PM

AUGUST 23, 1942

Brazil, Biggest Latin American Nation, Goes to War

U. S. A. Helping Preparedness Program . . . Naval Strength to Be Doubled

Geographically, Brazil is the biggest country in the Western Hemisphere, but its army and navy are pitifully small for a nation of 45,000,000 people.

For the last year, Brazil has been training and building at top speed, with liberal help from the U. S. A., against the day when it would take its place with the United Nations in the war against the Axis powers.

Brazil's fighting strength today is, of course, a military secret. Two years ago it had an army of 60,000 men and a navy of 14,000, with a fleet consisting of two battleships, two light cruisers, eight destroyers, three submarines, and some smaller vessels.

That 1940 army could be swelled from reserves and state militia to 285,000 men. With a population of 45,000,000, Brazil could draft an army of 1,500,000 men, if it had guns for them.

During the last year, large quantities of arms and material have reached Brazil from the U. S. A. for development of defenses at vital ports and construction of airdromes to guard Brazil's 5700 miles of seacoast.

In addition, Brazil and the U. S. A. have signed a trade agreement whereby Brazil's army gets needed war equipment in exchange for raw materials needed in the U. S. A.

At the same time, Brazil has undertaken to double the strength of its navy, appropriating $150,000,000 to build cruisers, destroyers and submarines of Brazilian material with Brazilian labor.

In spite of its exposed position, Brazil occupies a strong strategic position because of its vast quantities of food and raw materials. The fleet, while small, is of considerable importance. In the last war a Brazilian squadron patrolled the Atlantic. Recently, Brazilian planes helped U. S. bombers destroy a U-boat.

These Brazilian soldiers, resting during maneuvers in the Parahyba Valley last Spring, are typical of the young men who make up Brazil's Army. Most of them are draftees, drawn from the families of the peasant poor in a country where illiteracy is estimated at 60 per cent. The officers are drawn from better families and are well-trained.

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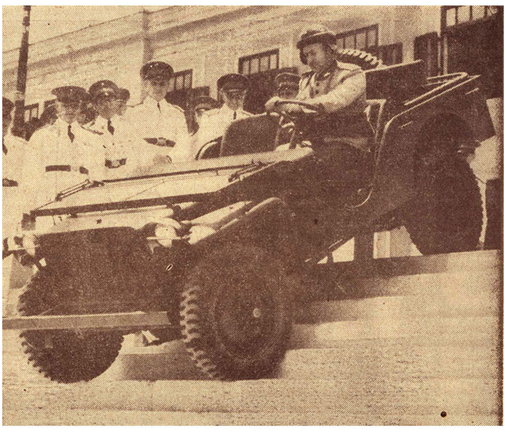
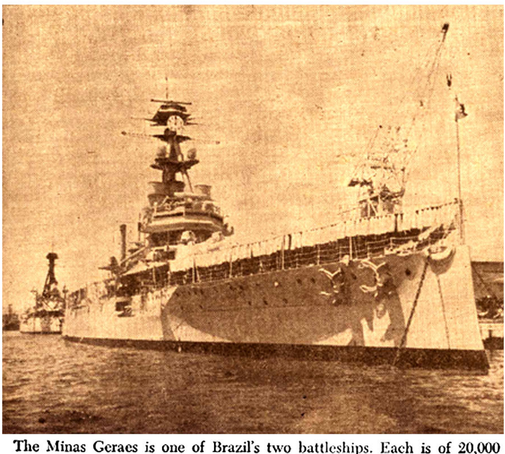
Brazil Goes to War

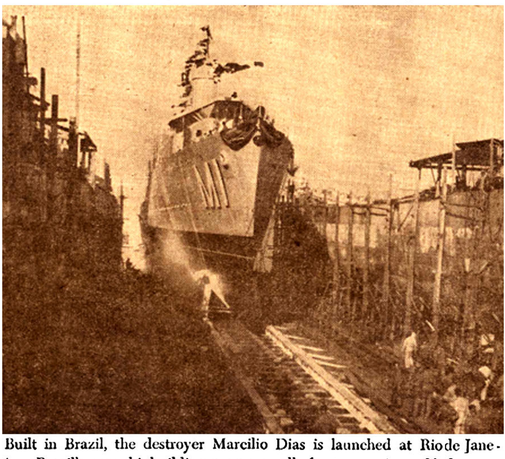


One of a fleet of U. S. Army scout cars recently delivered under a trade agreement whereby the U.S.A. furnishes modern army equipment in return for strategic raw materials.

Brazilian cavalrymen on their way to the Spring war games. The country's peacetime army had only three cavalry divisions with a with a total personnel of 9000.



The Minas Geraes is one of Brazil's two battleships. Each is of 20,000 tons and has a main battery of 12 12-inch guns. Brazil now has its own shipyards and is working overtime to double its naval strength.



Built in Brazil, the destroyer Marcilio Dias is launched at Riode Janeiro. Brazil's new shipbuilding program calls for two cruisers, 20 destroyers and six submarines.

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Brazil, like most nations, has been concentrating on air power. This group of modern training planes are flying high over Campo Los Affonsos, near Rio de Janiero. Brazil has been training hundreds of pilots at Campo Los Affonsos, using U. S.-made planes exclusively. Many of the pilots have been given basic instruction at U. S. Army air bases to prepare themselves for their part in hemisphere defense.

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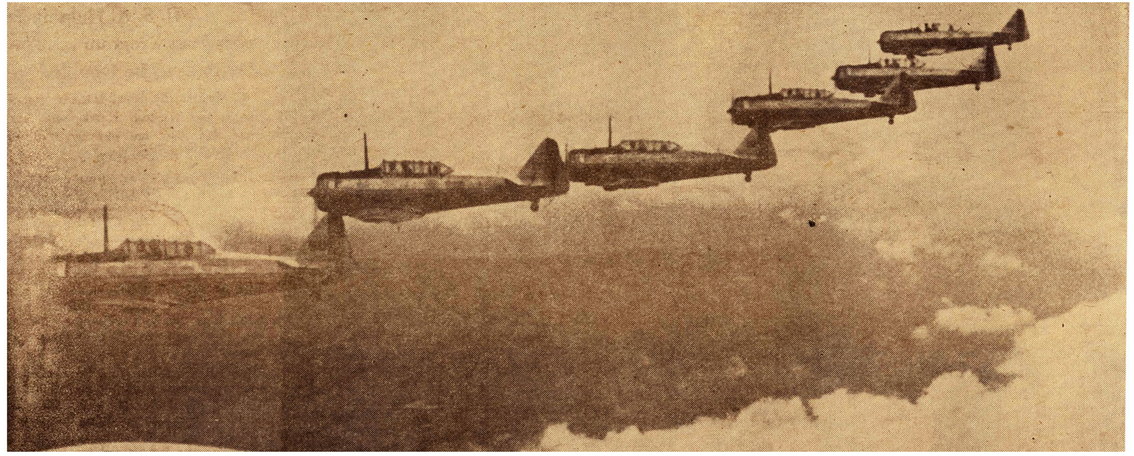
Brazil Builds Up Its Army for War With Axis