

Strategy Research Project International Fellow

National Identity and Will: Brazilian Insurance against the Melian Trap

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Abstract

Brazil will be a global player and one of the world's largest economies by 2030. However, given globalization, the rise of non-states actors, and demographics issues, trends point to an increase in individualism and the fracturing of national identity with painful consequences to nationalism. This paper examines whether Brazil's grand strategy for 2030 adequately addresses national identity and national will to support the instruments of national power in achieving the country's interests. Given the strategy formulation framework, Brazil must identify its threats and its place on the global stage to correctly define its interests. The country must balance its defense expenditures with its economy to protect its sovereignty, citizens, and resources, avoiding the Melian trap of the Peloponnesian war. Thucydides' fear, honor, and interest construct plays a significant role in the scenarios used to assess risks. The paper closes with the recommendation that, using strategic communications and the educational system, Brazil must bolster its national identity and improve the national will of its population to avoid negative trends and adequately support the elements of power in pursuing the country's interests.

National Identity and Will: Brazilian Insurance against the Melian Trap

A country cannot be peaceful without being powerful.

—Barão do Rio Branco¹

Brazil is an emerging middle power in the international system.² It is the world's fourth-largest democracy, fifth-largest country, and seventh-largest economy. In South America, Brazil is responsible for 48% of the region's total area, 50% of its population, 59% of its economy/GDP, two-thirds of its agriculture, 42% of oil production, and almost 75% of the expenditure on infrastructure of regional integration.³ Given its territory, population, and resources the country will undoubtedly play a more important role on the global stage in the future.

“By dint of its size and economic capacity,” Dr. Hal Brands notes, “Brazil will exert a strong pull on regional and global politics in the coming decades.”⁴ In fact, trends indicate that Brazil will be the world's fourth largest economy by 2030 according to Central Intelligence Agency analysts.⁵ It is also likely to have the ability to project power globally by 2045, according to the United Kingdom (U.K.) Ministry of Defense trends.⁶ Therefore, the country should invest more in defense, both to increase participation in the United Nations system, and to be able to defend its resources and interests. However, the country must also take care with its population since trends indicate some potentially negative changes in the future.

Due to the movement of people, information, and ideas across national boundaries, U.K. Ministry of Defense trends observe that individuals may “define themselves less by their nationality,” weakening their sense of patriotism. “Globally, the state will probably be of less relevance to the individual. As individuals feel less connected to the state, they are also likely to become less interested in supporting it.”⁷

Thus, the question that this essay seeks to answer is, given the above trends, does Brazil's grand strategy for 2030 adequately address the country's identity and national will to support the instruments of national power, mainly the military, in pursuing the achievement of its national interests?

National identity and national will have to reinforce the social cohesion of the Brazilian population to support the achievement of the interests of their country. This paper begins with Brazilian national interests (ends). It then identifies ways of approaching national identity and national will within Brazilian governance and the available means to improve these feelings in the Brazilian population. Following that it identifies risks to achievement of the country's national interests in the event of a lack of those beliefs. Finally, after presenting some historical cases as benchmarks, this paper will present recommendations for Brazil's grand strategy to successfully implement sustained changes to best address national identity and national will. The result of this assessment is the conclusion that Brazil must bolster its national identity and improve its national will in order to avoid negative population trends and adequately support the instruments of national power in pursuing the achievement of the country's interests.

Brazilian National Interests

In today's world, national interests are a very complex concept. Given globalization, the international world order works as a complex adaptive system where a choice made in one state can impact other states in multiple ways. For example, if a state does not have a concern regarding climate change, its neighbors, and perhaps the whole world, could be affected by that decision. Moreover, powerful states have the option of ignoring international agreements while weak states may not. Thus, nation

states do not have great freedom of maneuver to make choices unless they have the power to guarantee them.

Brazil faces a difficult challenge regarding its interests over the next few decades. It is a developing country with many resources that will become increasingly significant in the upcoming years, such as water, food, energy, and minerals. The nation will have to wisely manage and defend those resources. Nevertheless, Brazil's defense expenditures do not match its economic status. For example, although Brazil is the world's seventh-largest economy,⁸ its defense budget it is the sixty-fifth in the world.⁹ This problem is made more challenging because the population has little concern regarding defense issues.

Brazilians have a lack of fear, which means a lack of interest in defense issues, in part because "Latin America is a zone of relative peace in terms of state-to-state conflict."¹⁰ Thucydides, the ancient Greek historian who wrote the history of Peloponnesian War, believed that fear was a powerful feeling that could drive national interests. According to the Athenian historian, the Spartans voted for the war because they feared the growth of Athenian power.¹¹ Regarding Brazil's interests, this history is significant because it warns about the importance of the risk awareness for the definition of national interests.

Interest is related to the survival of the state since in the absence of the state the prince cannot exercise his power according to Machiavelli, the Florentine politician and diplomat who wrote *The Prince*. It is also important to emphasize strategic thinking, as highlighted by the Italian writer, when he recognized the successful approach of the Romans in addressing their interests in their new colonies. Indeed, Machiavelli stated

that wise rulers “have not only to watch out for present problems but also for those in the future, and try diligently to avoid them.”¹² In fact, the Brazilian Constitution correctly addresses the survival of the state as one of the national interests. However, it needs to improve its strategic view due to the country’s foreseeable growth and rising importance in the future and to counteract trends regarding the “feelings of detachment from the whole or nation state.”¹³

This consideration regarding the future leads to a link between interests and identity since “an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is.”¹⁴ That assumption is even more significant for Brazilian interests because politics is used to define identity according to the eminent American political scientist Samuel Huntington, who stated out that “we know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against.”¹⁵ Thus, Brazil must identify first the threats it faces and what it wants to be in the future to correctly define its interests up to 2030.

This is very hard since Brazilians seem themselves as a peaceful people. It is a trait that one can see in the Brazilian soldier with his empathy and peaceful culture, as well as his unique flexibility and adaptability that allows him to solve complex problems with a minimal use of force.¹⁶ As Brazilian history shows the country has mostly been at peace with its neighbors during more than 145 years. The last time that Brazilian troops fought in a war was with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (BEF) in Italy during World War II.

Additionally, geopolitical factors such as the stable environment in South America, good relationships between Brazil and its ten neighbors, and even its asymmetric relation in size, population, and growth regarding the others South

American countries reinforces that peaceful mindset. According to the former Minister of Defense Celso Amorim, to address future external challenges Brazil must be guided by a grand strategy in which defense policy and foreign policy are combined to provide for peace.¹⁷ However, sometimes states have to use their power to acquire desired goals or defend their interests.

In this sense, Brazilian grand strategy has to highlight the necessity of the state to provide sufficient means to defend its survival, resources, and interests whether by peaceful means or by deterrence. However the concept of national interest has two elements, according to Dr. Hans Morgenthau, professor of political science at the University of Chicago. The first is logically required, necessary, and permanent. The second is variable and determined by circumstances.¹⁸ This leads to the necessity of constant reassessments of the national interests with an eye to the future, as Machiavelli advised for wise rulers.

Brazil's Federal Constitution establishes sovereignty as one of the foundational interests of the country. Likewise, it points out the fundamental objectives of the country: to build a free, just and solidary society; to guarantee national development; to eradicate poverty and substandard living conditions; to reduce social and regional inequalities; and to promote the well-being of all, without prejudice as to origin, race, sex, color, age or any other forms of discrimination.¹⁹ That foundational interest is significant to bolster a national identity, and those fundamental objectives are helpful to improve social cohesion, facilitating the emergence of national will.

Additionally, the Brazil's constitution establishes the following principles regarding international relations: national independence; self-determination of the

people; non-intervention; equality among the states; defense of peace; peaceful settlement of conflicts; repudiation of terrorism and racism; and cooperation among peoples for the progress of mankind.²⁰ Those principles reinforce the peaceful mindset of Brazilian institutions as well.

The National Defense Policy (NDP) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS) are legal frameworks that define the strategic position adopted by the country. That position relies on friendship and cooperation with the international community.²¹ Regarding the international arena, the Brazilian Armed Forces are structured by capabilities and not by identified enemies. This leads to a scenario compatible with the growth of Brazil's political and strategic stature that looks to improve the nation's participation in humanitarian actions and peacekeeping operations and to ensure capacity for projecting power, with the objective of eventually participating in other operations established and authorized by the United Nations Security Council.²²

One of the state's primary roles is to provide defense and security to ensure that its citizen's goals can be achieved.²³ Brazil's grand strategy 2030 should first consider its place in the world order. It should seek to develop sustainable alliances that could favor accomplishment of its mission of guaranteeing the sovereignty of the state and the welfare of its citizens. In doing so, it should consider its interests with one eye toward current threats and the other focused on future threats.

Ways and Means to Address National Identity and National Will in the Governance

Identity is "whatever makes a thing what it is, in the philosophical sense."²⁴ To Alexander Wendt, professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, identity is "at base a subjective or unit-level quality, rooted in an actor's self-understandings" into

which two kinds of ideas can enter, “those held by the self and those held by the other.”²⁵ Since it is constituted by both internal and external structures, identity can vary.

The same author defines four kinds of identity: “personal or corporate; type; role; and collective.”²⁶ This essay aims to discuss the first category since personal/corporate identity is a platform for the others kinds of identities. So, personal/corporate identity is “constituted by the self-organizing, homeostatic structures that make actors distinct entities. Each actor can have only one personal/corporate identity which always lies in a material base. In the case of states, that is the people and territory.”²⁷ That is a major point because we are looking for an identity that identifies Brazil as a unique state.

According to Stuart Hall, Jamaican-born cultural theorist, sociologist, and former director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University, “national cultures build national identities by the process that produces senses - stories, memories, and images - of the nation with which the people can identify themselves.”²⁸ This leads to a link between identity and interests, since “without interests identities have no motivational force, and without identities interests have no direction.”²⁹ So, for a young and multicultural country like Brazil, the policies that create or reinforce the narrative that links the present with the past and that can improve its identity in the future will be helpful to face the ongoing challenges up to 2030.

The general will is "always constant, unalterable and pure" and is aimed at the public utility,³⁰ according to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a Francophone Genevan philosopher, composer, and writer. Likewise, in democratic countries like Brazil, the public utility could be understood as a common cause. In fact, according to the Brazilian National War College, the national will is "the synergistic and dialectic combination of all

wills partially manifested democratically in any national community, but legitimately expressed in pursuit of a common cause: the conquest and the maintenance of the National Objectives." Therefore, national interests are the links that legitimate national will.³¹

In addressing Brazilian governance, the Brazilian Military Doctrine of Defense (MDD) reinforces the link between national interests and national will by defining national power as the "ability of all men and means that constitute the nation, acting in accordance with the national will to achieve and maintain the national interests."³² According to the MDD, national power manifests itself in five expressions: political, economic, psychosocial, military, and scientific and technological.

National will and national identity take part in the expression of the psychosocial element of power, which is the predominantly psychological and social manifestation of national power.³³ This element of power is made up of elements such as culture, the welfare of the society, the environment, and the structure of society.³⁴ Alongside with the other expressions, psychosocial element of power aims to contribute to achieving and maintaining national goals.

The Brazilian National Policy of Defense (NPD) is the highest political document regarding the planning of national defense actions by the state. In order to integrate efforts between the various sectors of the Brazilian state that contribute to achieving the objectives of national defense, the NPD highlights that the development of a defense mentality within Brazilian society is fundamental to sensitize it to the importance of threats to the national defense objectives like "sovereignty, national interests, territorial

integrity of the country, preservation of cohesion and national unity, and promotion of regional stability."³⁵

The National Policy of Defense also establishes guidelines which seek to encourage the society's awareness of national defense issues. It seeks to stimulate scientific research, technological development, and the productive capacity of materials and services of interest for defense. It aims to intensify the exchange of the Armed Forces among themselves and with universities, research institutions, and industries.³⁶

Likewise, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) spells out that it is not easy for a country that has had little experience with wars to convince itself of the need to invest in national defense. Therefore, the NDS warns that the whole national strategy rests on the awareness of the Brazilian people about the central importance of defense problems.³⁷ Thus, it is important to highlight that the Brazilian legal framework provides plenty of examples of the paramount relevance of national will and national identity to the achievement of Brazilian national interests. In fact, the NDS states that "the whole national strategy rests on the awareness of the Brazilian people as of central importance to defense issues," stressing that "the Nation should be identified with the cause of defense,"³⁸ which reinforces the importance of national will to the success of the strategy to be adopted.

The Secretary of Social Communication for the Presidency of the Republic is the competent office to deal with national will and national identity within the Brazilian government. Thus, the institutions that make up the federal government's social communication system must pursue the following guidelines to develop its activities: to promote Brazilian self-esteem and to contribute to the understanding of the positioning

and public policies adopted by the Federal Executive Branch.³⁹ At that level, the Secretary should provide the means to bolster national identity and improve the national will.

In the sphere of the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the defense media policy addresses this issue. Its purpose is to "sensitize society about the importance of issues involving threats to sovereignty, national interests and the integrity of Brazil."⁴⁰ Through the Defense Social Communication System and the Defense Social Communication Center, the MoD articulates joint actions and initiatives to improve national defense issues within the scope of Brazilian society. Thus, MoD should be the focal point regarding development, planning, and command and control of, as well as to provide the means to implement, any activity that bolsters national identity and improves national will in the military.

At the Brazilian Army level, the Center for Social Communication is the organization whose mission is develop and coordinate the activities to preservation and dissemination of the image of the Army with society. It should be highlighted, that the peaceful nature of the Brazilian people cannot lead them to believe in the absolute impossibility of conflicts, hence the need to use the resources of the center for Social Communication to cement a defense mentality within the population, in accordance with the intentions of national defense policy.

To summarize, in order to reinforce the Brazil's corporate identity one must address its components: the people and the territory. In addressing the people, it is important to highlight that among the various publics to be considered, the media and the academic milieu should be given particular attention for their ability to drive public opinion. In the internal environment, attention to retirees, pensioners, and civil servants

are also important. National identity, national will, and interests are linked since interests give the direction to the former, and legitimate the latter.

Brazilian governance has plenty of ways and means to address national identity and national will. It needs wise management to make its actions more efficient and effective in the search for the improvement of these important psychosocial instruments of motivation and social cohesion to support the elements of power in pursuing the achievement of the national interests. However, the lack of these beliefs could be dangerous in the future, thus it is important to assess the risks that outcome poses.

The Risks

The Brazilian population, after an extended period without interstate wars, lacks concerns about defense. This subject matter does not play a significant role in the mindset of the Brazilian population even though the country has valuable resources – oil, food, water, and energy - that require protection. The fracturing of national identities trend exacerbates this challenge.⁴¹ As stated in the Brazilian White Papers, “it is the responsibility of the State to provide and guarantee” conditions to protect the country “against the risk of external aggression, of political pressures, or unbearable economic constraints and is freely able to devote itself to development and progress.”⁴²

According to Thucydides, wars are fought for fear, honor, and interests. The following analysis of the risks posed by the lack of national identity and national will in the future will be based on scenarios in which each one of these three elements plays a significant role in order to prevent the disastrous outcomes of war for Brazilian society. These scenarios are also derived from Strategic Foresight Analysis (SFA), a blueprint from NATO Allied Command Transformation that identifies trends that will shape the future strategic context for the Alliance out to 2030 and beyond.⁴³

The first scenario involves Thucydides' issue of fear and the SFA trend where "non-state actors are gaining in status and influence."⁴⁴ Brazil could become the target of Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) that seeks to undermine its participation in peacekeeping operations in regions such as the Middle East and Africa. For example, terrorist groups or VEOs could attack Brazilian peacekeepers abroad or stage attacks in Brazil in an effort to disrupt the country's commitment to peacekeeping missions. Thus, the lack of identity and national will could jeopardize the resilience of society in response to such attacks, endangering national interests such as the repudiation of terrorism, defense of peace, and peaceful settlement of conflicts.⁴⁵

During the Second World War fear played a critical role when thirty-five Brazilians ships were destroyed by German submarines. As a result, more than one thousand Brazilians sailors lost their lives. At that time, Brazilian society was able to maintain its resilience against that adverse situation and support the war effort that culminated with the declaration of war and the participation of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (BEF) in combat in Italy during WW II.⁴⁶ Therefore, the facts and heroes of the past must be remembered by society as a way of strengthening national identity and, in doing so, reinforcing support for the achievement of national interests in such a scenario where fear could compromise the resilience of the national will.

The second scenario involves Thucydides' issue of honor and the SFA trend which states that "the competition for scarce raw materials, food, water, and energy resources, inside or outside traditional Alliance regions, will have global consequences."⁴⁷ According to the Central Intelligence Agency, Brazil could become a global player in a world in which the struggle for resources will increase, competition

could then lead to wars over resources.⁴⁸ In such a scenario, Brazil could face having its territory invaded by one nation or a coalition of aggressive powers of superior economic and military power, using asymmetric warfare and given the consequences of the scarcity wars. In this case, Brazilian society's resilience would be foundational to country's ability maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It is important to highlight that Brazil, as a signatory to the non-proliferation treaty, could not use nuclear deterrence. On the other hand, accounting for only about 1 percent of world trade, Brazilian trade pressures on a higher economic power would likely have little practical result. Thus, a possible solution would require the resilience of the population, which brings us to the critical role played by national identity and national will to resist invaders and break an enemy's will to fight.

According to the French General Andre Beaufre, to win such a war "it is essential that the morale both of those who are fighting and of the population should be raised to and kept at a high level."⁴⁹ This corroborates the importance of fostering in grand strategy a strong national identity as well as a national will that supports the country's defense and maintenance of national interests. Clausewitz stated that "the national character must be suited to that type of war."⁵⁰ Brazilians have shown that character throughout their history since the Battle of Guararapes in 1648, when the people in arms expelled Dutch invaders, a country that, at that time, had one of the most powerful armies in the world.

The third scenario involves Thucydides' issue of interests and the SFA trend which states that "emerging powers will exert increasing global influence. This shift in power may cause instability."⁵¹ If economic growth and development of Brazil greatly

increases on the world stage and is jeopardized in any aspect by leadership of world powers, strong defense policy could be critical in order to achieve national goals.

The lack of a strong national identity and national will to achieve Brazil's interests could be dangerous in the mid or long-term, given the struggle with other global powers in pursuing national interests. Thus, the Minister of Defense recommends in its defense media policy of a campaign to "raise awareness in society about the importance of the issues involving threats to sovereignty, national interests and territorial integrity of Brazil," reinforcing the importance of that subject.⁵²

Similarly, the Brazilian political scientist Eliézer Rizzo Oliveira noted the lack of motivation of Brazilian society regarding defense issues, referring to four factors. First, "overcoming an authoritarian past required society to reject the armed forces and the issues related to it." Second, rulers and legislators seem to believe that "the country does not have defense and security issues, given that Brazil is not the center of economic power or part of any world dispute." Third is the strong "thematic competition between interested parties and civil society; social needs must take top priority at the expense of national defense issues," particularly through the fourth factor's claim that the "social issues require votes, not national defense."⁵³

In this sense, Brazil has to avoid the fate of the Melians in the Peloponnesian War. According to Thucydides, the small island of Melia chose neutrality despite the threats of the Athenian envoys who stated "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."⁵⁴ However, the Melians could not guarantee their decisions because they lacked enough power to do so. As a result, they failed to secure their territorial integrity, and their people were enslaved or brutally killed.⁵⁵ Since the Brazilian

Federal Constitution establishes sovereignty and the well-being of all as foundational interests of the country, Brazil must reinforce its national identity and national will to ensure that all elements of the state's power can secure the national interests. By doing so Brazil can avoid the Melian's fate in the future.

Historical Cases

National identity and national will played a significant role in the development of some countries in the last decades of 20th Century. Thus, historical cases based on the experience of South Africa, South Korea, and the United States provide some lessons learned that could inform Brazilian grand strategy in addressing those two factors. As they deal with the Analytical Cultural Framework for Strategy and Policy (ACFSP), some of its dimensions will be highlighted in each case.⁵⁶

South Africa

The South African experience highlights two paramount points of interests for Brazil grand strategy. The first was the wise leadership of Nelson Mandela. The second, was the creation and the improvement of a new national identity. These two facts were foundational to the development and success of contemporary South Africa because they allowed a fast and peaceful process of reconciliation after apartheid.

As a leader, Mandela created a vision based on an equal society in which all the people could live in peace and support the country's development regardless race, color, or beliefs. After 30 years in jail, Mandela became free and led the fight against apartheid and began articulating his vision.⁵⁷ Mandela later became President of South Africa and gained the ability and power to pursue his vision.⁵⁸ Perhaps more importantly, he inspired the population. That inspiration and the expression of shared goals were foundational in securing the national will to support ending apartheid. It also

helped to avoid unintended second and third orders consequences. For example, Mandela's vision avoided a civil war or violent conflict between black and white people, which could have led to a division of the country. He achieved his vision in large part by crafting a new national identity.

The creation and the improvement of a new national identity was the second interesting point to Brazil. Nelson Mandela used the national rugby team - the Springboks - as a symbol to inspire a new identity of the South Africa among its people.⁵⁹ In fact, only a leader like Mandela could dare to do something like that because rugby was considered the "symbol of white Afrikaner unity."⁶⁰ In 1995, the team made its World Cup debut (they could not compete before given the anti-apartheid sporting boycotts of South Africa) when South Africa hosted the tournament. The Springboks won the World Cup. That victory was the short-term win Mandela needed to consolidate gains and produce more change.

Today South Africa is an emerging regional power and takes part in important multilateral forums like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). The BRICS aims are to seek common ground in political and economic venues, which reinforces South Africa importance in the international arena.⁶¹

The South African experience is relevant to Brazil since it shows the foundational role played by wise leadership to improve, and more importantly, to inspire national will to achieve national interests. Regarding the dimensions of ACFSP, the lesson learned is the importance of a symbol that has the power to represent all the population to secure and enhance the national identity; the role played by South Africa's national rugby team.⁶² Brazil's national soccer team could easily play similar role. It competes

every four years during the FIFA World Cup. Yet Brazil has an enormous advantage: the team is already loved by all Brazilians, unlike the Springboks.

South Korea

The experience of South Korea highlights four important points of interests for Brazil grand strategy: threat awareness, effective leadership, preferential partnership, and culture framework. South Korea has many superpowers in its neighborhood, such as China, Russia, India, and Japan, some of which are nuclear powers. The country fought many wars along its history, which bolstered the resilience of the people as well as their cohesion. More importantly, the country has a very clear enemy just across its border, North Korea.⁶³ Thus, the population easily understands that they have to support the efforts of elements of national power to provide a safe and stable environment where they can live and develop their country.

The role played by leadership in this case was more focused on economic development. Based on a centralized authoritarian leadership, South Korea adopted an economic model based on an exported-oriented strategy of economic development supported by comparative advantages such as stable guidance, and a large pool of cheap but skilled labor.⁶⁴ As a result of that stable environment, South Korea was able to receive massive foreign investments by the United States, as a preferential partner, which allowed it to finance domestic investment to support development. Over time those policies led to spectacular growth and made South Korea an Asian tiger.⁶⁵

The cultural framework of the population was foundational for the achievement of these objectives. Influenced by Confucianism, the population was remarkably resilient to face and overcome its challenges, using its history and its examples as a source of inspiration and mobilization. As a result, today South Korea is a proud member of the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and took a step closer to becoming an economically advanced country with a per capita gross national income that far exceeds that of most of its neighbors, other than Japan and Taiwan.⁶⁶

South Korea's experience could inform Brazil grand strategy in addressing factors like threat awareness, effective leadership, preferential partnership, and cultural framework. Regarding the dimensions of ACFSP, the lesson learned is the importance of a cultural framework that embraces the resilience and bolsters the powerful history of the country.⁶⁷ Also significant was the preferential partnership with the United States, which helped rebuild the country after the Korean War and helped foster economic development.

United States

The United States' experience is relevant to Brazilian grand strategy because of the country's political culture. The U.S. political system has many agencies and departments that are engaged with the defense of national interests, fostering national will and national identity. For example, the foundational role played by Department of State (DoS), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Department of Defense (DoD) – the three D (Diplomacy, Development, Defense) - in promoting and protecting U.S. interests abroad.⁶⁸

Internally, the Department of Veterans Affairs plays a critical role in reinforcing national will in supporting the military element of power. The Department's core mission is to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion. It is designed to be their principal advocate in ensuring that they receive medical care, benefits, and social support in recognition of their service to the Nation.⁶⁹ Besides its institutional role, the department also leverages resources externally by promoting

strategic partnerships with external stakeholders, as companies, associations, and other governmental agencies, ensuring a kind of safety net throughout the U.S. society. That role is significant to the improvement of civil-military relations while promoting shared values, behaviors, and attitudes that reinforce identity and national will in defense of national interests.

Soldier for Life is another comprehensive program to help soldiers from the start of their service until retirement. While serving, the program focuses on stronger technical skills, education, and professional leadership training. Nearer to separation or retirement, it focuses on preparing soldiers for the transition process in order to be "career ready." The program focuses on strengthening communities and inspiring future generations to serve as well.⁷⁰

Another example is the Joining Forces program, a nationwide initiative calling all Americans to rally around service members, veterans, and their families. It seeks to support them through wellness, education, and employment opportunities. Supported by the first lady of the U.S., the program aims to bring attention to the unique experiences and strengths of America's service members, veterans, and their families. Their goals are to inspire, educate, and spark action from all sectors of society to ensure service members, veterans, and their families have the opportunities, resources, and create greater connections between the American public and the military.⁷¹

The U.S. experience is relevant to Brazil since it shows the foundational role played by the elements of the political system such as history, religion, and demography. For instance, the model of commitment and resilience posed by the Valley Forge experience to the U.S. military forces. It is also significant because it shows the

unique U.S. perspective of the world, reinforcing the importance of the strategic culture. Regarding the dimensions of ACFSP, the lesson learned is the importance of an adequate political structure to support the improvement of identity and national will.⁷² Given the example of the 3Ds, the Brazilian Ministry of Defense should promote the improvement of the relationship with Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and Itamaraty – the Brazilian equivalent to the DoS – to foster the defense of national interests in complementary and mutually supporting ways.

Recommendations

Beyond these lessons learned from historical cases, education offers an excellent opportunity to enhance civil-military relations. Thus, the recommendations focus on some programs and initiatives to foster interest in defense issues throughout academia in general and among current and future decision makers, in particular. Additionally, education serves as a powerful tool to bolster national identity and strengthen the national will to defend national interests. In the case of Brazil, that could take place in three levels: high school, graduation, and doctorate-masters.

At the high school level, the focus would be on leadership, history, public speaking, and volunteering. In this case the integration would be done by promoting exchanges between Brazilian Military Schools and other civil educational establishments both public and private. For example, exchange activities would focus on the exercise of leadership in school activities such as choice of class leaders, sports competitions, and participation in school competitions such as International Olympiad in Astronomy and Astrophysics, Robotics, and Mathematics. Another area of focus would be knowing relevant facts and figures of Brazilian history, which could be achieved with the participation in military ceremonies. Also helpful would be participation in simulation

exercises, like the United Nations model, to introduce a discussion of defense issues, international relations, and politics.

At the college level, the focus would be on leadership, history, public speaking, and civil-military relations. In this case, the integration would be done by promoting the exchange between the Reserve Officers Preparation Centers – the Brazilian equivalent of the U.S. Army's Reserve Officers Training Corps - and members of civilian universities. It is important to emphasize that these simple and low-cost activities would be extremely productive with some guidance to achieve the desired goals. For example, these activities would focus on leadership during the execution of small boot camps and orienteering runs. Another area of focus would be the discussion of defense issues by seminars and lectures. Also useful would be the participation in military ceremonies to know relevant facts and figures of our history.

At the graduate level, the goals would be to improve civil-military relations, create shared vision, and seek alignment of efforts in pursuing national interests. These outcomes could be obtained in two ways. First, the integration of civilians in military schools of the highest level, for example, political and strategy courses of the three armed forces. Second, by integrating military personnel into civilian universities. In this case, the priority would be for masters and doctoral degrees focused on the areas of international relations, defense, strategy, and politics. Also in this option, there could be the use of retired personnel with adequate education training to act as teachers in those courses, as well as to foster the creation of centers of strategic studies or think tanks, increasing the level of integration. The partnership between US Southern Command and Florida International University is a very good example of such an initiative.

These recommendations are feasible since the means already exist. However, a coordinated effort between governmental agencies and educational institutions is needed. High level institutional engagement is also required to accomplish these goals. The Ministry of Defense could play such a role. Likewise, the ways of these recommendations are legal, ethical and worthwhile, as they are supported by Brazilian legal framework. However, they face a tough challenge due to the wide range of audiences to be reached, which implies crafting the correct strategy to reach each kind of audience. The ends are challenging but suitable, offering the opportunity to lead a new mindset on defense issues.

Conclusion

Brazil will be a global player in the future. Its abundant natural resources, its territorial area, and its internal market, as well as its multipolar view of the international system support that role. Improving its political culture and strengthening its democracy will support the achievement of this goal. However, the country will face ever increasing antagonisms in achieving its national objectives while developing the nation.

The history of the 21st Century will probably record disputes and conflicts due to the rise of non-state actors, competition for scarce materials and energy resources, and even due to antagonisms against emerging powers. Brazil must prepare for the risks posed by these scenarios by bolstering its national identity and reinforcing its national will to support the instruments of national power in pursuing its national interests. To do so, Brazil should keep an eye on the past remembering the choices made in the Battle of Guararapes, during World War II, and in the Cold War. The nation must also keep another eye on the future to secure its territory and resources while seeking preferential partnerships.

The attitudes of Brazilian society towards defense issues is foundational to overcoming these difficulties. Avoiding defense related issues risks becoming a modern day Melia. The nation must use the political culture and its tools to show society the real need for a strong defense policy as a way to achieve national interests. Brazil must overcome this challenge by improving its strategic view to define its position on the global stage in the future without losing its mindset of peacefulness. It must also make sure its defense expenditures correspond to its economic status. The country can achieve that by increasing the resilience of society, since, as pointed out by the ACFSP, “nation-state identity is usually artificially or deliberately created rather than deriving as the natural and spontaneous consequences of a nation’s history.”⁷³

Historical cases show the importance of risk awareness, leadership, preferential partnerships, and cultural framework to galvanize national identity and improve national will. They also highlight the critical role played by strategic culture and political culture to make these efforts sustainable. Given those examples, Brazil must improve its civil-military relations using strategic communications and the educational system to address selected stakeholders in order to bolster national identity and reinforce national will in support of instruments of national power.

National identity and national will are the insurance policies of the country against future threats. In the past, Brazil has been able to find the best answers to overcome its challenges in moments of crisis. Currently, the country has achieved a position that enables it to aspire to more significant roles on the global stage. Thus, inspired by its history and confident in its present, Brazil should eliminate fear and maintain the honor of its citizens in order to achieve its national interests in the future.

Endnotes

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