

In fact, both main political organizations, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Democratic National Union (UDN), largely controlled by traditionalist elements, also ignored the mounting social problem. But Vargas recognized the political potential of the new social classes. Resorting to demagogic techniques, he posed as the champion of the downtrodden, launched a new organization, the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), and won the 1950 presidential elections.

Though the armed forces permitted Vargas to assume the presidency, they kept an extremely short rein on him. Faced with a moderate-conservative opposition majority in Congress, he was powerless, by constitutional means, to fulfill his campaign promises. As the country's economic deterioration and political stagnation continued, Vargas tried desperately to intrigue his way out of his constitutional limitations by manipulating strikes and by directing the pressure of the masses against existing institutions. But the generals became increasingly restless. Late in 1954, the army stepped in and forced the President to resign, whereupon he committed suicide.

The government then passed into the hands of a caretaker administration while the nation girded itself for the 1955 presidential elections. In an atmosphere of severe political and social tension, these were won by a PSD-PTB coalition ticket headed by Vargas' supporter Juscelino Kubitschek, who was opposed by the armed forces.

In obvious fear of the latter, the Kubitschek administration, since taking office in 1956, has refrained from encouraging any further leftward political evolution in Brazil. Meanwhile, the economic situation has grown steadily worse. A spirit of sensitive nationalism prevents the administration from freeing the country's economy from retarding nationalistic and monopolistic restrictions. An anti-inflationary program, badly needed to promote sound development of the economy, is viewed as politically suicidal, particularly in view of the upcoming 1960 presidential elections. Finally, the decline of the coffee market has added to, and compounded, the nation's economic woes.

CHILE

Chile is politically unique in South America (along with Uruguay) in that it has strong democratic traditions and institutions and a non-political military organization. Political changes in this country occur in an orderly constitutional manner. The Radical Party, a middle-class organization which received substantial support from labor, supplied the nation's president during World War II, and its candidate, González Videla, also won the 1946 elections.

The González Videla administration (1946-52), however, soon began to lose the support of labor as its overhasty industrialization program produced runaway inflation and severe economic hardships for all lower income groups. Exploiting politically the nation's economic crisis, former strong man and independent candidate, Carlos Ibáñez, won the 1952 elections on a platform that promised nearly all things to all men. During his 6-year term of office (1952-58), however, he was able to do virtually nothing toward fulfilling these campaign promises. A badly splintered Congress prevented positive legislative action, and Ibáñez's attempts to have the army intervene to strengthen