

THE BRAZILIAN DOCTRINE OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE FIRST NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Fúlvia Rosemberg, Catholic University of São Paulo and Carlos Chagas Foundation, São Paulo

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Abstract

The first Brazilian national early childhood care and education (ECCE) program, the Chrysallis Project, was implemented in 1976 by the Brazilian Assistance League (Legião Brasileira de Assistência/LBA). The project reflected the Doctrine of National Security articulated by the Brazilian military governments of the period. The model used by the Chrysallis Project reflected other international trends seeking to expand ECCE at a low cost by involving communities. By doing so, the program reinforced economic and racial discrimination by providing a cheap alternative to primary education.

The first Brazilian national early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs for mass education were strongly influenced by proposals defined by UN multilateral agencies, especially UNICEF. Brazil, like many other underdeveloped countries, has been bombarded with consultancies, recommendations and proposals from international and multilateral organisms which have had considerable impact on implementing social policies in the areas of child care and reproductive rights. These have added to the interplay of tensions, conflicts and coalitions that have characterized Brazilian social policies aimed at poor sectors of the population.

An unfortunate marriage took place in Brazil in the 1970s between multilateral organisms and the military governments in the field of mass education. The marriage was possible because the betrothal took place during the Cold War, and the engagement ring was the key concept of "community participation" for implementing programs aimed at poor children. The tensions, conflicts and particularities of the policy debates were camouflaged by the reliance on community participation.

The Cold War, the Brazilian National Security State and Community Development

The Cold War ideology was the yeast for the production of the social hypotheses and their outcomes that were the basis for both the ideology of the Brazilian Doctrine of National Security (DNS) and the proposals for Community Development. These theoretical bases led to the creation of the Chrysalis Project, the first Brazilian national ECCE program, implemented by the Brazilian Assistance League (Legião Brasileira de Assistência/LBA) in 1976.

The Brazilian military government came to power in 1964, as the result of understanding between military and civil forces abopted the DNS that had been consolidated since 1949 by the Higher War

School (ESG).¹ This government was the first National Security regime in Latin America (Rodrigues, 1986). While based on the thinking of certain theoreticians of eugenics, the military governments incorporated no theory of racial supremacy or any imperial aspirations, nor did it suppose the support of the masses to legitimate the power of the State. It was used, however, to justify the imposition of a system of control and domination over real or virtual opposition (Moreira Alves, 1984, p 20-21).

The Brazilian version of the DNSD constituted a theoretical body with three broad strands: a theory of the geopolitical potential of Brazil and its role in world policy; a theory of war, including domestic subversion, and a specific model of dependent economic development, combining elements of a Keynesian economy with state capitalism (Moreira Alves, 1984, p20)

The geopolitical thesis that sustained the DNS in Latin America was the division of the world into two great political and power blocks, namely, the Christian, democratic West, and Soviet Communist expansionism. Due to the moral superiority of the West, the Brazilian DNS opted for the "best side", conferring on Brazil a strategic role in facing the Communist threat. It was to be "a stronghold of the free world" and a "citadel of democracy" (Comblin, 1977, p 30).

This Brazilian geopolitical thesis sustained a notion of a Nation conceived as a homogeneous whole endowed with a single will, free from conflicts or diverging interests. "The idea of national interest can easily be seen from this point of view. It is utterly vague and confusing, but seems so clear to our ideologues, because they see it as arising from their personification of the Nation: one interest, one will, one project and one power. All social conflicts then disappear, along with all the problems about internal politics." (Comblin, 1975, p 29). Social differences were attributed to the existence of regions and populations "not integrated" into the national development process.

For the DNS, the Nation has a single will and manifest destiny that is translated into national objectives. It is the State's responsibility to achieve these objectives. Six objectives were defined by the DNS: i) integrity of the national territory; ii) national unity; iii) democracy; iv) social progress; v) social peace, and vi) sovereignty. The motto for the five successive Brazilian military governments that took power between 1964 and 1985 shed light on these objectives: security and development.² Economic planning therefore also aimed at national security and sovereignty (Silva Pinto, 1984, p12).³ Or, as Marshall Castello Branco, first president of the Brazilian National Security State said in 1967, "the industrial revolution made war much more technical, and this accentuated the importance of economic development as an element of security."

The central position occupied by war in the DNS, and its very conception, are offshoots of the view of a world divided into two blocks, appropriate the Cold War period. The DNS held that those were times of total war between the Christian West and the Communist East. For Brazil, aligned with the West, national objectives were inseparable from the defense of the West and the struggle against communism.

¹There were many civilians among the teachers and students at the Brazilian Higher War School (approximately 50% between 1950 and 1967, according to Stepan, 1975, (p129). They participated in seminars and courses on themes related to the various aspects of social life in the Doctrine of National Security, including pre-school education (see Association of Graduates of the Superior War School in Minas Gerais, 1980).

²McNamara, 1967: "Security is development and without development there is no security. [...] Development is economic, social and political progress (cited in Comblin, 1975, p. 65-66).

³Luiz Fernando Silva Pinto was most responsible for drawing up and implanting the proposal for the Chrysalis Project.

"The concept of the Cold War makes the distinction between peace and war disappear. As a result, all the consequences of a state of war apply to the present situation." (Comblin, 1975, p. 213). For the DNS, total war was a war without barracks; it was not restricted to the military sphere but encompassed political, economic and cultural life. It was a form of expression of total war, and revolutionary war was seen as the strategy by international communism to penetrate into Africa, Asia and Latin America, especially through the variant of psychological warfare (Exhibit I, Paragraph 5).⁴

Anticommunism constituted the central ideological theme of the Brazilian and Latin-American armed forces in general. "To the extent that American hegemony was threatened in each Latin-American country, it was imperative that internal measures be taken to defeat the enemy that was adopting new forms of confrontation, characterized by internal insurgency. [...] Any and all opposition to these [strategic American] interests] were indiscriminately considered 'internal-enemy,' the agent of internal and militant insurgency of Marxist-Leninist ideology" (Cavagnari Filho, 1994, p. 29).

In the light of the DNS, revolutionary, or subversive, warfare and its variant, psychological warfare, were therefore weapons of international Communism to undermine national morale, win over minds, subvert the population and, finally, attain power by the use of force and violence (Exhibit I, Paragraph 4 and Martins, 1986, pps. 31-32). In the name of anti-Communism, the DNS emphasized internal security which led to abuses of power, arbitrary arrests, tortures, and the suppression of the freedom of expression (Moreira Alves, 1984, p. 27).

The internal contradictions resulting from economic, social and cultural policies were also of concern in the light of the "security and development" approach. For the DNS, true security presupposed a process of economic and social development. The process is "economic because military power is essentially conditioned to the country's industrial and technological bases; and it is social because even a satisfactory economy, if accompanied by excessive concentration of income and increasing social inequalities, gives rise to tensions and struggles that prevent institutions from functioning correctly. In the end, economic development itself and the security of the regime are put in jeopardy" (Marshal Castello Branco, 1967).

Poverty, therefore, can be a threat to National Security, and policies of social aid, among them the Chrysalis Project, are part of the strategies to combat psychological warfare.⁵ Action in "pockets of poverty," the so-called "pockets of resentment" was a preventive measure against international Communism (Silva Pinto, 1984, p. 1.1).

⁴The documents on which this text is based were taken from several sources. Material on the Doctrine of National Security was obtained partially in those texts cited above. In addition, a study was made at the library of the Higher War School, where Text TG 4-76 was found. It is reproduced partially here as an exhibit. Information on UNICEF guidelines related to child education was obtained from the texts cited. Studies were also done on the Data Base on Early Childhood at the Ana Maria Poppovic Library (Carlos Chagas Foundation), in the UNICEF library in New York (by the author and Thereza Montenegro) and the UNESCO library in Paris (by Livia Maria Fraga Vieira). A large number of the original documents on LBA and the Chrysalis Project were traced from the Masters' Dissertations of Vieira (1986) and Lima (1994), and from Luiz Fernando Silva Pinto, *O Social Inadiável*.

⁵It was through this channel that themes on social and welfare policies were included in the ESG (Escola Superior de Guerra) curriculum during this period.

Since the end of War World II, this conception of poor populations has also been employed in Brazil to give form to theory and practice of Community Development (CD), using the strategy of participation of the community in implanting social policies.

In her excellent study *Ideology of Community Development in Brazil*, Safira B. Ammann agrees that the Cold War was the source of the community development theory and the idea that the poor are the most receptive prey to international communist propaganda (Ammann, 1982, p. 29). A USAID manual published in Brazil on community education stated it clearly: "In the present ideological struggle, famished peoples are more receptive to international communist propaganda than prosperous nations are". Another passage asserted that "the effort to help peoples achieve a healthier and more economically productive standard of living would eliminate potential sources of Communism" (Scanlon, 1965, in Ammann, 1982, p. 58). This emphasis comes to the detriment of a concept of a social policy based on citizen's rights.

The proximity between the DNS and the Community Development concept results not only from a polarized view of the world but also from a notion of society governed by balance and harmony. In 1956, the UN defined Community Development as a "process by which a people's own efforts are united with those of governmental authorities to improve social, cultural and economic conditions in the communities, to integrate these communities into national life, and give them the capacity to contribute fully to the country's progress" (in Ammann, 1982, p. 25). In this view of society, the existence of social inequalities is explained by processes of circular causation. In other words, the poor are left out of the process of development and to put an end to this situation, consolidated action is needed (in the areas of health, food and education), especially to save children from the destiny that poverty has reserved for them.

This conception of poverty and programs for recovering poor children also seems to have been adopted by UNICEF, at least until 1979, the International Year for Children, as evidenced by the following excerpt from a report on childhood in the Americas. "Inequality and poverty are behind most problems involving children. There are multiple causes, and it is dangerous to oversimplify. It is clear, however, that the majority of these problems are directly or indirectly linked to poverty and thus unequal distribution of the results of development. The mother's age, her educational level, etc., may be factors, but all these elements are due in turn to poverty. Behind the handicap imprinted on each child is the face of poverty, reproducing itself" (UNICEF, 1979, p. 620).

The concept of Community Development found its way into Brazil immediately after the Second World War through rural missions, and it was subjected to regulation by the military government. In 1970, the Center for Coordination of Community Development Programs (CPCD) was set up. The CPCD conceived Community Development as an "instrument for popular participation and a system of work aimed at facilitating joint use of resources from the population and the government, and at improving results from both" (CPCD, in Ammann, 1982, p. 117). In other words, Community Development and community participation were seen at the time as strategies for integrating into society and national populations or regions that had been excluded from development. This is the basis for setting up programs and putting mechanisms in movement, in view of social and regional integration, all with financial support from the community.

Origins of the Model Early Childhood Care and Education Programs

The model for a Brazilian ECCE program for the masses was influenced by concepts put forward by multilateral agencies, especially UNICEF and UNESCO. The longest-lived influence was UNICEF, through Brazilian the National Department for Children (DNCr) which was phased out in 1968.⁶ UNICEF, like any other organization, has been reformulating the principles that guide its proposals and actions. During the 1950s and 1960s the conceptual bases were laid down to shape the model of child education put into practice in various countries, including Brazil. The guidelines from the period included (Black, 1989, and Egger, 1985) an emphasis on the participation of the community as a strategy for implanting social policies aimed at poor children; cooperating with the national governments; and incursions education.

Emphasis on Community Participation

During the 1950s UNICEF was still concentrating its efforts on the area of improved health and nutrition for poor children. The organ "was performing true pioneer work to the benefit of African children and mothers. In English-speaking countries, UNICEF contributed to the setting up of advanced care systems that, for the first time, *appealed to the participation of the community*⁷ (Egger, 1985, p6, my underlining). "Since then, the difficulties encountered in assuring the participation of the inhabitants" had already been perceived (Egger, 1985, p6). Even so, the principle of "community participation" was systematically included among its guidelines for programs aimed at early childhood. Henry Labouisse, then executive director, in reference to the 1965 report of the Executive Office, underscored not only the need for greater attention to pre-school activities, but the format that should characterize the programs as well. In the same presentation, he emphasized the work with disadvantaged populations, using local funds and "non-conventional" methods, attributing a catalyzing role to UNICEF.

A 1968 UNESCO-UNICEF document on pre-school children insists on the need for special attention to small children and recalls the difficulties of implanting formal programs in the developing countries. It then suggests "a possible solution that some developing countries are adopting in setting up pre-school facilities as annexes to primary schools, using a less elaborate model that is cheaper than [traditional] kindergartens."

Cooperation with National Governments

An internal reformulation in the 1960s recommended that UNICEF "work more closely with governments, in order to better adapt its cooperation programs to the specific needs of each country." This was the "national approach" that led UNICEF in Brazil and elsewhere to concentrate its efforts on the coordination of sectoral activities, insisting on the integration of distinct projects aimed at intensifying the impact of the supply of services in the areas of health, nutrition, sanitation, environment, education and social work (UNICEF, 1980, p. 8). Its action then began to be aimed more directly on national planning, with support from foreign and local consultants, who operated more or less directly with the national organs (in Brazil, especially with the Ministries of Social Welfare and Education).

Involvement in Education

⁶DNCr was created in 1940 by the Ministry of Education and Health to be the "supreme coordinating organ of all the activities related to the protection of children, to maternity and to adolescence" (Vieira, 1986, p. 94).

⁷The French term is *villageois*.

This new strategy led to the extension of UNICEF's actions beyond its priorities of health and nutrition. It first became involved in educational projects; later directed its attention to the "transmission of values to new generations," and eventually began concerning itself with the "whole child." This was the context in which UNICEF turned its attention to pre-school education and invested in an area that, until then, had been the responsibility of UNESCO.⁸ UNICEF's new proposals for children and youth were drawn up and brought to public attention through studies and publications, international and regional conferences, meetings of the Executive Commission and the work of UNICEF technicians who directly advised national institutions.

A 1965 conference in Santiago, Chile marked an important moment for Latin America. The conference recommended that plans for national development take into account the overall needs of children and youth, including pre-school children. This called for mechanisms to integrate ministries and include the efforts of groups and movements (the community). These new aspects were the basis for the new proposals for mass pre-school education in Brazil (UNICEF, 1968, p. 87-89).

At the Santiago Conference, the DNCr represented Brazil. The DNCr had also been present at the 1965 meeting of the UNICEF Executive Committee in 1965 convened to discuss the broad-scale protection of pre-school children.⁹ It reported on the situation of pre-school children in Brazil, and brought back ideas that became the basis of the department's Preschool Children's Assistance Program (DNCr, 1967), presented at the First InterAmerican Congress on Pre-school Education in Rio de Janeiro in 1968. The document contains the basic guidelines for governmental proposals for pre-school children during the 1970s and part of the 1980s.¹⁰

The 1967 plan is clearly a policy for assistance to pre-school children. It is not an educational policy. This distinction later became lost when programs were denominated as National Pre-school Educational Program. The document describes in sober terms the program as an emergency plan. This sobriety was lost in subsequent proposals in the 1970s and 1980s. The word emergency was replaced by "alternative, non-conventional, or informal", as opposed to "traditional education". What was initially determined by lack of funds went on to be treated as a theoretical ideal.¹¹

The DNCr proposed setting up recreation centers. Although no such centers were created at the time, they provided the model for the Chrysalis Project. Its objectives were assistance to and development of the whole child, and it broadened the concept of preparation for mandatory schooling, albeit with a strong preventive connotation: the concept of mass assistance by extending "low-cost" coverage through the use of simple buildings, unused space or community space, plus the use of voluntary or semi-voluntary work by lay persons.

⁸The allocation of funds to different programs points to the growing importance of education. Education projects were allocated 1% of the funds in 1961; by 1967 their share had risen to 22.4%.

⁹The Brazilian government's document presented at the 1965 Executive Board Meeting was signed by the Brazilian delegate, Dr. Ronaldo Victor de Lamare, then DNCr General Director (UNICEF, E/ICEF/CRP/65-26, June 14, 1965).

¹⁰The DNCr document emphasizes the influence of UNICEF, pointing out that the proposal had been drawn up "in consonance with UNICEF's interests." The importance of the plan can be seen by the references made to it in the first bibliographies on pre-school programs published by the Education Ministry at the beginning of the 1970s (Brazil, 1975; INEP, 1976).

¹¹See *Alternativas de atendimento ao pré-escolar no Brasil* (Alternatives to care for pre-school children in Brazil), published jointly by UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Welfare (undated).

This ECCE model aimed at being universal. This meant that, when prepared by the federal government, it could be implemented throughout the country and when proposed by multilateral agencies, it could be exported to any poor country. It was thus a centralized model that ignored cultural, political, or even educational national and regional particularities. It nevertheless needed local support from either government or community, without being accompanied by sufficient central funding to function on its own.

The Chrysalis Project

Although the origins of the Chrysalis Project lie in the 1960s, it was implemented only in 1976 during the fourth military government under President Ernesto Geisel, when a federal social assistance program was set up in accordance with the DNS. It was implemented by the Brazilian Legion of Assistance (LBA), a federal social-assistance agency founded by the first lady in 1942 to aid soldiers sent to World War II in Europe and their families) which had implemented a number of other programs for mothers and children, although these were local projects based on volunteer personnel. The LBA was seen as the creator and creature of social service in Brazil before creating the Chrysalis Project.

LBA could implement this project on a large scale for several reasons. It was in line with the DNS, and was an expression of its principles, since it adopted a new discourse of prevention; opened up a direct and visible door for the federal government on the local level without going through intermediate channels of state governments; and was based on public low-budget investments and used the strategy of community participation, thus adjusting itself to the economic model contained in the DNS.

The Discourse of Prevention

LBA's position on assistance to poor children had contained a strong element of prevention ever since it was founded, adapting its style to each historical period. At the end of World War II, the preventive concept, as a justification for assistance to children, appears with a connotation of eugenics. The LBA oriented its activities and resources toward "the defense of our race, taking care of mothers and children, the men of tomorrow" (LBA, *Boletim*, 1946, pps. 10-11). Later, its assistance to children was aimed at "avoiding idleness and begging among children, as these situations are seen as consequences of abandonment and of the moral decadence of society" (LBA, *Boletim*, 1960, p. 15). When the Chrysalis Project was set up, its rhetoric included the theme of national security, because the poor were a threat to national integration. "Poverty, indigence and sub-human conditions, individually and collectively, 'marginalize' sectors of society. In practice, being at the margin means that the individual is subject to all the duties imposed by society but is excluded from the benefits. "This singular lack of equilibrium in access to acceptable conditions of quality of life is physically translated into confinement of populations into areas of sub-human conditions, creating the ideal environment for the proliferation of suffering and resentment, its inevitable companions" (Silva Pinto, 1984, p. 1).

The result is that "under the influence especially of the media, these ghettos of poverty begin to aspire increasingly to the advantages that civilization has to offer." If this population is not provided with the means to achieve what it aspires to, it will be led to turn against society, threatening its security through antisocial action" (LBA, *Relatório Anual*, 1977, p. 7). This project was presented as a "civil defense campaign in times of peace." Social Welfare and Assistance began to be seen as "indispensable factors for the maintenance of Social Peace," one of the strategies in the psychosocial field to face the total war (ESG, TG4-76, p. 104).

Penetration of the Federal Government throughout Brazil

The Chrysalis Project meant direct contact of the federal government with the population in municipalities all around the country, without the intermediary of the individual state governments. (Table 1). This penetration corresponded to the specific objective of the DNS for integration of the Brazilian territory and maintenance of the military government in power through electoral propaganda. The federal government would make its presence felt by labeling all equipment supplied with the federal government's insignia. The project was thus able to use the type of marketing appropriate for the political situation of the moment. Investment in children meant investment in national security

Table 1. National Service to Children in Pre-School Day-Care Centers Sponsored by the Lba

Year	Children Assisted	Growth Rate	Number of Centers/ Pre-Schls.	Municipalities	Direct Admin.	Indirect Admin.
1977	21,280	-	725	243	n.a.	n.a.
1978	149,509	100	4,051	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1979	169,139	113	4,362	914	n.a.	n.a.
1980	280,591	188	6,307	1,063	28,486	252,105
1981	323,259	216	4,270	1,706	29,179	294,080
1982	467,392	313	4,608	1,835	38,644	428,748
1983	908,302	607	10,386	2,055	136,270	772,032
1984	1,015,037	679	15,132	2,627	166,725	843,312
1985	838,560	561	n.a.	2,706	41,021	797,539
1986	920,336	615	11,920	2,709	31,804	888,532
1987	1,709,020	1,145	21,958	3,107	56,320	1,652,700
1988	2,016,981	1,349	25,171	3,230	26,909	1,990,072
1989	1,933,336	1,293	26,000	3,251	19,333	1,914,003
1990	1,602,261	1,072	23,265	3,286	21,720	1,580,541

Sources: LBA, Annual Reports, in Vieira (1986, p. 208) and Lima (1993, p.50).

Low Public Budget Outlays

The project adopted the same line of social harmony contained in the DNS and in Community Development, giving special attention to community participation in funding the projects, a legitimate argument for keeping costs down. "The LBA [...] plans to carry out the Chrysalis Project with a view to aiding the largest possible number of children at low operational costs. The intention is to mobilize government and private organizations, as well as other community resources. The project will be put into practice throughout the Brazilian territory" (LBA, *Projeto Casulo*, 1977).

There was also an appeal to Brazilian nationalism, very much in fashion during the period of the military governments (who can forget the motto from the 1970's was: "Brazil, love it or leave it"?). The project was presented as being typically Brazilian.

Traditional day-care centers or nursery homes are based on what is considered to be an ideal number of qualified workers, support personnel and material resources. The reality in Brazil, however, is that the sophisticated resources found in developed countries are not available in Brazil, although developed countries have been seen as the standard for the organizations that aim at implementing child assistance projects. Simpler methods must be established, to make the largest number of places/day available for children, in order to face the problem realistically.
(LBA, *Projeto Casulo*, 1977, p. 5).

In fewer than four years, the project was giving assistance to almost one million poor children. Initially the federal government invested less than a quarter of the minimum monthly wage at the time. The project grew through a particularly Brazilian strategy of increasing the number of children and reducing the cost per child, thus maintaining the total amount paid out.

The first evaluation of the project was carried out the year after it started, and showed up the structural problems resulting from the low-investment model with community backing. These included lack of qualified personnel, little knowledge of the culture of the families assisted whose educational level was pointed out as responsible for difficulties in carrying out the project, inadequate facilities, water shortages, lack of funds, and shortage of human and material resources and equipment" (LBA, *Avaliação do Projeto Casulo*, 1978, p. 12). In other words, the difficulty of implementing a program supported essentially by resources to be provided by poor communities was already evident at this point.¹²

In 1981, the Ministry of Education and Culture also implemented a national program for pre-school education, targeted at the same population and based on similar objectives of prevention and the same strategy (reducing public money by employing the so-called "informal" model). These projects were the main factors responsible for the great expansion of ECCE in the country during the 1980s.

¹²Since then, various evaluations have been made, usually in reference to a single region. See Lima (1994).

In an evaluation of pre-school assistance, Rosenberg (1991) observed a significant number of children between the ages of 7 and 9, who were not attending primary schools, which is compulsory under the Brazilian Constitution. She also saw that this number was higher in the Northeast, the country's poorest region, and even higher for black children in the Northeast (see Table II above). She concluded that the ECCE for the masses was low-quality assistance for the poor used as a cheap alternative to primary education. She thus concluded that educational programs for children, even when provided as a response to demands from women (as was the case in Brazil), can serve to reinforce existing discriminations and create new discriminations against women, and poor and black children, when they are set up under the so-called "alternative" models destined for the poor. This sequel had already been detected in the pioneer program involving the community, implemented by UNICEF in English-speaking Africa in the 1950s!

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