthage in Spain, the fleet was actually used as a rudimentary "fire support" platform for the invading Roman troops.³⁰ In this manner, Rome was able

²⁸ Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, London: Penguin Books, 1979, 62.

²⁹ Ibid, 63.

³⁰ Ibid, 412-414.

to defeat Carthage and become the undisputed master of the Mediterranean Sea.

Henceforth, Rome's power grew in the region, reaching a point of complete hegemony only a few hundred years later. According to Polybius,

Since the Romans deliberately chose to school themselves [in naval affairs], it is quite natural that they should not only have boldly embarked on their pursuit of universal dominion, but that they should actually achieved their purpose.³¹

As the years progressed and Rome's power grew, so too did its prestige in the region. Ancient Rome fits into Mearsheimer's offensive realism equation quite well, for Rome desired to maintain its territorial integrity, and acted as a rational actor, expanding its power in order to compete with its rival, and in the end it achieved hegemony (Mearsheimer's stated end state). While it is true that Rome was a dominating power in the region both militarily and politically, it is also true that as a result of controlling the seas, Rome gained the power it sought. Without defeating Carthage on the seas and gaining naval supremacy in the Mediterranean shortly thereafter, Rome could likely never have ascended in the way it did.

To compare this case to Brazil's situation, Brazil is a nation that, while not pursuing a fleet in response to a hostile enemy, it is building to maintain its sovereignty. As Rome did before it, Brazil seeks to maintain a fleet capable of ensuring that its autonomy is never challenged,

³¹ Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, London: Penguin Books, 1979, 109.

and perhaps to serve as a reminder to other countries in South America that it is the regional power.

D. THE KAISER'S NAVY

Following the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, the German state was an official entity, all of the separate Prussian states having been united as a result of a solely land-oriented struggle. As Holger Herwig writes, "The war at sea was conspicuous by its absence."³² Indeed, to that time, Prussia had never needed a navy of any great power, as it had no major maritime interests to speak of. With the creation of the German Empire in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles in 1871,³³ that fact remained largely unchanged. Some fifteen years later, however, when Wilhelm II ascended to the title of Emperor on June 15, 1888, the German attitude toward naval power "was to change dramatically."³⁴

The new Kaiser turned out to be a great proponent of naval power, a desire of his that only grew stronger, almost to the point of obsessive, with time. By the mid 1890s, Wilhelm had read Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*,³⁵ a book that had a great effect upon him. Around the turn of the twentieth century, as Gary Weir writes,

³² Holger H. Herwig, *Luxury Fleet: The Imperial German Navy 1888-1918*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980, 13.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 16.

³⁵ Ibid, 17.

Possessing a navy was a sign of national greatness and power, and a strong naval force was virtually required for a nation to compete for economic and political influence around the world.³⁶

In a relatively limited time since Germany emerged as a state, it had already begun to acquire colonial possessions overseas. These, of course, became some of the maritime interests that drove Germany to build a modern navy, the Kaiser's own desires notwithstanding.

In 1897, then, when Germany announced its intentions to build a large naval fleet, the decision was partially the result of the Kaiser's great affinity towards naval power as well as the growing desire of Germany to emerge as a power to rival that of Great Britain, which up to that time had been the undisputed world naval power. The Kaiser, in a speech delivered in 1900, summed up in a short space the German desire to attain power and prestige through the development of a modern navy:

And as My grandfather [did] for the Army, so I will, for My Navy, carry on unerringly and in similar manner the work of reorganization so that it may also stand on an equal footing with My armed forces on land and so that through it the German Empire may also be in a position abroad to attain that place which it has not yet reached.³⁷

In short order, Germany had become a world power, though one of much more contemporary means than the others of the day. Using offensive realism to explain this case, again as in the case of Rome, Germany felt threatened by another great power, Great Britain, as it sought to expand

³⁶ Gary E. Weir, *Building the Kaiser's Navy: The Imperial Navy Office and German Industry in the von Tirpitz Era, 1890-1919*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1992.

³⁷ Herwig, 17.

its empire abroad. Thus, Germany built up a navy to compete with Great Britain, and achieve its goals. In less than two decades, both would be tested during World War I, which was at the time, the most devastating conflict between the European great powers in history.

Brazil's Navy when compared to this situation presents a notable similarity. Germany had no true need for a large fleet, as its main source of power came from its land forces. Brazil, while needing a modest fleet to protect fisheries and other maritime interests close to shore, truly has no need for a large oceangoing fleet capable of power projection (as an aircraft carrier affords a fleet). As German naval expansion directly contributed to a naval arms race amongst the major powers at the time, other maritime states in South America (notably Chile) may be forced to expand their own fleets in order to create balance.

E. UNITED STATES NAVAL EXPANSION IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY

As the 20th Century approached, the United States found itself increasingly conflicted over whether to remain an isolationist state, or to embark on more ambitious aspirations in the world. Until the mid 1880s, the United States had no formal battleships in service, nor did it consider itself a naval power with global reach. When around that time several South American nations acquired modern battleships for their navies, the United States finally constructed its own ships in order to create balance. However, once those two ships hit the water, the tide of change had been set in motion.

Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* was published in 1890, and had a great impact on thinking

within the U.S. Navy and U.S. Government. That publication and its effects, coupled with other outspoken proponents of naval power, amounted to greater calls for naval expansion. Congress eventually agreed, and passed the Naval Act of 1890, which authorized several new battleships, capable of operations far from coastal waters, to enter the fleet.³⁸

A fleet that could operate far from home at the turn of the century required coaling stations. Fuel-hungry battleships could not steam for more than several thousand miles at the time without needing replenishment, and thus the Navy began searching for ways to acquire overseas coaling stations. Other European states such as Britain, and later, Germany, were all attempting to do the same thing, giving the U.S. even greater resolve to find these strategic locations. When the Spanish-American War came in 1898, the U.S. got exactly what it needed. Overseas bases in the Philippines, among other places, added many strategic fueling locations for the ever-growing U.S. fleet, and began to give the U.S. Navy more of a global reach.

The U.S. by the early 1900s had become an imperialist power, with a large, modern, blue water fleet. The fleet became the instrument of acquiring greater power and prestige amongst other contemporary nations. Arguably, U.S. involvement in the building of a blue water fleet also helped to contribute to a global naval arms race between the major naval powers. This arms race lasted well into the 20th Century, and was only curbed by formal treaty in 1921.

³⁸ George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years Of Sea Power*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993, 22.

F. THE INTERWAR NAVAL ARMS RACE

The period between World War I and World War II was tumultuous, especially as the great power states looked at their naval fleets and saw inadequacies when compared to others. The major powers with large fleets at the time, Japan, Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy, and others with smaller fleets began to embark on hugely expensive shipbuilding programs. These ranged from building new battleships (the "strategic" weapon of the time) to most any type of vessel then in use. Primarily, however, the focus was upon capital ships, as the battleship almost always was used as a measure of power for a given country.

What ensued was a naval arms race potentially of epic proportions, though it was more a continuation of an arms race that had essentially been ongoing since before World War I. Germany had already embarked on a naval building program to rival that of Britain, and as a result had sparked a naval arms race involving nearly all the great powers of the time.³⁹ Once the arms race had resumed post-World War I, each successive ship design to come off the ways was bigger, more powerful, and more expensive than the one before it. As one state fielded a new ship class, others would rush to match or gain a step up over it. In Mearsheimer's view, this would be standard procedure for states acting as rational actors under the theory of offensive realism. Each state was attempting to ensure its own survival in an anarchic international system. As each state was unsure of the others' true intentions, they were forced to engage in this struggle for naval supremacy.

³⁹ George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years Of Sea Power*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993, 37.

It was the United States that in 1921 first proposed a conference to limit the destructive arms race that had transpired. President Harding at the time was of the view that

The core of the problem was to be found in competitive programmes, and that before naval armaments could be effectively controlled it was essential to get rid of the spirit of rivalry.⁴⁰

Only after lengthy discussions with the major powers was some semblance of trust reached, and a treaty signed. The Washington Naval Treaty, as it came to be called, placed limits on the tonnage of capital ships that each power could build in the ratio of "5, 5, 3, 1.67, 1.67"⁴¹ for the U.S., Great Britain, Japan, France, and Italy.

The treaty worked for approximately ten years, but as the shadow of World War II loomed, some states ignored the treaty (Japan, in particular), and revived their shipbuilding programs. Thus, despite efforts to curb fully the naval arms race, the reality of the international system at the time practically guaranteed that states would eventually go back to vying for greater power over the others. Therefore, the theory of offensive realism seems to apply to this case as well. As Mearsheimer states, a state realizes that power is the "key to survival,"⁴² and will pursue any means necessary to gain the power it deems necessary to survive. The Washington Treaty limits were thus ineffective in the long term for this reason.

⁴⁰ Hector C. Bywater, *Navies and Nations: A Review of Developments Since the Great War*, London: Constable & Company Ltd, 1927, 123.

⁴¹ Ibid, 125.

⁴² Mearsheimer, 21.

The Washington Treaty case, as stated, was an outgrowth of the problems created when Germany built a modern naval force in the late nineteenth century. For Brazil, again, naval expansion in South America might in the long run result in a similar situation amongst states such as Chile or Argentina that also have an interest in the sea. The nations involved in the Washington Conference were all attempting to best each other with the size and capability of their fleets, and in doing so achieve superiority. Brazil follows this mold with respect to its neighbors in South America, and arguably has become the superior naval force in the region because of its actions.

G. THE BRAZILIAN CASE

The preceding examples have provided clear historical examples of nations expanding their naval power as a means to gain more power and prestige. Time and again, history has shown that one of the main reasons a state decides to build a fleet centers around its desire for a greater role in the world. Applying the power and prestige argument to Brazil, it will be shown that the case is quite similar.

The Brazilian Navy has always been an enigmatic force in South America, mainly because South America has enjoyed relative peace with respect to interstate conflict. Argentina and Brazil had been labeled as military rivals in the mid twentieth century, but those comparisons ceased to exist around the time of the failure of Argentina in the Malvinas conflict. Though Brazil possesses some of the most advanced shipbuilding capabilities in the South American region, a large number of the ships in the fleet came from purchases of ships from other countries. Only recently has the Brazilian shipbuilding industry begun to

produce modern units, including submarines, on its own. For most of the second half of the twentieth century, Brazil and Argentina were naval rivals, with each country possessing an aircraft carrier and modest fleets capable of dealing with the other. With the decline of the Argentine Navy in the 1990s, Brazil has emerged as the dominant naval force in South America.

In the 1980s, at about the time Argentina had fought and lost the Falklands War, the Brazilian Navy's ability to project power ashore was "seriously restricted."⁴³ While Brazil did have an aircraft carrier, due to restrictions placed upon it at the time as well as limitations of the aging platform itself (*Minas Gerais* was a secondhand British light carrier from World War II), the carrier only embarked helicopters in its air wing. Brazil's amphibious capability was nonexistent, as were other common methods of naval power projection.

In recent years, however, the negative trend in power projection capability has been changing. With the acquisition in 2000 of the former French aircraft carrier *Foch*, now renamed *Sao Paulo*, Brazil's carrier capability increased dramatically over the obsolescent *Minas Gerais*. The acquisition would likely not have been considered had not the dispute with the Air Force over the Navy owning its own fixed wing aircraft been resolved. Once the dispute was ended, Brazil purchased in 1998 twenty-three A-4 attack aircraft from Kuwait specifically for use on the carrier.⁴⁴ These two acquisitions alone, while by no means state of

⁴³ Ferreira, 37.

⁴⁴ Schleiffert and Rodenburg, 14.

the art, give Brazil a power projection capability an order of magnitude greater than it had previously possessed.

Aside from carrier aviation, Brazil has in recent years begun to construct its own ships, albeit using foreign designs and components. New frigates and submarines are under construction as of this writing, and other units have been acquired in addition to the carrier. These include four highly capable antisubmarine warfare frigates from Great Britain and several retired amphibious ships from the United States. There has even been talk in recent years of acquiring retired *Spruance*-class destroyers from the United States,⁴⁵ warships that in U.S. service were capable of launching the Tomahawk cruise missile for use in strike warfare. While this missile would almost certainly not be supplied to Brazil should this deal ever take place, the sheer capability of these destroyers with respect to others in the region, namely their robust antisubmarine warfare facilities and aforementioned strike warfare capabilities, would also represent a great step forward in Brazil's power projection capability.

The trend in modernization of the fleet and acquisition of a true power projection capability once again elicits the concept of offensive realism. Based on the history of the past twenty years in South America, Brazil clearly is aiming to be a regional hegemon in South America, having already essentially achieved regional economic dominance through MERCOSUR and other recently created institutions. Traditional rivals such as Argentina are no longer capable of affording military forces such as

⁴⁵ "Destroyers, Brazil," in *Jane's Fighting Ships*, updated on 5 March 2004, online at www.janes.com, accessed December 2004.

Brazil possesses, leaving Brazil ahead of all others in the region. Assuming Brazil seeks regional hegemony as a final goal, it will need to attain the greatest share of world power possible in order to achieve that end. The acquisition of more naval power is the form in which this greater share of world power presents itself for Brazil. To only examine Brazil's Navy in recent years proves this assumption, but when taking into account further military developments such as the multi-billion dollar SIVAM surveillance system,⁴⁶ the point becomes more concrete.

H. CONCLUSION

As with Rome, Germany, and the states involved in the naval arms race prior to World War II, Brazil is itself seeking prestige through the expansion of power. In the Navy's case, power is being acquired through a complete modernization of the fleet, from top to bottom. As the battleship was once the symbol of national prestige and power, so today is the aircraft carrier. Few nations can afford to build and/or maintain such ships today, and Brazil has clearly demonstrated a desire to be among them.

The theory of offensive realism explains best the Brazilian desire for greater power, and thus, prestige. A state seeks to acquire the most power possible so that it can both remain secure as well as achieve the end goal of hegemony. Though the Brazilian fleet is by no means a modern force as compared to the United States or Great Britain, it does remain relatively powerful and capable. It is certainly the dominant fleet in South America today, and will likely remain that way. If the current trend of

⁴⁶ SIVAM, or "Sistema de Vigilância da Amazônia," an acronym in Brazilian Portuguese, is a multi-billion dollar military surveillance system developed to monitor the Amazon region. It will be discussed in further detail in Chapter IV.

military modernization, especially in the Brazilian Navy, continues, Brazil will achieve the status of regional hegemon in South America. Once again, the theory of offensive realism will have been proven true.

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III. BRAZIL, THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL, AND THE NAVY

A. INTRODUCTION

Moving from the realm of Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory and the power and prestige angle, the next step in this analysis involves Brazil and its desire to play a greater role in the United Nations. In recent years, as global conditions changed, there have been increasing calls from around the world for drastic changes to be made to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).⁴⁷ Many of the proposed changes center around the fact that the world is no longer the same one upon which the UN Security Council was originally formed following World War II. Specifically, many of the proposals to change the UNSC involve adding newly emerging regional powers as permanent members of the UNSC. Brazil is generally considered to be a front-runner for one of these spots should the opportunity arise.

Brazil itself has wished to become part of such an expanded UNSC for some time, but with the election of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in the beginning of 2003, Brazil increased greatly its lobbying for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. In a speech delivered to the commanders-in-chief of the Brazilian Armed forces at the end of 2003, the Brazilian Defense Minister stated that "...it is essential, above all, that the United Nations Organization be reformed, and in particular its Security

⁴⁷ Marcel H. Van Herpen, "Security Council Reform: How and When?" in *In the National Interest*, October 8, 2003, found online at: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/reform/cluster1/2003/1008howwhen.htm>, accessed March 2005.

Council."⁴⁸ As if to add to Brazil's push for such an event, on January 1, 2004 Brazil took a seat for a two-year term as one of the rotating members of the Security Council, and later in the year offered to lead the peacekeeping effort in Haiti. Overall, "[Brazil's] actions have been a test of how it would behave if it were made a permanent member [of the Security Council]."⁴⁹

This chapter will focus on Brazil's increasing desire to fill a seat on an expanded UN Security Council and will explain why the expansion of her navy fits in well with such an aspiration. Generally, the five current permanent members all possess a large naval force (with respect to most other states). The other states lobbying for positions on the permanent UNSC, including India and Japan, also either currently possess decent naval forces, or are in the process of overhaul, expansion and modernization like Brazil. Possessing such naval power may not be a written prerequisite for being a permanent Security Council member, but the power projection capabilities such a force carries with it does say much for the ability of a state to undertake UN operations, including peacekeeping. The chapter will begin with a short representation of the current makeup of the UNSC, followed by a brief account of the proposals to overhaul it. Next, Brazil's own recent actions in achieving this goal, including its current (as

⁴⁸ Jose Viegas Filho (Brazilian Defense Minister). "Speech of the Most Excellent Minister of State for Defense, Jose Viegas Filho, to the General Officers of the Three Forces on the Occasion of the End of the Year 2003," Brasilia Ministerio da Defesa, December 17, 2003, FBIS Document ID: LAP20040224000041.

⁴⁹ Emir Sader, "What is Brazil Doing in Haiti?" in *Americas Program, Interhemispheric Resource Center*, July 6, 2004, found online at: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/haiti/2004/0706brazilinhaiti.htm>, accessed March 2005.

of this writing) leadership of the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti will be presented. Finally, how the navy's expansion fits in to the equation will be discussed.

B. THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND CALLS FOR REFORM

The UN as an international organization has been in existence since the close of World War II, when the victorious allied powers created it "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."⁵⁰ The Security Council itself consists of fifteen member states, five of which are permanent (United States, Great Britain, Russia, China, and France), and ten non-permanent members who serve for two-year terms (each year about half rotate).⁵¹ As of this writing, as discussed earlier, Brazil is currently serving as one of the non-permanent members (its term will end at the end of 2005). For the duration of the Cold War, the Security Council was often bogged down by the bipolar world that was represented by two of its permanent members, the United States and the Soviet Union. After the collapse of the latter, the restraints and inaction of the "Cold War impasse"⁵² gave way to a greatly increased role in, among other things, international peacekeeping.

Despite its recent successes and greater action, there has been an increasing amount of calls to reform the Security Council. The general arguments for reform center around two main issues. First, that the permanent members of the Security Council is made up of states that were either considered global powers at the close of World War

⁵⁰ *Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations*, found online at: <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/>, accessed March 2005.

⁵¹ UN Security Council Members website, found online at: http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_members.html, accessed February 2005.

⁵² Frederic L. Kirgis, "The Security Council's First Fifty Years," in *The American Journal of International Law* 89/3, July 1995, 516.

II or rose to that status shortly thereafter, but today are no longer the powers they once were.⁵³ The second argument is that since World War II, "new powers have emerged and are asking for their rightful place in the Security Council."⁵⁴ Among these include emerging regional powers such as Brazil and India. Essentially, these arguments translate to one key point, that the Security Council is no longer reflective of today's vastly different world, when compared to the one from which the original UNSC was conceived at San Francisco following World War II.

One of the more popular proposals to reform the Security Council has come from Japan, the basic idea of which would be to increase the number of permanent members from 5 to 10, and the number of rotating seats from 10 to 14.⁵⁵ The United States, for its part, proposed a "regional representation in which one country represents a continent."⁵⁶ Since such a proposal will almost certainly generate disagreement as to who deserves the seat more between one or more states in a given region (Brazil and Argentina, for example), other suggestions have included rotating the permanent members within a given region to give a more equitable arrangement within the UN Security Council.

Regardless of the final outcome of Security Council reform, it is highly likely that it will occur in the near future. States such as Brazil, India, Nigeria, and several

⁵³ Van Herpen.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Alan Boyd, "India, Japan Still Shooting for Security Council," in *Asia Times*, February 26, 2004, found online at: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/reform/cluster1/2004/0226shooting.htm>, accessed September 2004.

⁵⁶ Van Herpen.

others all seem to be "in the running" to become permanent members of the Security Council. Because of Brazil's position as an emerging regional power, like India and several other prospective candidates, the chances of it being chosen to fill a permanent seat on an expanded Security Council are fairly good.

C. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN HAITI

Most recently, Brazil's decision to become involved in the United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Haiti is even more important than the SIVAM program, as it reflects a determination to be more involved in the UN not previously seen. In the most recent (2004) crisis in Haiti, Brazil offered to lead the United Nations Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the successor to the crisis-response Multi-National Interim Force (MIF). Since then, Brazil has garnered respect from the world community for stepping up and offering its military services so willingly.

The crisis in Haiti had been brewing for several years. In a country with little progress made in democratic consolidation since the last time (1994) the United Nations had a mission within its borders, it is little surprise that in 2004, a rebellion was sparked into life against President Aristide. After an interim force authorized by UNSC Resolution 1529⁵⁷ and led by a small group from the U.S. and several other nations, a second mission was proposed to more adequately deal with keeping the peace. On April 30, 2004, the United Nations Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was authorized,⁵⁸ and Brazil stepped up to take the lead of the new mission, deploying the largest

⁵⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1529, February 29, 2004.

⁵⁸ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1542, April 30, 2004.

contingent of troops to the beleaguered country. This was followed in much fewer numbers by several other Latin American states shortly thereafter.⁵⁹

MINUSTAH has since turned out to be Brazil's largest military deployment since World War II.⁶⁰ Following closely with Brazilian military involvement in the UN peacekeeping mission in East Timor, it also has a predictive quality, in that this may only be the beginning. Given Brazil's (and President Lula's) desire for a more active role in the United Nations, including gaining a seat on the Security Council, it is no surprise that Brazil has opted to take these actions. It is also likely that should the Security Council be reformed, Brazil's willingness to lead missions such as MINUSTAH will bode well for its consideration to occupy the seat it desires.

D. THE NAVY'S ROLE

While it may not seem apparent at first glance, the Brazilian Navy does have an important role in Brazil's desire to occupy a seat on the Security Council. In states such as Brazil and India, which also is building up its navy and is also in the running for a Security Council seat (should reform come), a fleet becomes extremely useful. Should Brazil receive its Security Council position, it will be expected to act as the other states currently on it do with respect to UNSC resolutions. Specifically, Brazil may become more involved in overseas UN operations. As with the United States, France and the United Kingdom,

⁵⁹ Tim Weiner, "U.S. Begins Transfer of a Shaky Haiti to U.N. hands," in *New York Times*, June 2, 2004, A3.

⁶⁰ Angus MacSwan, "Some See Quagmire for Brazil Troops in Haiti," online at: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=427319>, accessed February 2005.

Brazil may come to rely on its Navy to respond to crises that emerge, especially if they are in the Latin American or West African regions.

The Brazilian Navy possesses an amphibious force of three large ships (all acquired from the United States),⁶¹ and of course the aircraft carrier *Sao Paulo*. These ships, as well as numerous other support vessels, provide Brazil with a modest power projection capability that is invaluable in crisis response. With Brazil's continued plans to develop something more than a "home defense" fleet, it seems likely that the future holds more overseas involvement in store.

Aside from the aircraft carrier and amphibious forces, a great deal of focus has been placed on Brazil's ever-increasing desire to build a nuclear-powered submarine to add to its fleet. Were one to use this type of unit as a basis for comparison with respect to the current permanent members of the UN Security Council, it would become obvious that all five operate nuclear powered submarines in their own navies. It is interesting to note that no other world naval forces besides the five permanent UNSC members currently have such units in service, though several "prospective" UNSC members are all attempting to pursue the acquisition of them.

In a 2003 article in the Argentine newspaper *La Nacion*, analyst Rosendo Fraga wrote:

Brazil's decision to accelerate construction of a nuclear submarine, so that it can be placed in service in 2010, confirms the country's intention

⁶¹ "Brazil," *Jane's Fighting Ships* website, online at <http://jfs.janes.com>, accessed June 2004.

to become a "player" on the world scene and consolidate itself as a major power in South America, as India has done in Asia and South Africa in Africa.⁶²

The idea of Brazil building a nuclear submarine has been an "on again, off again" affair for more than twenty years.⁶³ However, in recent years, and especially with the start of the naval buildup by President Cardoso in the late 1990s⁶⁴ and continuation of it in Lula's administration, the program has taken on much greater importance. In a late 2004 interview, Brazilian Navy Commander Roberto de Guimares Carvalho stated that the "nuclear-powered submarine constitutes the natural strategic solution for [Brazil's] Defense System."⁶⁵ Thus, it becomes clearer that Brazil is most certainly intending on following through with its nuclear submarine program. Possessing a nuclear submarine may not have any direct impact on operations supporting the United Nations, but considering, as stated before, the fact that the five permanent members all possess such units, were Brazil to successfully acquire one, it would join the ranks of an "exclusive" group of nations, and might well have a better chance of gaining a permanent seat.

⁶² Rosendo Fraga, "Brazil Seen as Intent on Becoming World 'Player,' Regional Power," in *La Nacion*, November 20, 2003, FBIS Document ID: LAP20031120000045.

⁶³ Ferreira, 43.

⁶⁴ Near the end of Cardoso's administration, the carrier *São Paulo* was acquired from France, and the four British anti-submarine warfare frigates were also added to the inventory.

⁶⁵ Brasilia Inforel, "Brazil: Navy Commander Discusses Priorities," interview given by Brazilian Navy Commander; date and place not given, December 13, 2004, FBIS Document ID: LAP20041214000064.

E. BRAZILIAN NAVAL DOCTRINE

Brazil's fleet has historically been more focused on coastal defense than on having a fleet capable of operating on the high seas. While the possession of its aircraft carrier through the late twentieth century was enigmatic in that it was never used to the extent of its capabilities, the fact that the carrier was replaced with a new unit at the end of its life is perhaps more important than the mere existence of the ship. The acquisition of the *Sao Paulo* and the new plans for rehabilitating and modernizing the fleet reflect a distinct change in doctrine for the previously coastal force. In the same interview discussing the nuclear submarine, the Brazilian Navy Commander Carvalho stated his vision of where his fleet was headed in the early twenty-first century:

The prevailing strategic concept for countries that have limited defense budgets...is to possess means capable, not of defeating any adversary, but of imposing a high cost on any military option, dissuading aggression and providing an incentive for the peaceful solution of controversies...It is within this concept that the Navy is seeking to develop a naval power with modern features....⁶⁶

It is under this precept that Brazil has acquired the new carrier, pressed forward with development of the nuclear submarine program and enacted a major fleet modernization program.

Looking further out into the sea, Brazil now seems to be eyeing the whole of the South Atlantic as its personal bastion of sorts. Carvalho was quoted as calling this area

⁶⁶ Brasilia Inforel, "Brazil: Navy Commander Discusses Priorities," interview given by Brazilian Navy Commander; date and place not given, December 13, 2004, FBIS Document ID: LAP20041214000064.

Brazil's "Blue Amazon,"⁶⁷ essentially waters including Brazil's claimed 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone, and with the continental shelf included in this area, going as far as 350 miles beyond the shores of Brazil. While this tends to place Brazil more in the category of a regional power than a world power, it should be noted that not all of the UN Security Council's permanent members are world powers. China is most certainly a regional power as of this writing, and Brazil seems to be consolidating this role for itself.

F. CONCLUSION

As Brazil's capabilities for pressing further from the shores into the South Atlantic increase, so too does its ability to exert influence on those around it - perhaps a prerequisite for being an active member of the UN Security Council. While some of Brazil's naval programs may not directly be tied to the country's desire to gain a seat on the Security Council, arguably they do have an indirect effect. Brazil's active involvement in UN Peacekeeping in recent years has proved its willingness to contribute to the organization, and has only served to increase its reputation among the other member nations. The increasing power of the Navy proves that Brazil wishes to be more of a player in world politics, for even though navies as instruments of world power are no longer what they once were, the resources and commitment needed to field units such as an aircraft carrier or a nuclear submarine are only accessible to those states that wish to prove they have the means to do so.

⁶⁷ Brasilia Inforel, "Brazil: Navy Commander Discusses Priorities," interview given by Brazilian Navy Commander; date and place not given, December 13, 2004, FBIS Document ID: LAP20041214000064.

IV. THE NAVY AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

A. INTRODUCTION

In the preceding two chapters, the idea of power and prestige contributing to Brazil's naval expansion, as well as a look at how the United Nations Security Council has affected, most especially in recent years, the Brazilian Navy. One area that has yet to be discussed, however, is the domestic angle. Brazilian domestic politics has, in the best Latin American tradition, been quite tumultuous throughout its history. It was not until the 1980s that democratic consolidation finally began in Brazil, and not until even more recently that a key indicator of a relatively stable democracy, a civilian-led Ministry of Defense, was instituted.

From a domestic point of view, the past few years has seen a series of events that seem to have contributed to the Brazilian government's willingness to expand the Navy. This chapter will seek to focus on these events, and prove that domestic politics in Brazil has had a role in the current expansion of the Brazilian fleet by discussing first the creation of the Ministry of Defense, the all-important democratic institution. Additionally, the SIVAM program will be discussed, as its costly development by the military may well have contributed to strengthening the Navy's case for an expanded force structure indirectly. Finally, I will explore the role that institutional emulation - a theory explaining that a given state will develop a certain institution by "emulating" a similar one in a comparable state - played in the decision to expand Brazil's Navy. While this theory may sound at first more

in the realm of international relations, it is in fact Brazilian domestic politics that has the final say in any such endeavor.

B. THE BRAZILIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY

The creation of the Brazilian Defense Ministry in 1999 was arguably one of the single most important developments in Brazilian defense policy since the fall of the military government in 1985. While still in its infancy and experiencing "teething problems" such as the recent resignation of Defense Minister Jose Viegas in November 2004,⁶⁸ having civilians in control of the defense ministry gives Brazil more respect on the world stage and increases its ability to more efficiently control its armed forces, both in an operational sense and, perhaps most importantly, its finances and procurement.

When the chains of military dictatorship were finally cast aside in 1985, the new civilian government had its work cut out for it. The military was a strong and highly influential force in government, and had little intention of moving from that position. For the first fifteen years of democracy in Brazil, each cabinet post related to the Army, Navy, and Air Force was headed by a military officer.

It was not until Fernando Henrique Cardoso assumed the presidency in 1995 that things finally began to change. Cardoso knew that the military would very likely oppose any plan to institute civilian control over them, so he shrewdly took any chance he could to avoid conflict with the military leadership, in the hopes that they would eventually concede. Their concession was rewarded with

⁶⁸ "Defense Minister Attributes Resignation to Army Letter on Herzog Case," in *Sao Paulo Agencia Estado*, November 4, 2004, FBIS Document ID: LAP20041104000077.

increased funding across the board, including the navy, and in some ways was the beginning of the expansion. Thus, during his administration, Cardoso was able to keep the military at bay by giving his forces some of what they wanted most: military pay and modernization of the forces. In 1998, "the military dissatisfaction over pay..."⁶⁹ was ended when a 113% pay raise was authorized, greater than anything the military had hoped for. All the services also received some funding for much needed modernization. The Navy was authorized to purchase twenty-three A-4 Skyhawk attack aircraft for use aboard its carrier *Minas Gerais* (since replaced by *Sao Paulo*), the 1963 regulation⁷⁰ limiting fixed wing aircraft to the Air Force having been repealed.⁷¹ The military, though still retaining most of its influence, was essentially pacified through Cardoso's actions.

In the final years of the Cardoso administration, the defense budget rose by the year 2000 to some \$17.8 billion,⁷² which was "more than the rest of South America combined." This included the purchase in the same year of the retired French aircraft carrier *Foch* (renamed *Sao Paulo* in Brazilian service), both to replace the aging, World War II era *Minas Gerais*, and to serve as a platform for the Navy's new aircraft acquired the year before from Kuwait.

⁶⁹ João R. Martins Filho and Daniel Zirker, "The Brazilian Military Under Cardoso: Overcoming the Identity Crisis," in *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 42, Autumn 2000, 151.

⁷⁰ Hal Klepak and Dean Martins, "[Brazil] Country Briefing, Finding Its Place As Region's Powerhouse," in *Jane's Defence Weekly* 026, October 23, 1996, found online at <http://www.janes.com>, accessed August 2004.

⁷¹ Filho, 154.

⁷² "Defence Spending, Brazil," in *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - South America*, 15 November 2004.

The much heralded (and hugely expensive) SIVAM system also went into service under these funds, as well as several other military purchases, all of which were, interestingly enough, completed *prior* to the aforementioned defense review.⁷³

Once the Ministry of Defense had been successfully created, civilians assumed control over most of the armed forces' arenas. With the removal of military officers from their positions as cabinet ministers, the overall power of the defense ministry has decreased, but influence over the services has increased. Attention has since the Ministry's creation in 1999 been turned towards streamlining thinking "more clearly about defence policy."⁷⁴ In 2000, Defense Minister Geraldo Quintao

Launched a defence review - an exercise routine in rich democracies, but almost unprecedented in Latin America. In Brazil's case, it is overdue.⁷⁵

Much like the "Bottom-Up Review" or the Quadrennial Defense Review of the U.S. Defense Department, the intent was to focus Brazil's "military capabilities with its foreign policy objectives,"⁷⁶ funding them fully, and "trimming the fat" off programs that had become obsolete or were no longer of practical use in executing defense policy. These defense reviews have in essence given a more thorough look at what aspects of the military are most essential for Brazil. Thus, the fact that today the Navy

⁷³ Anonymous, "The Americas, Defence Dilemmas," in *The Economist* 358, Jan 27, 2004, 34.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

continues to evolve and expand reflects the fact that the civilian Ministry of Defense has had a positive effect on the military.

At the end of 2003, the Brazilian Minister of Defence, Jose Viegas Filho, delivered a speech to his general officers in command of the military forces. In that speech, Filho mentions several things that reflect the Ministry of Defense's contribution to the Navy's expansion. On funding, he stated:

I am sure that a new steady level of funds for defense is one of the requirements of the state...In my ministry, I will seek in 2004, as I sought in the year that is closing, a frank dialog with the government with a view to explaining the importance of funds for defense activities, not just to pay for operating costs but also, and mainly, to make it possible to resume programs and projects that are fundamental to the reequipping and modernization of the means of defense at levels compatible with our real needs.⁷⁷

This quote reflects the relevance Filho places on modernization and procurement for the military in general. Additionally, he mentioned the Navy specifically in several instances. On the type of fleet Brazil should conceivably possess, Filho said this:

For its job of defending Brazil, the Navy...should have a fleet capable, if necessary, of denying the use of the sea, of dissuading and extending protection to threatened areas. It is worth saying, we should persevere in developing nuclear propulsion for submarines, make every effort so that the aircraft carrier and its aircraft achieve a high degree of readiness,

⁷⁷ Speech by Jose Viegas Filho (Brazilian Defense Minister).

[and] resume the normal cycle of maintenance and modernization of our naval equipment.⁷⁸

The fact that the Minister of Defense explained that Brazil should have a fleet capable of sea-denial is extremely important. A fleet capable of sea-denial must be one that is either large, or if not large, extremely technologically capable. Either pursuit, however, is extremely expensive, his mention of nuclear power notwithstanding. This speech above all, however, reflects the relevance of the Ministry of Defense to the military in Brazil today, and helps to explain why the Brazilian Navy has enjoyed a rebirth during the past half-decade.

The creation of the civilian-led Defense Ministry was indeed a momentous occasion in Brazilian domestic politics. Its existence and early successes have paved the way for ambitious programs such as SIVAM to be seen to their conclusion, while at the same time permitting the civilian government to remain in control over the armed forces. The current naval expansion, including the previously mentioned aircraft carrier as well as several new programs have all come about following the transition to the Ministry of Defense from a system where the "ministers" were in reality the service commanders-in-chief. Thus, its relative importance to Brazil's navy cannot be refuted easily.

C. SIVAM: NAVAL PROCUREMENT BOON?

The SIVAM system, while purposely built as a domestically oriented project, has greater implications than simply a surveillance system of the Amazon basin. The SIVAM project is viewed by many in Brazil as a natural extension of Brazil's "manifest destiny," or rather, the

⁷⁸ Speech by Jose Viegas Filho (Brazilian Defense Minister).

development and settlement of the Amazon region. A Brazilian admiral (interestingly enough) was quoted as stating:

In Brazil we are 100 years behind the United States. The development of the Amazon is simply a part of our national process, just as [the United States] governments populated the American West in the 19th Century.⁷⁹

First begun in the mid 1990s under the Cardoso administration, the Amazon Vigilance System, or SIVAM system, is a large network of radar stations, satellites, and other components chiefly designed to watch over the skies along the border with Colombia and Peru in an effort to reduce the incidences of incursions by drug smuggling aircraft. While this is the system's primary mission, it also has side benefits such as environmental monitoring, and more importantly, it gives Brazil greater bargaining power in the region.

The system itself was embattled from the start, as most hugely expensive projects are, regardless of where they originate. Numerous allegations of impropriety were levied within the Brazilian government against the leaders of the program, but did these not result in any serious legal obstacles, and the system was built regardless. Once completed, the SIVAM system cost Brazil a staggering \$1.4 billion, an unheard of price in Latin America for a single defense system. As of this writing, the system is in full operation and has already resulted in several successes against drug smuggling aircraft, but perhaps the largest benefit to Brazil has only begun to be realized. Brazil

⁷⁹ Marcelo Ballve, "Brazil's New Eye on the Amazon," in *NACLA Report on the Americas* 36, May/June 2003, 32.

has already begun to negotiate with its neighbors, Peru and especially Colombia,⁸⁰ for use of the data from the SIVAM system. Thus, SIVAM may likely be more important for securing Brazil's role as a regional power, a role not originally intended for it, but with a \$1.4 billion card to play, Brazil would be foolish not to play it.

Arguably, another side benefit of the system, from the Navy's perspective, is that the Air Force and Army spent the enormous amounts of money on the program. As a result, this has contributed in some ways to the Navy's own procurement. The Brazilian government saw fit to increase the funding of the Navy in various arenas, since the Navy seemed to be having only a "trickle" of funding coming its way as a result of the SIVAM program. This is an interesting side effect indeed, for with the staggering price tag of the SIVAM project, it is unusual that in a country where money is already tight, at the same time Brazil's Navy was acquiring a new aircraft carrier from France, fixed-wing aircraft to fly from its decks, and other procurements such as highly capable antisubmarine warfare frigate from Great Britain, further domestic submarine construction, and carrier-capable aircraft.

D. SIVAM AND THE DEFENSE MINISTRY COMBINE TO AID THE NAVY

While it is possible that in some ways, the Navy's funding was increased as a result of SIVAM in order to place it on a more "equal footing" with its sister services in terms of expenditures, this may not entirely be the reason the Navy saw its funding increase. With SIVAM already underway and consuming a large amount of resources during his administration, then-President Fernando Henrique

⁸⁰ Matthew Flynn, "The Amazon's Silent Spy," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 59, January/February 2003, 13.

Cardoso also dramatically increased general military funding across the board beginning in 1995. The following table clearly shows this increasing trend.

Table 2. Military Expenditures under Cardoso, 1994 to 1998

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount Spent (in FY00 Dollars)</u>
1994	\$ 5.343 billion
1995	\$ 7.841 billion
1996	\$ 6.764 billion
1997	\$ 8.294 billion
1998	\$ 7.816 billion

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute⁸¹

By the turn of the century, funding had increased to well over \$8 billion annually, and currently shows no sign of easing. This is where the budget-consuming SIVAM program and the drive to create the Ministry of Defense converged to aid the Navy's budget.

Essentially, two domestic factors arguably contributed to the Navy being able to expand its procurement and modernization. First, the SIVAM program's huge budget, mostly consumed by the Army and Air Force, gave the Navy more bargaining power to successfully ask for more money. The Navy more than likely felt left out by the massive amounts of attention and funding given the SIVAM program in the final years of the 1990s. It is perhaps not coincidental that the decades old law banning the Navy from owning its own aircraft was only repealed during the initial construction period of the SIVAM project. The authorization to purchase the A-4 attack aircraft,

⁸¹ Data for Brazil's military expenditure history was found at the website for the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), found online at <http://www.sipri.org>, accessed April 2005.

personally authorized by President Cardoso, followed shortly thereafter, amidst the protests of the Brazilian Air Force. Were it not for the fact of SIVAM's high price tag and the Navy's omission from "seeing" any of the money given that program, it is likely that these two events, not to mention the subsequent acquisition of the aircraft carrier from France, would not have occurred.

The second key fact centers around the Brazilian Defense Ministry. The desire to create the Defense Ministry, largely opposed by the military, drove the Cardoso administration to increase military funding in order to pacify negative sentiment towards the Ministry's creation. For its capitulation and rescinding of its ministerial status, the military was rewarded with higher salaries and greatly increased budgets at the expense of its prerogative to self-determination. This, coupled with the reality of the SIVAM project, worked to give the Navy the largest funding boon it had seen in many years. By the beginning of the new century, Brazil had replaced its aging carrier, given it aircraft, and begun looking into other programs including the long-desired nuclear submarine, which are still high on the Navy's list of priorities today.

E. INSTITUTIONAL EMULATION: THE OTHER DOMESTIC ANGLE

There is another perspective worth noting, that may have contributed to Brazil's drive to achieve a blue water naval force. Many emerging democracies or Third World states, beleaguered with the prospect of institutionalizing and consolidating democracy within their borders, often ultimately emulate the institutions of established states. While this perspective has often been relegated to

explaining why a given state's government will take shape similarly to an existing one in another, it can also be used to explain why a state will drive itself to maintaining armed forces that it may or may not need, or that is largely symbolic in nature. This is arguably the case in Brazil, where the existence of an aircraft carrier is often thought of as unusual.

Institutional emulation is most prevalent in Europe, where following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the states that emerged in Central and Eastern Europe were democratizing and in need of a successful solution to quickly consolidate their regimes. The process, while internationally aimed, is solely domestic in focus and scope. A good idea of how institutional emulation tends to happen is presented by political scientist James Sperling:

The deep structure of the international system...requires states to be functionally alike - alike in the capacities that they pursue. This requirement suggests that states will converge on a narrow range of successful institutional forms in the management of those policy areas that directly contribute to national autonomy or survival.⁸²

Essentially, it seems to work almost as a "bandwagon" - a state will choose to emulate the institutions of another successful state because all of the others around it are either doing the same, or have already done so. In this manner, the emulating state maximizes its "prospect for survival and prosperity."

While this may be enough to explain why a state would choose to simply emulate another's institutions, some

⁸² James Sperling, "Neither Hegemony nor Dominance: Reconsidering German Power in Post-Cold War Europe," in *British Journal of Political Science* 31, April 2001, 409.

additional conditions should be noted. A caveat to this institutionalist approach is that

The social world is a cultural system, structured by an evolving set of categorical prescriptions and proscriptions that define and delimit appropriate action...since these cultural categories are practically taken for granted as lawful, actors rarely subject conforming behaviors to cost-benefit analysis - or do so only ritualistically.⁸³

Essentially, then, in addition to the requirements already stated, a state embarking on an emulation of another's institution do so with little regard for the ultimate consequences, mainly because it is generally assumed that it is the right thing to do.

To apply the institutional emulation theory to Brazil's Navy, what emerges is an interesting situation. The Brazilian fleet is comprised mainly of ships acquired from either the United States or Western European nations. Little of the fleet was constructed in Brazil itself, nor are the majority of units in service Brazilian in design. The sailors, in particular the officers, wear uniforms modeled after Western navies, and are educated in tactics and procedures similar to those practiced in Western navies. While this alone does not suggest outright emulation, it does provide some evidence that the Brazilian Navy is not a force created solely on its own without influence from other navies.

⁸³ Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman, "Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach," in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, found online at: <http://www.ciaonet.org/book/katzenstein/katz03.html>, accessed October 2004.

Where some sentiment in favor of the Navy is strongest lies in the civilian population of Brazil. In general, most in Brazil view the Navy and its strength as extremely important. Some of the best examples of these opinions can be found in commentaries and editorials from some of the more popular publications in Brazil. One such article submitted to *Sao Paulo Folha de Sao Paulo* illustrates this with respect to Brazil's naval aviation:

The fact is that country stops being "peripheral" only when it is respected. And Brazil will be respected only if it has the conditions and competence necessary for making its decisions at the international level. Without naval aviation, there is no way to defend a fleet. Furthermore, any fleet without it is no more than a coastal navigation fleet. With the *Minas Gerais* and *Sao Paulo*, Brazil is improving its conditions for implementing a national plan in which the country's sovereignty will ensure the dignity of its people.⁸⁴

The commentator here clearly likens the possession of aircraft carriers to the ability of Brazil to gain respect and preserve its sovereignty. The nuclear submarine program also attracts attention from civilian commentators in Brazil:

In the 21st Century, Brazil will have to develop a military capability compatible with its giganticness and its real geopolitical size, without identifying enemies...The country will need an ocean-going Navy, an Air Force with the capability for prompt response, and an Army with expeditionary capability.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Flavio Flores da Cunha Bierrenbach, "Commentator Relates Navy's Acquisition of Aircraft Carriers to Sovereignty," in *Sao Paulo Folha de Sao Paulo*, November 15, 2000, FBIS Document ID: LAP20001115000018.

⁸⁵ Eduardo Italo Pesce, "Brazil Urged To Develop Military Capability Comparable to Major Nations," in *Sau Paulo Gazeta Mercantil*, January 14, 2005, FBIS Document ID: LAP20050114000060.

This is yet another piece of evidence that Brazilians in general are in support of creating a strong military in general. Countless published examples similar to these are readily found on the Internet, and other various reliable sources such as the Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Clearly, Brazilian civilians do not wish to be regarded as a Third World nation, and as a result are willing to support such things as the Navy's expansion into blue water.

The most important factor, however, lending to the idea that Brazil is emulating the navies of Western nations again comes back to the pride of their fleet, the aircraft carrier *Sao Paulo*. Brazil, as mentioned before, sees itself as an emerging regional power and perhaps later becoming the hegemon of South America. In keeping with this role, Brazil is determined to maintain the carrier, much as the United States in its role as a hegemon maintains its own fleet of carriers. It has been argued about the acquisition and maintenance of weapons such as the aircraft carrier that

The armed forces, equipped with as modern weapons as possible, came to be regarded by many governments in the Third World as a symbol of unity and independence and as tangible evidence that the government intended to defend its sovereignty. The actual utility of these weapons...was often of secondary importance.⁸⁶

Thus, perhaps Brazil truly does not know the role its aircraft carrier will play, other than to ensure that its own perceived sovereignty remains intact. Regardless, it is obvious that Brazil has sought to emulate the navies of Western powers, both in attempt to establish itself as a

⁸⁶ Eyre and Suchman.

regional power, as well as proving that it cares about its own sovereignty and prestige.

F. CONCLUSION

Much has been presented here about Brazilian domestic politics and its Navy, and how they tend to affect each other. The general trend in Brazilian domestic politics seems to increasingly support a more regionally dominant role for the country, and in this role, the Navy will always have a place. The creation of the Ministry of Defense, the completion and early successes of the SIVAM program, and the recent naval modernization and procurement programs all contribute to this assumption. Brazil's Navy has obviously benefited from the Cardoso administration's favorable fiscal treatment of the armed forces during his administration. The current Lula administration, while having lowered defense budgets somewhat, has not shown it wishes to reduce the fleet.

The institutional emulation theory provides an interesting and different perspective in explaining why, domestically, Brazil has chosen to pursue the maintenance of a blue-water navy, when in reality it faces little external threat, and most certainly has little need for a new aircraft carrier. The only explanation remaining in this regard is that Brazil's Navy has done what it has done because it wishes to try to maintain itself as capable of defending its sovereignty. Additionally, it also wishes to prove that it can maintain its role as a regional power. The best course of action for Brazil's Navy, then, was to do its best to be like and act like the navies of the most influential Western powers, namely the United States Great

Britain, and France, all of whom have aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines - both are essentially symbolic in Brazilian possession.

V. CONCLUSION

Brazil has clearly demonstrated a desire to become a player on the world stage in recent years. Strangely enough, it essentially can already be considered a regional power in South America, as its economy is among the strongest. With respect to its Navy, Brazil has the sole aircraft carrier on the continent, Argentina having discarded its elderly carrier in December 1996 after years of inactivity.⁸⁷ Brazil is clearly the dominant naval power in South America simply for the existence of its aircraft carrier, the other newly acquired units and the nuclear submarine program notwithstanding. The three different perspectives given in this paper provide a glimpse into the mindset behind Brazil's desire to maintain a relatively strong (and expensive) naval force, and why it seems a small part of the big picture of Brazil attaining a more influential role in the world.

The power and prestige argument is relevant, as it helps to explain Brazil's situation in a more historical sense. Mearsheimer's concept of offensive realism is most certainly applicable to this case, as in striving for the more far-reaching naval force Brazil is asserting its relative superiority over the other South American countries. Few if any of the remainder of South American countries have the financial means, much less the political will to maintain a fleet that includes a maintenance-intensive aircraft carrier in its inventory. As the aircraft carrier is generally considered the modern capital

⁸⁷ A.D. Baker III, *The Naval Institute Guide to Combat Fleets of the World 1998-1999: Their Ships, Aircraft and Systems*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1998, 7.

ship, as the battleship once was, possessing one grants a country a certain prestige, regardless of the mission for which it is intended. Perhaps this explains why in additions to Brazil, Russia continues to maintain its sole carrier, and India is trying to replace its aged one.

The desire of Brazil to gain a permanent seat on an expanded United Nations Security Council has been long-standing within the country, and thus Brazil has been willing to take the steps it deemed necessary to attain that goal. As recently as March 2005, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan finally proposed sweeping changes to the UN Security Council, after years of consideration.⁸⁸ As of this writing, the ultimate results of that proposal have yet to be seen, but it is highly likely that some reforms are inevitable. In becoming more involved in the United Nations, notably by taking a lead role in the most recent UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Brazil is almost certainly attempting to demonstrate its resolve to be a member of the Security Council. The Brazilian Navy fits into this equation because by creating a more blue-water force as it seems to be doing, the Navy will be able to better support overseas roles such as the one in Haiti. All but one (China) of the current UN permanent Security Council members possesses at least one aircraft carrier in their inventory, and all have been active in peacekeeping missions. Brazil obviously sees its Navy as a prerequisite for greater UN involvement; thus the recent expansion and drive toward "open water."

⁸⁸ Edith M. Lederer, "Four Nations seek Security Council Seats," in *Miami Herald*, March 22, 2005, found online at: http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/breaking_news/11198540.htm, accessed February 2005.

Domestically, within Brazil one of the most important events to happen to the Navy was the creation of the Defense Ministry. Since prior to that, each service was essentially "master of its own destiny," there was no oversight and consequently, stagnant change and innovation. Now, with a Ministry of Defense in place and capable of conducting thorough defense reviews much like the United States Quadrennial Defense Review, the Brazilian Navy can be better provided with guidance on where to devote its energies. The SIVAM project, expensive though it was, arguably assisted in acquiring the new aircraft carrier and other units during the program's gestation period. The fact that the program was mostly concerned with the Brazilian Army and Air Force leads to the conclusion that the Navy was given extra funding to acquire the new units and start the new acquisition programs.

Taken separately, each of these perspectives are relevant explanations for why Brazil has chosen to pursue its current fleet. However, *together*, the total argument is even more convincing. While Brazil's desire to gain a seat on the UN Security Council is nothing new, the funding provided to the Navy as a result of domestic issues such as the SIVAM program most certainly contributed to Brazil finding the best way to better itself in the eyes of the UN. Thus, the Navy was seen as the "best investment" of these energies, and was developed to the state it is in today as a result of both factors. Gaining more naval power, especially the aircraft carrier, also increases Brazil's prestige factor.

Regardless of the ultimate outcome, Brazil has chosen to be a blue-water naval power, albeit a modest one. If

the proposed nuclear submarine program goes through as planned, Brazil will be one of only a few countries capable of constructing such units anywhere in the world. Brazil's new carrier is probably good for another twenty years of service, given the length of time its predecessor served in the Brazilian Navy. Thus, barring any unforeseen circumstances, the next decade will likely result in a Brazil sitting on a newly reformed United Nations Security Council, a Brazilian Navy more active away from the South American coastline, and a greater acceptance of Brazil as a regional power in the Southern Hemisphere.

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