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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

BUREAUCRACY AND ECOPOLITICS IN THE THIRD WORLD:  
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FORMATION IN BRAZIL \*/

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### Summary

We are definitely in an age of scarcity. Scarcity of resources, scarcity of places to dispose of our wastes, and, above all, scarcity of adequate institutions to face the challenges of the current environmental crisis. Ecopolitics represents thus the most immediate recognition that, in order to look inward, searching for answers to the basic questions of human existence and destiny, we must look outward, to our ways of relating to our fellow human beings in society as well as to our partners in nature. As Lynton Caldwell once stated, there can be no greater misconception than to consider that the environmental crisis concerns only endangered wildlife and pollution. The environmental crisis is simply the outward manifestation of a crisis of mind and spirit.

Consequently, to be able to understand the basic dimensions of this crisis one must make an attempt to grasp concrete social processes. One must look at a particular national and historical situation and attempt to unveil the basic patterns of relationships amongst human beings, individually, in social groups and classes, as well as through the institutions that regulate their daily lives. This is thus a study of politics. It is also a study of the bureaucratic politics of environmental policy formation. But it is equally a study of a particular political system, of a particular process of policy formation, that of a Third World country, Brazil.

Only through historical and analytical study can one pursue an evaluation of whether Brazil's present environmental (pollution) and ecological (depletion of the resource base) problems have emerged from sheer economic growth and industrialization, or whether they have been produced by the inadequacies of an institutional (bureaucratic) and political (social stratification, distribution of power) nature, or both. Consequently, starting from an exploration of the context of Brazil's political development, attention is focused on the social and political conditions that favoured the creation of a specialized agency--SEMA--as well as the extent to which these conditions have determined its perceived missions and its ability to translate environmental concerns into coherent public policies. Finally, the study closes with an analysis of the bureaucratic politics of public policies concerning the environment, understood both as pollution control and abatement and as conservation and management of natural resources.

In short, this is a study about the bureaucratic dimensions of ecopolitics in Brazil, but it is not an analysis of specific environmental policies in that country. The intention is not to explain the particularities of how, for example, environmental standards are established, but, rather, to understand the kinds of ecological challenges brought up by the political development of Brazil.

Why not? We have a lot left to pollute.  
They don't.

J.P. Reis Velloso, Planning  
Minister (1972), on Japanese  
investments in Brazil.

The pollution giants of the twenty-first  
century will be China and Brazil.

Ui Jan

## INTRODUCTION 1/

Ecopolitics, both as a discipline and as a specific arena of politics, truly belongs to the society of the late twentieth century. How many centuries has humankind had to travel to discover that ecopolitics has been with us since the dawn of time. Ever since Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden, for an ostensibly ecological act, human beings have had to struggle with the blessings and the curse also of ecopolitics.

### 1. A troubled relationship between humans and nature

Long before scientific knowledge came about we had been experiencing, and unwillingly dealing with, the laws of ecology. Yet, we still know practically nothing about those laws. We are particularly ignorant of the range of relationships, interconnections, and implications among human activities and the inexorable cycles of nature. The fact that we are part of nature, and that nature is also part of our culture, only compounds our difficulties. Too, it makes our attempts to harmonize politics and ecology, in our daily lives, even more clumsy.

Nevertheless, the crude facts of life tell us that the higher we rise in advancing our technological society, the more intimate and demanding the interconnections between ourselves and our forgotten nature become. And the more tightening there is of the links between our numbers and our needs and wants, as some of the resources for satisfying them become exhausted, the more we must confront their effects. Scarcity of one resource generates rising prices of others, thus fueling inflation. As populations rise and become more concentrated, more and more jobs must be found, and resources are used up faster. As the competition to grasp a greater share of resources goes unchecked, we place increasing strains upon the stability of our institutions.

To incorporate an ecological framework into our economic and political decision-making --to take into account the implications of our public policies for the network of relations operating in

ecosystems-- may be a biological necessity. As A. F. Coventry once stated, "we have for a long time been breaking the little laws, and the big laws are beginning to catch up with us."<sup>2/</sup> But human beings do not function naturally, in a more or less automatic manner; they need conscious and deliberate actions to change course. By extension, an ecosocial system, which includes both natural and human systems, can transform itself only through the human ability to set and seek a predetermined goal.

On the other hand, political and social life does not unfold according to human theories, much less does it wait for political knowledge to explain or orient its concrete manifestations. Because life is not lived on a theoretical plane but, rather, in the real world of social cleavages, corporate interests, and governmental actions, the ecological argument is almost by definition political. It will always be political, regardless of our personal preferences, despite the lack of political theories about it, and irrespective of our political orientations.

In effect, it is time to recognize that the ecological outcomes of the way people use the earth's resources are ultimately related to the modes of relationships amongst people themselves.<sup>3/</sup> To understand the implications of the ecological (scarcity of resources) and environmental (scarcity of "pollutable" reservoirs) crisis, one must attempt to grasp the social process behind it. And the possible solutions to the current crisis must be found within the social system itself.

## 2. "Ecopolitics", more than word games

Another way to approach this reality is to underscore the fact that goods and services, measured by the yardstick of human needs, are generally in a situation of scarcity. At the same time, interests and wants of individuals, groups and societies are being permanently redefined, in themselves as well as in relation to one another. From their definition follows the question of who gets what, when, how, and why. That is what the study of politics is all about. But because the most basic resources, such as the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the materials with which we build and equip our shelters, are all provided by natural processes, contemporary politics stands on the ecological foundations of society.<sup>4/</sup>

Ecopolitics is a short word for ecological politics. It emerges from the recognition that to overcome the current ecological and environmental crisis, political decisions will have to be made. In this process some interests will be favored over others, both within as well as between nations. No one should assume, however, that "ecopolitics" is merely a new and catchy word, a marketing device for environmentalists. Hobbes,



more than three hundred years ago based his suggestion that some sort of civil authority was necessary, otherwise conflict and chaos could result, on the fact that human wants and desires are always unfulfilled due to the scarce nature of resources.<sup>5/</sup> He continues to be right. Scarcity was also at the core of the political thought of many philosophers before Hobbes. Plato (427-347 B.C.), for example, voiced concern with overgrazing and deforestation. He foresaw the need for a responsible pilot to run the otherwise unstable ship of the state, an elite class of guardians led by his "philosopher-kings." His pupil Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) suggested that scarcity might justify slavery for civilized life to be possible, and that poverty and social conflict would inevitably result from uncontrolled human reproduction.<sup>6/</sup>

The use, however, of ecopolitics to label the study of the interplay between human activities and natural systems --or the study of people's power to control their immediate environment-- is of recent date. Karl Deutsch was probably among the first to classify in these terms this new field of the social sciences, which he called "ecosocial science" and "ecopolitics." According to his original definition, it asks about the viability of ecological and social systems, singly and in their ecosocial interplay, and about the possibility, desirability and limits of political intervention. Its approach rejects the romantic illusion that all natural ecological systems are necessarily viable. Most of the earth's deserts are not man-made. But it does insist that no social system can remain viable for long if it degrades or destroys its natural environment, or if it fails to save it from deterioration or self-destruction.<sup>7/</sup>

For our purposes of studying the bureaucratic politics of environmental management in Brazil, the term "ecopolitics" is especially relevant. As Michael Kraft has underlined, the labels "environmental policy studies" or "environmental politics" are ambiguous, slightly inaccurate, and even seriously misleading in some respects.<sup>8/</sup> For one thing, the object of analysis is not the "environment" narrowly defined --usually referred to as the characteristics of natural systems. Nor is the study related to a specific "sector" of governmental action, such as public policies designed to avoid or alleviate pollution. On the other hand, the ultimate goal is not to understand just how different social and political groups influence environmental policies as such but rather, through the study of environmental problems brought up by economic growth, to understand how the political system operates. Other policy areas must also be considered when studying ecological policies, such as housing, science and technology, agriculture, land use, conservation, energy, transportation, and so forth. Ecopolitics thus constitutes an attempt to integrate the study of dimensions that are artificially separated for analysis, rejecting at the same time the fallacy that all natural systems are necessarily viable.

### 3. Policy analysis regarding environmental problems

Policy-making can be understood as a process to transform societal demands into political choices. It is in more than one way the very core of political life. Furthermore, policy-making is a sociobehavioral and historical process. When one indicates that "society" has "decided", for example, largely in favor of private automobiles instead of other modes of (public) transportation, it does not necessarily follow that the majority of its members, much less each individual, has rationally or consciously chosen this as the best course of action. Neither can one precisely indicate a particular moment when this decision may have been made. Formulating and implementing public policies is thus a behavioral process informed by the values, aspirations, beliefs, and prejudices of key actors --individuals, groups, classes, corporate executives, governmental bureaucrats, legislators, and party officials. But it is also social, for it is conditioned by the characteristics --stratification, norms, traditions-- of the social setting in which policy-making takes place, and because the outcomes are designed to affect major portions of the community, if not the entire community. Finally, public decisions are hardly made all at once. Most of the time policies derive from the cumulative effect of decisions that have been consciously, or unintentionally produced, over a long period of time. That is to say that in addition to being social and behavioral, public policies are also the product of history.

If these comments appear germane to most areas of policy analysis, they are of paramount importance to environmental policies. This approach to public policies in general makes one profoundly skeptical with respect to the possibilities of an "objective", thorough assessment of any public policy, much less "ecopolicies". What we call a "theory" or an "analytical model" is often an arbitrary order imposed upon ongoing processes. In this sense, the present analysis is as speculative as any alternative approach to the study of ecopolitics.

In the world of policy analysis one may speak of "policy actors", "agenda setting", "rules of the game", "formulation", "implementation", or "evaluation" as if these processes actually existed. But in the real world of societal decisions, much to the desperation of positivist social scientists, not every outcome, for example, supposes intentions, roles, strategies, and goals. The fact remains that the product of public decisions is much

less directly related to the solution of a given problem than most of us would like to assume. The overwhelming majority of policy outcomes are determined, instead, by the complex network of alliances, obligations, rivalries, and, of course, a lot of confusion, incompetence, and ambition, that permeate the world of governments, corporations, interest groups, political parties, and community organizations.

As with any public policy, ecopolicies derive from a need to arrive at and implement political decisions, in this case, to direct society's attention to the scarcity of natural resources and of pollutable reservoirs. Hence, as with most policies, some interests will be favoured over others. However, whereas most policies allow for a somewhat clear identification of "winners" and "losers", environmental policies are much more difficult to treat in this respect. Furthermore, the outcomes of environmental policies are not open to direct measure or individualization. One can measure the results of, say, educational or health policies, and identify which groups benefit most from decisions in these areas. But which particular groups stand to gain from drinking water free of pollutants, or from preventing the depletion of the ozone layer? Finally, perhaps one of the most salient dimensions of ecopolicies, the ultimate beneficiaries of these decisions are not yet participants in today's struggle for survival. This means that we must consider also the needs and conceivable aspirations of generations to come, whereas we educate, shelter, do justice to, and tax a population that is already alive.

Here especially, the expression environmental policies is inaccurate and seriously misleading. We are not dealing with a specific sector of governmental action, although many of us fall into the trap of believing otherwise. The environment cuts across all other sectors of public activities. To treat it separately, therefore, defeats the purpose of ecopolicies. Likewise, to apply the same methodological tools generally used to analyze other policy-areas is highly questionable, in addition to being absolutely impracticable. Because a thorough analysis of ecopolicies would require the study of all public policies, one could hardly expect to arrive at any meaningful conclusions. Still, one must develop an initial understanding of ecopolitical processes, even if on a provisional basis, before being able to approach the nuts and bolts of policy-making in this area. It is necessary, therefore, to explore several dimensions of environmental policies, rather than focusing exclusively on the so-called processes of policy formation.

## I. ECOLOGY AND POLITICS IN A BUREAUCRATIC SOCIAL FORMATION

It has been stressed already the fact that to understand adequately the inner workings of an ecosocial system --how natural and human systems interact, reinforce, maintain, and transform one another-- it is crucial that we explore the political dimension of these relationships. These are undoubtedly important theoretical pursuits, which call for diversified analytical paths. These range from the integrated study of public policies to the detailed exploration of the elements that make up a political system --such as social stratification, modes of interest aggregation and representation, popular participation, and decision-making processes. However, the results yielded by these types of inquiry, must be coupled with an examination of actual processes in a particular national setting. This line of inquiry should allow a better understanding of how and how well the Brazilian political system responds to the magnitude of the current process of natural resource depletion, and disruption of the physical habitat. But this sort of understanding can come only after one acquires a historical perspective on how economic interests, social classes, and the political and institutional structure have evolved in its recent past.

### 1. Basic characteristics of the Brazilian social formation

Brazilian society is a typical example of "parallax view" at work. The parallax effect, a concept borrowed from astronomy, optics and other heavenly sciences to help unfold social reality in Brazil, indicates the apparent change in the position of an object resulting from the change in the position from which it is observed. This may indeed be the best way to describe Brazil. It also explains most of the differences between the visions offered by several observers, both Brazilian and "Brazilianists" alike, at different moments of the country's development.

In a penetrating analysis of what he calls "the Brazilian dilemma", anthropologist Roberto da Matta has managed to reveal, with an insight unparalleled by any other study of the Brazilian character so far, that authority, hierarchy, violence, and oppression pertain to the society as much as democracy,

egalitarianism, and compromise. He writes: We have in Brazil carnivals and hierarchies, equality and compromise, with the cordiality of an encounter full of smiles giving place, shortly after, to the terrible violence of the repulsive "do you know to whom you are talking?" And we also have samba [a Brazilian dance of African origin], cachaça [liquor distilled from fermented sugar cane], beach and soccer, but mingled with "relative democracy" and "Brazilian style capitalism", a system where only the workers assume the risks, while, as it is known, they do not realize any profit....And all of this, above anything else, in the name of our undeniable "democratic vocation".9/

Despite the apparent difficulty of characterizing the process of social formation in Brazil, its most important elements are quite straightforward: hierarchy, paternalism, repression, and authoritarianism, alone or combined in different ways. For example, being paternalistic, Brazil is also an extremely formalistic society, where rules and regulations are much more important than facts. Until recently a citizen was required to get a certificate of "being alive" in order to pursue, and periodically renew, several relationships with the State; the citizen could not simply appear in front of the bureaucrat.

Also, in a society at the same time paternalistic and repressive, there is always a "Big Father" to be revered--often a personification of the State through a demagogic leader--in contraposition to the depersonalized masses. This situation has been epitomized by the clientelistic dictum of "to our friends everything, to our enemies the law." It summarizes the contradictions of the mere citizen, who is to be treated according to the law, and the person who is to be treated according to his or her "connections"--the (in)famous jeitinho brasileiro [the Brazilian fix, sometimes euphemistically referred to as "creative imagination"].

Finally, the combination of all these elements produces a formalistic, depersonalized, and legalistic Brazil, one that flourishes in the same territory as the Brazil that is an open society that ignores laws and regulations and that favors kinship and clientelism, and whose preferred form of treatment is companheiro, amizade, and tudo bem [fellow, friend, and everything's O.K.]. At the same time, Brazilian society also appears in many respects traditional and closed (if one is willing to leave Rio's beaches and look around). These apparently contradictory dimensions relate to the same society. This is not the "dual" society that some describe the country to be, no matter how schizophrenic Brazil's tropical latitudes may appear to the unprepared observer.

The most distinctive element in the social formation of Brazil is undoubtedly the bureaucracy. The bourgeoisie was

dominant, it was first commercial, swinging back and forth between agrarian and industrial factions, and finally it became industrial. The State bureaucracy and the the Church hierarchy were predominant in society even if the military exercised more or less dominance at the political level, according to the changes in the ruling elite. These partners were each important, even if they were not always equal.

Above and beyond these elements, the most dominant, structural facet of Brazilian political development has been the presence of patrimonialism, a bureaucratic order more than a bureaucratic State, one that encompasses both public and private dimensions.<sup>10/</sup> The patrimonial order is usually referred to by its concrete political practices of social control, such as clientelism, patronage, or cooptation, which combine elements of paternalism, repression, hierarchy, and the authority to rule and stand above social classes. The "estate" bureaucracy, administrative apparatus, and general staff of the patrimonial order should not be confused with the "State" bureaucracy, the "elite," the "ruling class," or the "dominant classes." The bureaucracy does not constitute a class in and of itself, although more often than not it acts as a surrogate of the elite. It may well stand above dominant classes, but it does not enjoy autonomy over society. Conversely, however, even if the composition of the elite changes, the patrimonial order persists.

As Raymundo Faoro explains, this bureaucratic "caste" develops a pendular movement that often misleads the observer. It turns against the landowner in favor of the middle classes; alternatively, it turns for or against the proletariat. Also, the bureaucratic apparatus may be modernizing or conservative. It may favor the pluralistic aspects of democracy, through direct representation, or it may enhance patronage and cooptation. These apparent behaviors are actually optical illusions suggested by the projection of modern ideologies and realities upon a past that is historically consistent within the fluidity of its mechanisms. For the estate patrimonial structure, therefore, social formations are mobile points of support.

The masses, the people, the Brazilians, or whatever name one wishes to give to the majority of the population, have lent their support at every episodic change of the ruling alliance. But they do so much as those in the stands "help" their soccer team win a championship. The fact remains that all conflict resolution in Brazilian politics has taken place within the confines of the elite. Some, like Dom Pedro I, have candidly recognized that. The emperor once said that he would "do everything for the people, but nothing by the people."<sup>11/</sup> Most politicians, however, have tried to disguise the patrimonial order with popular colors.

In short, Brazil may have been transformed from the agrarian and merchant society of colonial times into the most advanced industrial and capitalist society in the Third World. Yet, its social formation will probably never lose its patrimonial cast. This may reinforce its authoritarian features at times. At other times, the social formation may tend to free the infant, atrophied, participatory and egalitarian inclinations of Brazil. But the weight of tradition tends to perpetuate elitism, and move Brazil to be ever more statist than it would otherwise be. The patrimonial society of Brazil must puzzle the superficial observer. Its schizophrenic traits reveal themselves in catatonic syndromes, often alternating phases of (authoritarian) stupor with phases of (democratic) excitement, but the muscular (bureaucratic) rigidity is always present.

## 2. The Brazilian State, a Portuguese version of Oedipus?

It is very difficult to present an image of the State that captures the characteristics, and yet the singularity, of the Brazilian case. Perhaps the best way is to make use of the joke on how the Portuguese subtitled a film on Sophocles's tragedy about the son of Laius and Jocasta.<sup>12/</sup> Some say that following the Portuguese tradition of pulling the piano instead of pushing the stool--the surest way of determining the pianist's nationality--it went something like this: "Oedipus: The son who killed his father, slept with his mother, and ended up blind." The abridged version read: "Oedipus, the son who became father."

If there is something that sums up the Brazilian State it is this version of Oedipus. No wonder Sophocles made it into a tragedy. Whereas in the vast majority of today's countries the state follows the preexistence of a more or less organized society, in Brazil it happened the other way around. In Spanish America, for example, the colonial administration was superimposed upon a native society that, in many places, displayed levels of social organization that were as complex as in Spain. In Brazil the Indian population, compared to the rest of the region, was relatively sparse, and at the end of the twentieth century it has been all but annihilated. From initial estimates that range from 2 to 5 million at the time of discovery, today only around 200,000 indians are left. This amounts to one-sixth of one percent of the total population, compared to the 30 to 60 percent that still populate Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru.

The first general-governor of Brazil, Tomé de Souza, arrived in the country in 1549 already with a government structure, laws, rules and regulations, and even with a constitution, the Regimento de Almeirim prepared in Portugal one year earlier. These had all been derived from the institutional and political

system prevailing in Portugal, and they were to be implemented in a Brazil without Brazilians yet--the Indians, as still today, have never been considered citizens. The Brazilian State was, so to speak, part of Tomé de Souza's luggage. A perfect example of the Portuguese Oedipus. This situation prevailed at least until the 1930s, when, despite some profound changes experienced by the society, basically the same institutional framework remained in force. The Portuguese court was transferred to Brazil in 1808, independence came about fourteen years later, the empire collapsed in 1889, but the legal statutes of the colonial period still applied, from the Ordenações Manuelinas (1548-1603) to the Ordenações Filipinas (1603-1916).

This explains most of the elements of the social formation described above. The patrimonial, bureaucratic character of the State has imposed, and will probably continue to impose, its own limits on the constitution of society, giving it the distinctive features of formalism, bureaucratism, and authoritarianism. There has been such a concentration of power in the hands of the State that the broader civil society has had very little room to organize itself, to form strong channels for interest articulation and representation. The little it may have had has often been co-opted or simply suppressed. On the other hand, the political society (the Legislative, party system, and electoral processes) itself has not been able to represent the plurality of interests existing in Brazilian society at large.

In short, to the social formation of Brazil, as well as to the process of formation of Brazilian State, corresponds a power structure that is concentrated and exclusionary; an organization of decision-making processes that responds to the particular interests of the best organized groups of society; and, finally, a strong technocratic, hierarchical, and formalistic pattern of conflict resolution.

Insofar as ecopolitics is concerned, the obstacles posed by the particular process of social formation that is still unfolding in Brazil seem to be rather obvious. Nevertheless, there are several aspects of it that, in addition to elitism, authoritarianism, and bureaucratism, make understanding more cumbersome. First of all, we should take note of the legalistic tradition of Brazilian politics. Laws, decrees, rules, and administrative orders dominate and regulate the life of the country to such an extent that they even blur the frontiers between public and private affairs. Reality, to be accepted as such, must be first imagined by the legislator. Before the presidencies of Getúlio Vargas (1930-45, 1951-54), for example, the mobilization of the working classes was considered to be mostly a "police problem." Their unions became legitimized only when the State bestowed its recognition upon them, thereby defining their action in its own terms and according to its corporatist interests. A similar image can be applied with



respect to the environment and to natural resources. In a patrimonial order where nothing has value in and of itself, these issues assume relevance in the eyes of the State as their functionality to its policies also increases. Until that happens, this particular reality simply does not exist. Society, which is used to seeing through the eyes of the State, may not recognize it. Even after its "sanctification" through the law, there is not any guarantee that it will be adequately addressed, as Brazilian workers discovered long ago.

A second aspect, in fact a corollary of the legalistic tradition, is the quasi worship of everything that is public. This manifests itself in several ways. The most common way was summarized by Raymundo Faoro as follows: A Brazilian who excels is bound to have lent his collaboration to the State apparatus, not to private enterprise, to business success, or to cultural contributions, in a Confucian ethics of the good servant with an administrative career and a curriculum vitae approved from the top down. Victory in the social world, founded upon the intramundane asceticism of personal, rational, step by step effort, reveals in general contempt, a mediocrity that aim at glory in the style granted to it by Montesquieu.<sup>13/</sup>

Another possible approach, noted already, is the compulsion to have every minuscule aspect of life, public or private, foreseen, regulated, enshrined in the law. Brazil has so many laws, regulations, statutes, and ordinances, that someone suggested the most effective solution to all of the country's problems would be one single law making all previous ones mandatory.<sup>14/</sup> But because Brazilians are proud to be "the largest Catholic country in the world," while church attendance must be among the lowest, and while candomblé, umbanda, and other Afro-Brazilian rituals claim increasing numbers of followers, so their worship of the state is also blended with a certain dose of iconoclasm.

All of this should not add more confusion. The State is the source of much of what concerns the individual, in private or public life. To be somehow connected with the State is, therefore, a source of prestige and social status. Moreover, as a general rule, to be a public servant has a very special meaning in Brazil. Rather than "serving the public," it means to serve one's own interest--through co-optation and political control--at the public expense. The net result is too well known to deserve further comments here: a tightly controlled society, corruption, and the distribution of privileges.

Still, it should be underlined that corruption may assume a multitude of forms. It may represent direct payment in exchange for a favor, or it may be a specific way of making life easier without necessarily being illegal. It may not involve, therefore, any monetary value at all; it may not even be considered

corruption. This should not alarm anyone, since, in many instances, the "Brazilian fix" may well be a powerful weapon against the discretionary powers of the state. For ecopolitical purposes, the most important manifestation of corruption is the "structural" variety. Because to survive and to be kept in State favor one should not cause too many problems, it is no surprise that governmental agencies and State enterprises in Brazil are generally the worst environmental offenders. The State sector is the first to claim environmental awareness, but it is also the first one to shove problems under the rug.

### 3. Technobureaucrats, key actors in Brazilian politics

The civilian-military regime installed in Brazil after 1964 can be expressed in very simple terms. It represented the alliance of the financial and industrial bourgeoisie with multinational interests. The agrarian and commercial elements of the bourgeoisie now occupied the back seats. The working classes were, of course, excluded. What has made this alliance possible --or, more candidly, what enabled the rule of the dominant classes-- was the existence of a well-trained, specialized, and willing technocracy, both civilian and military.

But the technobureaucrat is not merely a recent actor in Brazil. Strictly speaking, the position was born in 1821, when Dom João VI went back to Portugal, and posts had to be filled in the administrative apparatus that the court left behind. Its teenage years probably began in the 1930s, when the State started to take planning seriously, thereby allowing for the outgrowth of the technician's rebellious, "modernizing" spirit. As with most teenage manifestations, the noise of this group was stronger than its real influence, and the traditional, cabide de emprego [literally, employment hanger], bureaucracy, still overshadowed the early, striving version of the "new man."

The real emergence of the technobureaucracy, as a political and as a social actor, thus came about under the military after 1964, almost as a State within the State, by-passing the old bureaucrats and abolishing interest articulation through political parties and politicians. Not surprisingly, among the first tasks of the new government was the unprecedented administrative reform of 1966-67. Tavares and Assis neatly sum up the goals, intentions, and results of the reformers: The horror of public empreguismo [a spoils system] manifested by the new conductors of the state left os barnabés a ver navios [literally, the petty bureaucrats were left holding the bag], while a well-paid, modern state bureaucracy was created in the indirect administration. These would later make up the social base for the famous "bureaucratic rings" that occupied the management apparatuses of the state's modernized segment.<sup>15/</sup>

Until 1964 public service was a prestigious but low-paid job; for most bureaucrats actually a second or third job. After the military takeover, attention was given to technicians (professional experts) over bureaucrats (traditional public servants), i.e., to a new caste of technobureaucrats. Beyond the semantics involved, the main difference between the two groups was that the bureaucrat strove to maintain the status quo, and the technicians were deeply committed to reform and change.

In trying to quantify issues of the bureaucracy there is much discussion about numbers. Nevertheless, it seems safe to assume that there are around 4 million technobureaucrats in Brazil today: 500,000 in the federal bureaucracy, 2 million on state and municipal levels; and 1.5 million in the universe called "the Brás country" formed by the four hundred or so State enterprises. This name comes from the suffix "Brás" that follows the titles of many state enterprises, such as PETROBRAS, NUCLEBRAS, ELETROBRAS, and SIDERBRAS.<sup>16/</sup> The 1.5 million employees in the Brás country are, of course, the vanguard of what has here been considered the technocracy "as a social actor." These are the people who enjoy special pension funds; retirement at 55 instead of 65, as for the rest of the people in public administration; and annual salaries equivalent to salaries for sixteen to eighteen months.

There is also a great deal of discussion about the normative orientations of the technobureaucracy. Some writers allege that Brazilian bureaucrats value economic development over social and political development, stressing their conservatism. Others choose to underline, precisely, their failure as agents of modernization and as promoters of economic development. Still others underscore the technocrats' ideological cohesion with their counterparts in the private sector, not only at the abstract level of shared interest in capitalist accumulation but also at the concrete level of shared faith in corporate growth and profitability as the primary measures of success.<sup>17/</sup>

Rather than contradicting one another, all of these descriptions contain portions of the reality. First of all, as is true with any complex social group, there are as many valid descriptions as there are different elements within the group, and different points in time at which to analyze each element. What matters most, therefore, is to concentrate upon the descriptions that may best identify the dominant element. Furthermore, when one studies technobureaucracies, one should not be bound by rigid definitions of "private" and "public" categories, even though the public segment is usually singled out.

In this respect the recent study of René Dreifuss is most useful.<sup>18/</sup> Standing head and shoulders above the vast majority of other contemporary analysis of the military regime, his insights

help to demolish several common misunderstandings. Closely related to the discussion so far, is his contention that the 1964 Republic came to consolidate the influence of being an entrepreneur, or a businessperson, as the crucial step to becoming a politician or a governmental official. He cites, for example, that 300 of the 400 key posts in the Ernesto Geisel administration (1974-79) had been filled by persons loyal to General Golbery do Couto e Silva, the leading strategist of the civilian-military alliance. And they were all connected to the Institute for Research and Social Studies (IPES), an outpost used by businessmen to plan the overthrow of João Goulart in 1964. Furthermore, the most important reforms of the regime (financial, administrative, and fiscal) had all been previously planned, discussed, and approved by IPES.

Needless to say, the particular way in which the technobureaucracy evolved in Brazil, especially after 1964, is of significance for ecopolitics in that country. For one thing, the "private" orientation of dominant technobureaucrats does not collide with the overriding presence of the State in the economy. Rather than representing a weakening of the patrimonial order, the post-1964 regime actually makes it stronger. The result is that State agents end up subverting the use of resources that belong to the entire nation; they promote their exploitation according to their corporate ideology. On the other hand, by substituting economic for political considerations, and by subsuming both to "technical" criteria, the regime has been able effectively to neutralize, to sanitize, environmental issues. Finally, the technobureaucracy has attained what we may call a "relative autonomy"<sup>19/</sup> over the interests of different social groups. Making this situation even more disquieting, the State looks upon any mobilization of society around environmental issues with great suspicion.

## II. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FORMATION IN MODERN BRAZIL

Ecopolitical knowledge can undoubtedly benefit from a historical and political analysis of the development of specific nations. As the formation of a society unfolds, the emergence of dominant interests and classes becomes more evident to the observer. The process of forging and breaking down alliances reveals distinctive features of the State. Hence, studying these processes of social formation and of State building makes more transparent the prevailing patterns of relationship between humans and nature in that particular society. Yet, a closer focus on how decisions are made may shed light on more general processes. The study of the creation of a specialized agency for environmental matters in Brazil, the Secretaria Especial do Meio Ambiente (SEMA, Special Secretariat for the Environment), is thus a logical consequence of what has been developed so far. It is also a necessary prelude to a deeper analysis of environmental politics. Through the combination of macropolitical analysis with the study of the bureaucratic politics of governmental policies, we should be able to identify with considerable specificity the main actors, processes, and structures involved in the ecopolitical arena of Brazil.

### 1. If you can't find a deodorizer, create an agency

It has become almost axiomatic to repeat Engels's assertion that people themselves make their history, only they do so within a determined environment that conditions it, based upon real relations that are already in place.<sup>20</sup> Bearing Engels in mind, we turn to a little known, almost unnoticed fact of Brazilian ecopolitical history. This is the simple signature attached to an obscure document of the National Security Council, the Exposiao de Motivos No. 100/71. An E.M. is a document that usually accompanies a piece of legislation, containing the justification for a particular policy. The signature on this particular E.M. is that of Brigadier General João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo, the secretary-general of the NSC in 1971.

This E.M. would not require much attention if it were not for two facts. First, the bearer of that signature seven years

later --and five years after the creation of SEMA-- became president of Brazil, and until 1985 he was the chief policymaker in the country. Furthermore, all of what can be considered the official ideology of environmental management in Brazil was already contemplated in that otherwise bureaucratic label E.M. 100/71. The E.M. 100/71 responded to another bureaucratic action, also obscurely titled, Aesp./AOI/DNU/266/602.60(04), of 23 August 1971.<sup>21</sup> This second document constituted the official, Itamaraty (Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations) position regarding environmental matters, and was used as the basis for the Brazilian participation in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held at Stockholm, in June 1972. This document was subjected to the careful scrutiny of the NSC, and it was endorsed by someone who, in the years immediately before becoming president, was to serve as head of the National Information Service, a powerful Brazilian organization that is a mixture of the FBI and the CIA, an organization whose head occupied the most important post in the policy-making hierarchy of the military regime. This scrutiny and endorsement laid the groundwork for the establishment of a specialized agency to deal with environmental matters. In October 1973, Decree No. 73.030 created this agency, the Secretaria Especial do Meio Ambiente (equivalent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency), under the coordination of the interior minister. The very situation, almost fortuitous, that allowed it to come into being is revealing both of Brazilian ecopolitics and of bureaucratic politics more generally. How did SEMA come into being?

In the late 1960s Congress was suggesting the need for a national environmental policy. The year 1967 opened with the establishment of a National Sanitation Policy. In that same year the National Council for Environmental Pollution Control was created in the Health Ministry. All Brazilian states had at least one agency closely related to pollution abatement. General Figueiredo, in E.M. 100/71, had also called attention to the need for a national policy of pollution control to be formulated by the federal government. The Declaration of Stockholm itself called for the creation of a specialized agency. In short, the time was ripe for the emergence of SEMA. Or, as North American politicians are fond of saying, environmental management was "an idea whose time had come." Despite that, over a year had gone by since Stockholm and the government did not seem to be in any hurry.

The opportunity came in the form of stench. Fortunately enough for environmentalists, the odors were causing pestilence in the home state of the chefe do gabinete civil, the chief of staff for the president of Brazil. The operation of a wood-pulp industry near Porto Alegre, the capital of the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, was causing severe inconvenience for the general population. Every time the wind blew the wrong way, a new wave of nausea, vomiting, and sickness affected an increasingly

vocal population. After contact was made with the Interior Ministry, which was supposed to have a say in urban planning and zoning, this matter was brought to the attention of the Gabinete Civil through a decree that was tailor-made for the situation. Its backers were ready with the necessary Exposição de Motivos and everything else that the patrimonial order would call for on such occasions. This decree provided for a specific agency to be charged with solving specific problems such as the one in question. Being a very popular figure in Rio Grande do Sul, where he had been president of one of the two major soccer teams, and being also an authority on legal matters, Professor João Leitão de Abreu, the chief of staff, immediately seized the opportunity. With the enactment of Decree 73.030 by President Emilio Garrastazú Médici, Brazil gained a new agency. And the chief of staff got rid of a smelly problem.

This experience reveals more about Brazil than it appears to do. The way in which an organization comes into being exerts considerable influence on the perceived missions of its bureaucrats.<sup>22/</sup> An agency that has resulted, for example, out of an emergency situation is likely to respond, in its day-to-day operations, in a spasmodic, emergency-like pattern. Another agency created to placate special interests is unlikely to address broader issues that may enlarge its clientele, thereby jeopardizing the original interests. Therefore, because we have analyzed the ecopolitical foundations of SEMA in Brazilian social formation, it seems appropriate to bring to public knowledge the most intimate moments of SEMA's birth. SEMA was created in response to an instance of environmental contamination, and this fact would later have a lasting effect both on its members' sense of purpose--the organizational "culture" of SEMA--and on its effectiveness in implementing environmental policies as well. Ecopolitics in Third World countries deals more with managing the natural resource base than with abating pollution. Brazil was one of the leading speakers for this viewpoint at the U.N. conference in Stockholm. Yet, up to now the dominant environmental perception in Brazil relates to the pollution of air, water, and soil rather than to natural resources management.

A second element of SEMA's creation that also reflects the ruling alliance installed after 1964 is the technocratic orientation instilled at the moment of its inception. First of all, the E.M. that accompanies the decree establishing SEMA justifies it on the grounds that Brazil already had a multitude of agencies working on specific areas, citing eighteen agencies distributed among nine ministries. Despite that, the E.M. proposes as a "solution" the creation of yet another organization. Worse, an agency that worked according to the same precepts of bureaucratic behavior could not possibly be expected to get other agencies to cooperate. Being a second-class secretariat of a regular ministry, it could not have any

political clout, even in the most strict bureaucratic sense, that would help formulate and implement a national environmental policy. Furthermore, the actual way in which SEMA was set up and staffed points to the predominance of a particular professional perspective, that of the natural sciences broadly defined: chemistry, biology, pharmacology, and others.

As a result, the Brazilian government was able to depoliticize environmental issues, reducing them to a question of technical, or technobureaucratic, expertise. The initial configuration of SEMA poses a set of most difficult questions for the ecopolitical perspectives of Brazil. Many social scientists believe that a genuine environmental policy must reflect basic elements of a national "project of society." An environmental policy must, at one and the same time, offer the basis for questioning specific styles of development and be, itself, the result of societal decisions about the future of the collectivity. Unfortunately, SEMA, as it has been conceived and now operates, is actually an obstacle to that end. As one portion of the state apparatus SEMA cannot, of course, substitute for other institutions of society. This would be a theoretical usurpation of power and a political impossibility. Nevertheless, as it stands today, SEMA works to hinder, if not to foreclose, the process of ecopolitics in Brazil.

Necessarily, these are some of the ecopolitical implications of the alliance forged after 1964. They all refer to structural characteristics of Brazilian society that cannot be done away by a regime change, not even by the "redemocratization" of the 1980s. Therefore, observers must be temperate in their criticism of SEMA's role in managing the environment. To be sure, current practices reinforce the dominant ideology, and SEMA is liable for most of these. Nevertheless, the most important characteristics of ecopolitics in Brazil go beyond specific administrations; they have been unfolding through a much longer process. The advent of the military regime, it should be stated once more, simply enhanced already latent values, beliefs, and practices of the leadership cadres in Brazil.

## 2. Competing political forces and the context of ecopolicies

Any discussion of environmental policies requires a political instead of a technical treatment. At stake in ecopolicies is much more than the simple arrangement of public actions in one area. It is the concept of development itself that is being called into question. Indeed, an environmental policy that goes beyond pollution control and abatement, important as these two dimensions certainly are, will often imply redefining, or at least redirecting, the process of development. The acknowledgment



of this facet of ecological reality requires analysts to inquire: development of what, for whom, and at what cost?

The holistic and, at the same time, the specific nature of ecological problems also underscores the political foundations of ecopolicies. Because we cannot deal with all problems at once, we are forced to choose particular areas or problems for concentrated governmental efforts. However, by doing that, by singling out any given area, we are bound to provoke jurisdictional disputes within and between bureaucratic and societal institutions. This in addition, of course, to the problems derived from an application of what Herbert Simon calls "bounded rationality"--the limited capacity of the human mind compared to the scope of the problems it needs to address--to complex ecological relationships.23/

As a result, what are often considered "technical" criteria (standards, regulations, norms), will have to be bargained for, that is, politically negotiated. Another important characteristic of public actions in the environmental arena, now understood as both pollution control and the management of natural resources, derives from the near impossibility of directly measuring their results for society as a whole. Likewise, ecopolicies are hardly amenable to the individualization of results. How can one measure the benefits of the conservation of natural resources for generations not yet born? What is one person's share of improved water quality, or an atmosphere free of pollutants?

These three notions, that ecopolicies question development processes, that they generate jurisdictional disputes, and that they are nonquantifiable and nonindividualizable, all lead to one crucial feature of the context in which environmental problems emerge. Within the cultural framework of modern civilization, in which human beings are not part of but rather apart from nature, ecopolicies are clearly unsympathetic, bothersome, and distasteful. Environmental policies stand out from other public policies by being "the spoiler." Traditional policies such as those carried out in agriculture, in education, in public health, or in social welfare, draw their legitimacy from "positive" objectives. They all "provide" something to society. Moreover, the implementation of these policies will, sooner or later, be transformed into tangible benefits to easily identifiable individuals or groups. Conversely, environmental policies address the collectivity as a whole, including unborn "collectivities."

Furthermore, ecopolicies are characteristically "negative" in comparison with other policies, always calling attention to what should not be done, often emphasizing the negative side effects of the implementation of "positive" policies. On the other hand, some "negative" policies, such as fiscal and tributary policies, also "penalize" some groups while favoring others. But these policies claim their legitimacy from the

coercive powers bestowed upon them by society. Nobody likes to pay taxes, but everyone agrees that governments need revenues to carry out programs. All expect to benefit from these programs. Fiscal policies are also seen as powerful mechanisms to foster an egalitarian distribution of resources, so most people abide by them. With environmental policies the opposite takes place. Even though the survival of the species could exert a strong coercive influence, the advocates of ecopolicies shy away from intimidation. Their legitimacy is usually founded on the need to harmonize disparate wants with the carrying capacity of life-support systems.

We thus arrive at the core of the dilemmas faced by policymakers formulating and struggling to implement environmental policies today. On the one side, their stand must be adversarial, almost by definition. On the other, decision makers are compelled to exercise persuasion, convincement, and inducement in a continuous learning process. Not surprisingly, it requires much more political will to break the inertia of environmental policies than it does in other areas of public action. For the same reasons, it takes much less political clout on the other side to reach a situation of virtual stalemate, to immobilize environmentally oriented programs and activities.

I once spotted on a street in Rio, at the height of the 1968 student revolt, a graffiti that expressed with great clarity the burdens of overly political situations. It read: "Those who remain in the middle suffer the paralyzing action of the extremes." This fits the situation of ecopolicies in general, and particularly that in Brazil. As a former high-ranking official who played a decisive role in the creation of SEMA puts it, to have an effective environmental policy one must create conflicts. It is of the nature of ecopolicies not to stay in the middle. The context of environmental problems is thus a conflictive one. It does not matter from where one approaches these types of problems. You may consider them from a biological point of view, one of life struggle, adaptation, and malfunction. You may adopt a sociological definition, investigating how particular natural processes allow people to dominate other people and, in doing so, to disrupt natural cycles. You may apply economic criteria, looking at how environmental problems represent a misallocation of resources. Irrespective of approaches, however, these perspectives all characterize conflictive situations.

The crucial question, then, turns out to be whether conflict is being well administered or not. We have seen indications that the intrinsic tensions of ecopolicies have not been well administered in Brazil. Quite the contrary, the way in which Brazil is administered only aggravates the conflicts, and it postpones their resolution as well. First of all, the negotiation that allows any conflict to be addressed presupposes the existence of actors that share more or less equivalent control

over political resources. Nothing could be further from this assumption than politics in the environmental arena of Brazil, not to mention in the Third World more generally. On one side there is a strong group of business people, industrialists, developers, multinational corporations, all of whom benefit greatly from accelerated economic growth. On the other side is a loosely related group of conservationists, community-based organizations, experts, and persons directly affected either by pollution or by the depletion of natural resources. In the middle, in some sense over both groups, stands the bureaucracy.

As Francis Rourke rightfully points out, bureaucrats are unable to rule alone, but their strategic role in policy-making means that "no one in modern politics can rule without them" either.<sup>24/</sup> If this is true in the North American context, it is even more so in Brazil, where the technobureaucracy has been the leading force behind developmentalism in the postwar period. The "actors" involved in Brazilian ecopolitics have thus had unequal power, which renders the situation a "nonconflictive" one that, therefore, does not appear to demand great administrative resources. State agents set the stage for mediation, but they themselves unilaterally set the limits of such negotiation. The stage is one where environmental problems are tightly compartmentalized through bureaucratic expertise, and where citizens are unable to express a multitude of interests concerning it. The limits for negotiating environmental conflicts can be summarized as follows. National leaders do not acknowledge that the security of the nation depends upon an ecologically sound development strategy; instead, environmental criteria are subsumed by national security interests that are defined militarily. Furthermore, rapid economic growth have high priority over conservation. On top of that, the technobureaucracy and the corporate elite share an ideological orientation toward the private allocation of natural resources regarding the Brazilian "commons." As can be readily inferred, this is a no-win type of war, a conflict where only one side is armed.

The situation is not, of course, as bad as it looks. Actually, it is much worse! One may argue, not without reason, that in a situation such as Brazil--a statist society embedded in a patrimonial order--most of the conflicts, as well as any possible negotiations, occur within the governing elite rather than through independent political actors. That is precisely the reason that the situation gets worse or, as indicated before, why the conflict is not administered at all. The sheer number of actors inside each segment of the governmental bureaucracy effectively precludes attempts at interorganizational cooperation.<sup>25/</sup> The Secretariat for Modernization and Administrative Reform (SEMOR), an agency until mid-1986 subordinated to the planning minister (and since transferred to the Ministry of Administration), once set out to determine how many organizations at only the federal level were involved in

environmental matters.<sup>26/</sup> For pollution control, for example, it found sixteen agencies distributed among six ministries. However, the method used to arrive at such estimates was too restrictive. As a former deputy-secretary of SEMOR myself, I know that this number does not even approximate the real picture.

A simple, more recent example underscores this. Given the concerns of the secretariat, as well as those of the National Program of Debureaucratization, regarding the duplication of functions in the federal government, a group of technicians decided to find out how many agencies dealt with something as simple as fishing activities. When they gave up counting, over sixty federal agencies had already been identified. For any given problem or issue, SEMA would have to negotiate with at least several agencies in every one of the twenty-five or so ministries, and even this is a conservative estimate.<sup>27/</sup>

### 3. The bureaucratic politics of environmental policy formation

Unfortunately, given the characteristics of both the context of environmental problems and the actors involved in the formation of ecopolicy in Brazil, some of the widely accepted "principles" of bureaucratic behavior inhibit still further the emergence of coherent policies in this area. The first and most important of these postulates refers to the fact that "where you stand depends on where you sit," which is also called Miles' Law.<sup>28/</sup> It means that the position of a bureaucrat on any policy issue is determined by the culture of the agency that he or she represents. This culture, in turn, reflects the institutional history of the agency, as well as the ideology, values, symbols, professional leanings, and crystallized patterns of behavior of the group of bureaucrats who make up the organization.

Illustrations of Miles' Law in Brazil are easily found. The extreme example of the power that a bureaucrat has to shape reality as he sees fit was an incident that supposedly took place at an obscure desk of the social security office in Rio de Janeiro. The wife of a noted jurist who, among his many accomplishments, had drafted the Brazilian Civil Code, went to this office to collect her husband's retirement pension. She carried with her a written mandate to represent her husband, for he was ill at that time. When she got to her destination, the bureaucrat refused to pay her and explained that he could not accept that mandate because it was not written in accordance with the law. Trying to control her astonishment, she brought to this man's attention the name of the person who had signed the mandate, the author of the Civil Code himself. "There must be a misunderstanding," she said, "this person instituted the mandate in the first place, so he must know how one should be worded." To

this apparently irrefutable argument the bureaucrat replied, trying to create his own reality: "He may have established what a mandate is, but I am the one who interprets the law here, and according to what is in 'our' books, this is unacceptable."

This brief vignette of bureaucracy at work in Brazil is useful, because it shows how "bureaucratic politics," at the most elemental level, manifests its logic. Nothing here is exclusive to Brazilian society. There are several studies in the United States showing how bureaucrats shape policy to a greater extent than politicians and top executive officials like to believe that they do, how they operate autonomously to a degree that most of us--bureaucrats included--refuse to accept to be the case.<sup>29/</sup> Add a large amount of arbitrary, preposterous, and authoritarian behavior entailed by a patrimonial order and an oversized, overgrown State, and the picture becomes more complete.

Another, not so anecdotal illustration that the policy-vision of a bureaucrat is limited by the "viewfinder" of his or her agency's camera, has been offered by a noted Brazilian economist who successively headed the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Secretariat. As finance minister, he was a staunch opponent of the Ferrovía do Aço, a costly and controversial railroad to carry the iron ore from Minas Gerais to the port of Rio de Janeiro. While he held that position the construction dragged on. Under a new administration this respected technician became minister of planning. One of his first public speeches was devoted to defending the urgent need to complete the proposed railroad, in light of the importance of expanding the industrial capacity of the country, increasing export earnings, and other arguments.

Is this a typical example of how government operates in underdeveloped countries? Was this minister out of his mind? Was he a compulsive drinker, as some have maliciously suggested? Nonsense. He was simply acting as a good bureaucrat. As finance minister he had had to be concerned primarily with spending; he controlled the gates to the government's bank, or to the printing machine. He had had to judge every project on the basis of cost. Because the railroad would drain hundreds of millions of dollars from the treasury, he had "had" to oppose it. Later, as a planning minister he "saw" things differently. The landscape viewed from this window is dominated by economic growth and development, and everything that enhances both processes should be supported. The Ferrovía do Aço would generate export earnings at a time that Brazil was starting to feel the crunch of its financial obligations, so nothing was more "logical" than fighting for its completion.

A more general, structural illustration of Miles' Law can be found in the way that certain policies are formulated and implemented. Typical of the failure to consider the logic of

bureaucratic behavior are housing policies in which the most important policy mechanism is a financial institution. Fully to appreciate the degree to which these policies are bound to fail, one must remember why they usually come into being in the first place. If market mechanisms alone were able to satisfy the demands of a population who cannot afford to buy homes, there would not have been a need for a specific public policy in this area. This should mean that, once the intervention of the State has become legitimized, a different sort of rationality would be called for, one in which the "social" would have primacy over the "financial." What happens, then, when the National Housing Bank is chosen as the primary instrument to implement such policy? The answer is straightforward: a nonhousing policy.

The assumption is that a bank is run by bankers, and a banker who is not able to invest a bank's resources so as to earn an acceptable rate of return is simply not a good banker. Such a person would be considered an incompetent, a bad professional, even though his or her actions may be informed by the highest social values. The result is that little by little the initial objectives of the policy begin to fade away. New resources begin to be oriented toward middle-income and upper-income individuals who can guarantee the overall financial soundness of the system. When society starts to demand a return to the original goals, the system faces the real possibility of going "bankrupt." This is precisely what happened in Brazil, but the example can be generalized. Some would argue that the above description simplifies the problem too much, that problems encountered by social policies are complex, and that several variables contribute to repeated failure in those areas. They are right.

Nevertheless, what must be stressed here is that aspects such as the ones just mentioned are equally crucial to explain the failure of policies that require a bureaucratic organization for their formulation and implementation. An agency with the institutional characteristics of SEMA, located first in a ministry whose culture values public-works as the primary outcome of its policies, thus finds it very hard to assume, or to convince others to assume, a posture of harmonizing the environment and development. It should not cause much surprise, for example, to see the emphasis placed by government bureaucrats, both within and outside SEMA, on the installation of ecological stations. These are, of course, very important. But the point is that the reason that they have been hailed, eating up a good proportion of the (meager) financial resources at the disposal of SEMA, has had much more to do with the logic of bureaucratic politics and the culture of MINTER (Ministry of the Interior) than with anything else.

The foregoing remarks about the actors involved in ecopolicy-making, the context in which their "acting" takes place, and the laws governing their performance, allow us to

introduce two additional components of bureaucratic politics that are of paramount importance for environmental policies. The first is that the more controversial a policy is, the more likely it is that it will never be fully formulated, and, if it is, it will never be implemented. If this were not self-explanatory, one would need only to examine the reasons that agrarian reforms are the oldest rhetorical policies in Latin America. It also explains why sweeping agrarian reform is never implemented. For the same reasons, decisions involving antagonistic interests that can be postponed will be postponed indefinitely.<sup>30/</sup>

Unfortunately, environmental policies are by definition controversial, and they necessarily involve disparate, often opposing social and economic interests. Brazilian policymakers are well aware of this fact. They knew this long before SEMA came into being, and it would take much more than a single agency to change this state of affairs. As a matter of fact, in light of the Brazilian case, a corollary to the two laws mentioned above could be suggested: the principle of the bottom line. Because the interests involved in ecopolicies are often conflictive, and because these policies are controversial anyway, one should strive "to compromise," to arrive at a minimum common denominator. The problem is that minimum in this case means "the less powerful." Consequently, the bottom line of ecopolicies in Brazil has been the familiar "development with low ecological cost," an euphemism created by the military regime to conceal the true meaning of the developmentalist ideology, i. e., development at any cost, social or environmental.

Brazilian elites, particularly technocrats, have also learned the lessons of coping with innovations. Environmental problems are fairly recent or, better said, their recognition is indeed of a recent date. Ecopolicies thus represent an innovation, almost a revolutionary innovation, to the process of development planning. Faced with this new challenge, the Brazilian bureaucracy has adopted what Donald Schon calls "dynamic conservatism."<sup>31/</sup> First, one accepts a discourse that incorporates the new issue, something that was successfully demonstrated at Stockholm. Then follows the stage of "containment and isolation," when one literally throws the discourse into a bureaucratic box in the governmental structure. Care should be taken, of course, not to provide adequate resources to this new agency. Just enough persons should be employed to give the impression that something major is being done--and to serve as scapegoats when things do not (as one knows that they will not) get done. Just enough resources should be allocated for a couple of works to be built and, it should not be forgotten, for studies, dozens of studies.

Containment and isolation also have another important, beneficial side effect for dynamic conservatism. These processes lead to compartmentalization. Now that SEMA is in place, busily

tilting against its windmills, there comes the phase of "selective inattention." In other words, SEMA must be in a bus stop where the bus of power does not stop. Does the law require that SEMA participate in activities related to science and technology? Well, we may include a SEMA representative on an interagency committee, because, after all, we do not expect results to come out of committee work anyway.<sup>32/</sup> The law requires that large-scale infrastructure projects should undertake a thorough evaluation of their impact on the availability of natural resources and on the integrity of environment in its area of influence? So we create an environmental unit as part of these projects and pretend not to perceive that we do not allow it to interfere with planning activities or with implementation of the projects. Finally, we may include a section on the environment in development plans, but we also forget to consider the targets and strategies outlined in this one section in the other, substantial parts of these plans.

In short, one should promote the minimum change possible so as to guarantee that nothing will actually change. This is dynamic conservatism. It is dynamic because it is not the result of a carefully conceived scheme of overt resistance. There is no conspiracy theory at work here. This brand of bureaucratic conservatism develops out of the synergistic effect of particularistic interests. The individual, group, or class is able to establish a connection between these interests and the (inertial) interests of the social system as a whole. Because everyone is bound to be affected by ecopolicies, there is no need to connive in accord against taking them seriously. It is just a question of letting the bureaucratic process run its course.

We have seen this movie before, at different times, with different characters, and in different national settings. But there can be no doubt that the script is tailor-made for the patrimonial order. And the Brazilian bureaucracy has had plenty of candidates for the roles of starring actor, supporting actors and, as a matter of fact, for the entire cast. The only thing we will not find in this movie is the traditional disclaimer. If any character, event or situation resembles SEMA and environmental policies in Brazil, it is not merely a coincidence.



### III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

We are definitely in an age of scarcity. Modern technology has allowed a limited number of societies to experience unprecedented levels of abundance. Notwithstanding this, the "environmental crisis" underscores the fact that we are running out of resources and out of places to store or dispose of our wastes. These problems are not exclusive to rich or poor countries. Absolute and relative scarcity --actual lack of resources and lack of access to resources-- equally affect central and peripheral nations. But we are also living in an era of scarcity of adequate institutions, and a scarcity of political will as well. The vast majority of our social and political institutions were not designed for the basic dilemma of ecological scarcity; they can barely operate within its parameters, and they are ill-suited to solve it. Furthermore, as if dynamic conservatism were operating on a global scale, the more we verbalize the environmental crisis, the less willing we seem to be to take appropriate actions to counter its harmful tendencies.

#### 1. The round journey of ecopolitics

We must learn from the past, even from antiquity. The case of the Roman Empire illustrates quite well how a society that had probably attained the highest levels of technological development that any civilization could have aspired to before the invention of the steam engine can still fall prey to burdens that are clearly ecopolitical. The network of sources supplying goods for the empire was able to support, at one point, a population of about 1.2 million persons in Rome alone, and close to 14 million on the Italian peninsula. This was no small accomplishment, and it occurred at a time when the population of the globe was barely reaching 200 million. Yet, close to the final collapse of the empire, the Eternal City itself was plagued by inadequate food supplies and pestilence, as well as by barbarians. Rather than searching for the causes of its collapse, we should be surprised that the Roman Empire survived for so long. As Edward Gibbon, the noted historian, rightfully concludes: The decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness. Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of

destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight.<sup>33/</sup>

History is full of examples of civilizations being shattered by the ecopolitical inability to sustain complex levels of social organization. Romans are simply the most dramatic illustration of ecopolitical folly. And there is no reason to believe that we are more exceptional than the Romans. This case is especially important, because it is even more difficult for us to build resiliency into the fabrics of our industrial societies than it was for the Romans to do in their agrarian society almost two millennia ago. When a society collapses due in part to inadequate resiliency, knowledge disappears together with social organization. Human civilizations have indeed become extinct many times in the past. It took almost 1,500 years just to regain the levels of technological expertise of the Roman Empire.

Harrison Brown, author of the classic The challenge of Man's future (1954), has demonstrated graphically the difficulty for "modern" societies simply to remake what hundreds of years before other civilizations had done with much ease.<sup>34/</sup> With the decline of Rome, circa 400, Nero's circus fell in disuse, and a large obelisk in the center of the track fell over. It remained in that position for eleven centuries, until Pope Sixtus V decided to erect the obelisk in front of the Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican. The task seemed so complex for the technology available at that time that all mathematicians of Christendom were asked to submit proposals. After fifty suggestions were carefully examined, and many problems overcome, on 30 April 1586 the huge obelisk was finally lifted, placed on rollers, and hauled to the center of the square. In September it was triumphantly pulled upright. Amidst much rejoicing few noticed that over twelve centuries earlier Romans had floated that same pillar down the Nile from Heliopolis to Alexandria, had transported it by ship to the Tibur, had hauled it several kilometers to Nero's circus, and had erected it just a few yards from where it now stands. Why should modern societies fare any better? What are the indications that descriptions such as this are mere historical curiosities?

On the more concrete level of politics, we must incorporate an ecological rationale into our way of allocating resources, struggling for power, or simply deciding how to spend next year's budget. Special interests, race, class, and ideology are, at this point in human evolution, unequivocally against the survival of the species. Yet, we must live and operate through economic groups, in social classes, and with ethnic divisions. How we move beyond present institutional constraints constitutes the utmost challenge of ecopolitics. Put in these terms, the "environmental question" of the twentieth century turns out to be quite straightforward. It means the construction of a transitional strategy for a new civilization, as well as new national styles

of development. It can also be understood as the rise of a social science that stops addressing the issues of the nineteenth century--when most disciplines were established--and starts to anticipate and treat the matters of the third millennium.

Post-industrial societies have stretched the limits of many life-support systems. At the same time, the increasing militarization compounds the dangers of divesting society of its ecological foundations. It is about time that our social and political institutions get out of the way of the future and that we learn to cope more appropriately with scarcity and maldistribution of resources. It is also time that our political leaders begin to think about the future without the yardsticks of the past. The carrying capacity of ecosystems may depend upon human actions, but the laws of ecology do not hinge upon people. Ecopolitics must be a round journey.

## 2. Brazil in the 1990s: Hope or despair?

The ecopolitical situation of Brazil is undoubtedly depressing, but it is not necessarily hopeless. Perhaps the greater menace comes from the militarization of Brazilian society. We have noted how the military regime has enhanced the patrimonial heritage of Brazil, rendering it a more authoritarian, bureaucratized and statist society. The advent, however, of an industrial-military complex contributes to the perpetuation of these structural elements. Arms production, directly or indirectly, employs close to a million Brazilians, and military sales abroad provide a sizable proportion of export earnings. Brazil is already the leading arms producer and exporter in the Third World.<sup>35/</sup>

This situation has a twofold meaning, and both meanings are equally disquieting. For one thing, if the military has temporarily left the foreground of Brazilian politics, its presence behind the scenes is acquiring strong roots in Brazilian society and in the economy. The consolidation of an industrial-military complex may lead to a complete turnaround in the economic model of development. The highly sophisticated technology that is required for arms production also necessitates that a major portion of the resources for scientific and technological development be diverted to military programs. Hence the Brazilian economy may change its axis from the automobile to the armored car, from the traditional industries of the ABC paulista [the auto-industrial cities of Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo and São Caetano do Sul] to the high-tech industries and laboratories surrounding São José dos Campos.

Coupled with militarization, the profoundly unequal distribution of personal and regional resources stands as the major obstacle to sound ecopolicies in Brazil. The defense of the

quality of life of a collectivity presupposes an equitable distribution of resources, as well as of the social and political power entailed by their possession. Few would have qualms about this assertion. Also, in few nations would anyone find the contrasts to be more glaring than in Brazil. The wealthiest of Brazil are among the wealthiest in the world. But its poorest also number among the poorest in the world. Brazil has changed dramatically in the past three decades while at the same time its resources have become even more concentrated geographically and socially. Furthermore, Brazilian development has taken an increasing toll on the ecological endowment of the nation. Whatever the vantage point from which one approaches the situation in Brazil, the 80 million Brazilians, the 60 percent of the population that goes to sleep undernourished every night, or the 40 million who fall below the line of absolute poverty, constitute a clear indication of the perverse results of ecopolitics in Brazil so far.

There are, then, various reasons for despair about the ecopolitical future of Brazil. At the level of actual tendencies, to begin with, ecological resources are being used up at an exponential rate. There are worsening environmental conditions both in the countryside and in the urban areas. Completing this picture is the rate of growth of the Brazilian population, which, even if it continues to decline over the next decades, still represents the addition of vast numbers of human beings to be fed, sheltered, and educated. On the other hand, one cannot find major "physical" obstacles to comprehensive ecopolicies in Brazil. The country is self-sufficient in most resources, including technological ingenuity. It has all the basic requirements to achieve self-sufficiency in energy, food, minerals, and other strategic areas. It has the largest genetic pool in the world, which means that the country will be able to master perhaps the most important element for sustained development in the future. Brazil has also made tremendous progress on the institutional and legal fronts.

If we turn, however, to the main features of Brazilian social formation and political development, the future looks even more bleak. The "new" authoritarianism brought about by the technobureaucratic-military alliance has elicited latent characteristics of the nation. The demobilization of society, technocratism, and the fragmentation of issues and interests are but one side of reality. On the other side stands the internationalization of the economy, the statization of national resources, and the consequent exploitation of the Brazilian commons according to a developmentalist ideology guided by private criteria for the allocation of resources. Both aspects render it extremely difficult for a less pernicious relationship to emerge between environment and development in Brazil. The former makes it problematic for society to organize autonomously around environmental issues; the latter incorporates a new logic

of development that is antithetical to the sound management of natural resources.

Finally, one should add to this picture the fact that, because all public matters have been filtered through the ideology of "national security," at least since 1964, superior "national interests" loom over environmental policies. In effect, Decree-Law No. 1.413 and Decree No. 76.389, both enacted in 1975, demonstrate the rash realities of ecopolitics in Brazil. These decrees unilaterally revoked the right of state and local governments to suspend economic activities for environmental reasons, rendering any regulatory power useless.

In other words, the Brazilian governmental stand on environmental issues is a legitimate product of the technobureaucratic-military alliance. Its policies were based, and will be based at least for the next few years, on a tripod. The primacy of economic growth and industrialization over conservation and rational use of natural resources constitutes, perhaps, the oldest part of ecopolitical ideology in Brazil, dating back to colonial times. The two "modern" additions to the tripod have been, on the one hand, the consideration of environmental problems according to the precepts national security, and on the other, the tight compartmentalization of environmental management through bureaucratic expertise. Each component represents the interests of one of the partners in the alliance that took over in 1964.

In short, the Brazilian elite has struck a bargain whereby the rapid advance of a few into the world of postindustrial society comes at a heavy social cost, the marginalization of the vast majority of the population. Mephistopheles can be seen beside the door, collecting a stiff environmental premium. The 1990s have even been called, according to a different periodization of Brazilian history, "the time of the reckoning." The simple projection of the current situation warrants only one type of inference. As Souza, the main character of a novel about the future of Brazil, sadly concludes as he wakes up one day: "It will be more suffocating than yesterday, worse than the day before yesterday; much better than tomorrow."<sup>36/</sup>

Fortunately, the future of human societies is hardly ever a simple projection of their past. In ecopolitics more than in any other area of human endeavor, there is apt to apply the popular dictum that "where there is life, there is hope." Underneath the asphyxiating reality of a militarized state one can perceive the signs of a different society struggling to be born. So far, the birth has been effectively aborted on several occasions, but every new attempt must be greeted with enthusiasm, including the New Republic of 1985. The New Republic may be young, but its foundations can be traced back to the student revolt of 1968, to the electoral defeats of the regime since 1970, to the limited

guerrilla warfare of the early 1970s, as well as to the mobilization of organized labor in 1978. Being established does not necessarily mean that it will be able to survive and to open a new era of more equitable relationships among Brazilians, and hence between Brazilians and Brazilian nature as well. Still, the ecological pessimism of these pages may prove to be mistaken.

Notwithstanding the depressing performance of SEMA in promoting the formulation and the implementation of environmental policies, to deplore SEMA's record to date would amount to kicking a dead horse, so to speak. If it were not for the fact that the (non)policies of Brazil in this area can be traced to some key structural features of its social and political development, the concrete limitations that surround the operation of SEMA--lack of resources, lack of manpower, and lack of clout--are enough to render the agency little more than a token of the environmental concerns of the government. For a bureaucratic adornment, SEMA has actually done a superlative job, as attested by the international recognition granted to its achievements as well as to its officials.

The question of allocation of resources to SEMA and to other groups working on the environment deserves to be mentioned here, since this may show the degree of governmental (lack of) support for the formulation and actual implementation of environmental policies. Estimates made, for example, by the World Bank, indicate that 2.5 percent of the GNP of the United States was annually devoted, from 1978 to 1980, to environmental action. Alternatively, a sample of forty Third World countries revealed that, for the same period, none spent more than 0.3 percent of its GNP on environmental programs. Other sources suggest also that the figure for Brazil is actually much lower than that: only 0.065 percent.<sup>37/</sup> SEMA is actually one of the smallest and poorest agencies in the federal government. In any event, SEMA is ligh-years away from a situation close to that of its North American counterpart. Seven years after its creation, a study of the U.S. EPA concluded that "while small in comparison with Cabinet-level departments, EPA is the largest of the regulatory agencies in terms of appropriations and manpower."<sup>38/</sup> Larger, for instance, than agencies of the importance of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Food and Drug Administration, the Security and Exchange Commission, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Civil Aeronautics Board. Finally, while SEMA's budgets have run only to tens of millions of dollars while, for example, the environmental impact studies for the Transalaskan pipeline cost the United States government \$500 million.<sup>39/</sup> Brazil now competes with the United States in jet aircraft, in gasohol, and in semiconductors; it should do so as well in the funding of new knowledge on the environment.

Furthermore, a solution must be found to the institutional dilemma that causes SEMA to remain immobilized. The bureaucratic

niches of SEMA have been most inappropriate; it was inadequate as a second-class secretariat in the Ministry of the Interior, and it is still inadequate as an appendix of a ministry entirely dedicated to urban development, or worse still, one devoted solely to the housing aspects of urbanization. Perhaps a sensible alternative, given the characteristics of the Brazilian bureaucratic State as well as the multiple dimensions of environmental policies, would be to separate ecopolicies from environmental management. Ecopolicies pertain to the highest political and normative levels of government, that is, to the presidency, either as an autonomous entity or under the Planning Secretariat. Likewise, the current National Council for the Environment should be scaled down numerically, and upgraded politically. The CONAMA should not mingle in the details of environmental management--in air and water quality or sanitation--except for truly national problems whose size or scope deserve its attention, such as deforestation and cyclical droughts. The "new" CONAMA should be designed in such a way as to play the same role that the National Monetary Council plays in development planning and economic policy. This means to say, it should become the highest political forum, in the executive, for defining how ecological and environmental resources are to be used, maintained, and reproduced in Brazilian society.

Environmental management, both pollution control and natural resource conservation, could be left under a coordinating agency that also maintains some executive powers. This agency, which could of course be SEMA, would tend to concentrate on what can possibly be expected of it. It should not fight no-win wars against sectorial ministries and planning agencies. Rather, it should manage programs such as ecological stations and national biological parks; promote research and development of pollution abatement technologies; and oversee the enforcement of pollution control measures at the state and municipal levels.

The ecological argument must be, by definition, a political one. Before one looks for the technical arguments, for rational decisions, the right political alliance that must be found. In politics, there is no such thing as "rationality." Only university professors and a few zealots of the "common good" believe in the possibility of rational political decisions. Rationality, in politics, is defined according to the interests that are contemplated in a decision. In Brazil the necessary "political will" to formulate and implement ecopolicies is still lacking. The right alliances have not yet developed. But all of the evidence is now at hand through which they can be forged.

Toward the end of the decade, for instance, some episodic manifestations of popular mobilization, not sufficiently broad or permanent to be considered a "movement," seemed to indicate that Brazilians were starting to fight back. Few have been able to score significant victories like the successful 1978 blockade

against the construction of the new São Paulo international airport that was initially planned for Caucaia do Alto, one of the few natural forests left in the state. Most protests end up being run over by the technocratic-authoritarian machinery, as in Contagem in 1975, or in Sete Quedas seven years later. These failures should not be cause for despair, though. The struggle for a healthier environment is more similar to guerrilla warfare than most of us would be willing to acknowledge.

In this context, it should be recalled that Fidel Castro arrived in Cuba with eighty-two men, and, in less than one week their ranks were reduced to twelve. Three years later, those so-called crazy visionaries were able to topple a dictatorship backed by 30,000 troops. And when Ralph Nader started fighting against the most powerful auto industry in the world, back in the late 1960s, his crusade initially seemed to be limited to one man. Now, several victories later, Nader's organizations claim followers in the hundreds of thousands, and the automakers of Detroit have been pushed to build safer cars. In time, strong oak trees of an environmental movement in Brazil may grow as well from the tiny acorns spread upon the ground so far.



## NOTES

1/ This paper represents a summary of the research results of Roberto P. Guimarães, "Ecopolitics in the Third World: An institutional analysis of environmental management in Brazil," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1986.

2/ Quoted in G. Tyler Miller, Jr., Living in the environment, 2d ed. (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1979), p. 32.

3/ This has been first expressed in the forceful words of C.S. Lewis, in his splendid The abolition of Man (New York: MacMillan Company, 1944): "what we call Man's power over Nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other men, with Nature as its instrument."

4/ A comprehensive analysis of the ecological foundations of politics is William Ophuls, Ecology and the politics of scarcity: Prologue to a political theory of the steady state (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1977). A most lucid and provocative essay on scarcity and political power can be found also in Richard J. Barnet, The lean years: Politics in the age of scarcity (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981).

5/ Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, ed. Crawford B. Macpherson (New York: Penguin Books, 1969).

6/ See Plato, The Republic of Plato, trans. Francis M. Conford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), and Aristotle, ed. Ernest Baker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).

7/ Karl W. Deutsch, ed., Eco-social systems and eco-politics: A reader on human and social implications of environmental management in developing countries (Paris: UNESCO, 1977), p. 13.

8/ Michael E. Kraft, "Ecological politics and American government: A review essay," in Environmental politics, 2d ed., ed. Stuart S. Nagel (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), pp. 139-59.

9/ Roberto da Matta, Carnavais, malandros e heróis: Para uma sociologia do dilema brasileiro, 3d ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores, 1980), p. 14.

10/ According to Raymundo Faoro, Os donos do poder: Formação do patronato político brasileiro, 2 vols., 4th ed. (Porto Alegre: Editora Globo, 1977), p. 28, "Side by side with the property of the Crown there is private property, recognized and guaranteed by Princes. Above these properties, the King's or private, there is an overproperty, identified with the territory and including the command, but barely separated from the dominion, over things and persons, over all things and all persons." See also, for the same subject, James Lang, Portuguese Brazil: The King's plantation (New York: Academic Press, 1979); and Fernando Uricoechea, The patrimonial foundations of the Brazilian bureaucracy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

11/ These words were said during the final events that led to his abdication in 1831. See John Armitage, The history of Brazil: From the period of the arrival of the Bragança family, in 1808, to the abdication of Dom Pedro the First, in 1831, 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder and Company, 1836) 2:129.

12/ Just as North Americans joke about the Poles, Poles laugh about the Soviets, and the French pique the Belgians, so Brazilians also have favorite targets for their humor. Some obviously come out of competition, as is probably the case with Argentines; it is said that Brazilians love Tango because they know that every time they hear one an Argentine has passed away. But the Portuguese are by far the most popular butt for humor, as a direct result of the deep and fraternal feelings of Brazilians toward their ancestors. Because no other people in the world is so dedicated to making fun of themselves, nothing is more natural than making fun of our European forebears as well.

13/ Faoro, Os donos do poder, p. 743. Joaquim Nabuco, a leading abolitionist and an influential politician during the Empire, referred to public service, in his O abolicionismo (São Paulo: Instituto Progresso Editorial, 1949), as "a noble profession, and the vocation of all. Take, at random, twenty or thirty Brazilians in any place where educated society meets: all of them either had been, are or will be public employees; if not they, their children will be" (p. 158).

14/ It is worth mentioning one example of the legalistic tradition of Brazilians, which, at the same time, illustrates their disrespect for the law. In 1595 King Felipe II issued a law forbidding the enslavement of Indians in Brazil. Only eleven years later, there got under way one of the largest and longest operations to hunt down and enslave Indians in Brazil. These operations were called Bandeiras [pathfinders]; they lasted for two centuries, and often enjoyed governmental support.

15/ M. Conceição Tavares and J. Carlos Assis, O grande salto para o caos: A economia politica e a politica econômica do regime autoritário (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 1985), p. 12.

16/ See Marcos Sá Correa, "Alta privilegiatura," Veja, 13 April 1983, p. 74.

17/ Illustrations of these views can be found in Peter McDonough, Power and ideology in Brazil (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Robert D. Daland, Exploring Brazilian bureaucracy: Performance and pathology (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981); and Evans, Dependent development: The alliance of multinationals, State, and local capital in Brazil (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), respectively. A useful collection of essays about the role of the bureaucracy throughout Brazilian history is to be found also in Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor, ed. Politics and administration in Brazil (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1978). For an analysis of how bureaucrats are formed in Brazil, in such a way as to guarantee capital accumulation, refer to Maria L. M. Covre, A formação e a ideologia do administrador de empresa (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1981).

18/ René A. Dreifuss, A conquista do Estado: Ação política e golpe de classe (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1981).

19/ Reference here is made to the special clout enjoyed by the technobureaucrat, either as a public servant or a businessperson, due to the simple fact that he or she is located inside the state apparatus. Recalling Peter Evans's description of the triple alliance at work--how partnerships are established, between state and local capital, state and multinationals, and multinationals and local--one cannot avoid recognizing the central role played by technobureaucrats as they foster, facilitate, or hamper jointventures. Similar reasoning may be applied to Fernando Henrique Cardoso's description of the "bureaucratic rings." Finally, a concrete example of this process has been the development of a national computer industry. Aside from the specific weight of local and international interests in the governing coalition, it would be correct to suggest that the creation of the Federal Service of Data Processing (SERPRO, 1964) set the stage for current protectionist policies. This is the same stage on which technobureaucrats were later successful in creating the Secretaria Especial de Informática (SEI, 1979; regulator of the microelectronics industry), under the direct supervision of Brazil's National Security Council.

20/ Frederick C. Engels, "Letter to Starkenburg (1894)," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Selected correspondence, 1846-1895 (London: M. Lawrence, 1934), pp. 516-19.

21/ Brasil, Presidência da República, Conselho de Segurança Nacional, Exposição de Motivos No. 100/71, sobre a posição a ser adotada pelo governo brasileiro no que diz respeito aos problemas ligado ao meio ambiente (Brasília, 22 December 1971). See also, Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores (Itamaraty), Conferência das Nações Unidas sobre o meio ambiente: O Brasil e a preparação da conferência de Estocolmo (Brasília, 1972)

22/ See, in this respect, the penetrating analysis of Anthony Downs, Inside bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967).

23/ See, in this respect, Stahl W. Edmunds, "Environmental policy: Bounded rationality applied to unbounded ecological problems," in Environmental policy formation: The impact of values, ideology and standards, ed. Dean E. Mann (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1981), pp. 191-201. For more detail on the Principle of Bounded Rationality, see Herbert Simon, Models of Man (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957), pp. 198-200, 246ff.

24/ Francis E. Rourke, Bureaucracy, politics, and public policy, 3d ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), p. 190.

25/ A good summary of the problems that are likely to arise when too many actors have to be coordinated to carry out environmental policies is to be found in Joseph J. Molner and David L. Rogers, "Interorganizational coordination in environmental management: Process, strategy, and objective," in Environmental policy implementation: Planning and management options and their consequences, ed. Dean E. Mann (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1982), pp. 95-108.

26/ Brasil, Presidência da República, Secretaria de Planejamento, Secretaria de Modernização e Reforma Administrativa, Cadastro da administração federal: Função saúde e saneamento (Brasília, June 1978).

27/ A suggestive, picturesque view of what may happen when several agencies share an interest or oversight over a particular issue was the following memorandum sent by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the director of the Bureau of the Budget, on 20 July 1939, and reproduced in Harold Seidman, Politics, position and power: The dynamic of federal organization, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 96-97: I agree with the Secretary of the Interior. Please have it carried out so that fur-bearing animals remain in the Department of the Interior. You might find out if any Alaska bears are still supervised by (a) War Department (b) Department of Agriculture (c) Department of Commerce. They have all had jurisdiction over Alaska bears in the past and many embarrassing situations have been created by the mating of a bear belonging to one Department with a bear belonging to another Department. F. D. R. P.S. I don't think the Navy is involved, but it may be. Check the Coast Guard. You never can tell!

28/ Rufus E. Miles, Jr., "The origin and meaning of Miles' Law," Public Administration Review 38 (September-October 1978):399-403. For an exploration of this law, as well as of several of its possible corollaries, refer to the superb analysis of Seidman in Politics, position and power.

29/ Classic within a vast literature is Graham T. Allison, The essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971). Equally brilliant is Morton Halperin, Bureaucratic politics and foreign policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1974). Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron B. Wildavsky have also done an outstanding job in debunking the mythology of clearcut distinctions between politicians (policymakers) and bureaucrats (policy administrators). Their conclusions stand out in the amusing, tell-it-all title of their book: Implementation: How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; or, why it's amazing that Federal programs work at all, this being a saga of the Economic Development Administration as told by two sympathetic observers who seek to build morals on a foundation of ruined hopes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

30/ Most of the comments made in this section about bureaucratic behavior owe a profound intellectual debt to the illuminating lectures of Harold Seidman at the University of Connecticut during the fall of 1977. More specifically, because these two elements of bureaucratic politics were first articulated in those lectures, they should legitimately be called Seidman's Laws. Two other of his laws have been used already in this chapter: (1) the product of governmental decisions is not the solution of a problem but, rather, the result of competition, alliances, commitments, and a lot of confusion among governmental authorities; and (2) insofar as government programs are

concerned, action does not suppose intention; the summation of the positions adopted by several representatives of governmental agencies about a specific problem is seldom intentional for any individual or group.

31/ For an appropriate understanding of the strategies adopted by organizations to resist innovation, as well as for a good grasp on how social institutions transform themselves, see Donald A. Schon, Beyond the stable state (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973).

32/ Seidman, Politics, position and power (pp. 23-24), offers two interesting quotations on interagency committees. One from President Herbert Hoover, who once said: There is no more dangerous citizen than a person with a gift of gab, a crusading complex and a determination "to pass a law" as the antidote for all human ills. The most effective diversion of such an individual to constructive action and the greater silencer on earth for foolishness is to associate him on a research committee with a few persons who have a passion for truth, especially if they pay their own expenses. I can now disclose the secret that I created a dozen committees for that precise purpose. [Herbert C. Hoover, The memoirs of Herbert Hoover, the Cabinet and the Presidency, 1920-1933 (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 281.]

Similar advice is contained in a poem published in London a couple of years after Hoover's memoirs. It read: If you're pestered by critics and hounded by faction To take some precipitate, positive action, The proper procedure, to take my advice, is Appoint a commission and stave off the crisis. [Geoffrey Parsons, "Royal Commission," Punch, 29 August 1955.]

33/ Edward Gibbon, The history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, 7 vols., ed. J. B. Bury, (London: Methuen, 1909), 4:173. See also Mikhail I. Rostovtzev, The social and economic history of the Roman Empire, 2d ed., rev. by P. M. Fraser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957); A. H. M. Jones, The late Roman Empire, 284-602: A social, economic, and administrative survey (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964); and F. W. Walbank, The awful revolution: The decline of the Roman Empire in the West (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969).

34/ Harrison Brown, The human future revisited: The world predicament and possible solutions (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), pp. 240-241.

35/ See, for instance, René A. Dreifuss and Octávio S. Dulci, "As forças armadas e a política," in Sociedade e política no Brasil pós-64, ed. Bernardo Sorj and Maria H. T. de Almeida (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1983), and also Clóvis Brigagão, A militarização da sociedade (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 1985).

36/ Ignácio de Loyola Brandão, Não verás país nenhum (São Paulo: Global Editora, 1981), p. 184.

37/ David Morell and Joana Poznanski, "Rethoric and reality: Environmental politics and environmental administration in developing countries," in Divesting Nature's capital: The political economy of environmental abuse in the Third World, ed. H. Jeffrey Leonard (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), p. 152.

38/ U.S. National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, Commission on Natural Resources, Decision making in the Environmental Protection Agency: A report to the U.S. EPA from the Committee on Environmental Decision Making (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1977), p. 182-83.

39/ Estimates based on Carlos Minc, Como fazer movimento ecológico e defender a natureza e as liberdades (Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1985), p. 67.