

REPRESSION AND RESISTANCE: the great press in Brasília during the Military Dictatorship (1964-1985)

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REPRESIÓN Y RESISTENCIA: la gran prensa en Brasília durante la dictadura militar (1964-1985)

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ABSTRACT:

Censorship in the Military Dictatorship has its origins in the processes of repression of the press institutionalized in the Estado Novo. In the military government, in addition to prior censorship, there was also a widespread repression on the media, based on methods such as: surveillance, harassment and punishment of journalists, and coercion of the press through tax audits and advertising control, among other means. The paper aims to analyze the relationship between the great national press, leading local press and journalists based in Brasília, with the censorship apparatus of the military regime. Based on an exploratory and descriptive research, with a qualitative approach, it used archival materials from institutions and truth commissions, as well as interviews with journalists. The paper concludes that despite the repression of the great press in Brasília, there were also resistance initiatives.

KEYWORDS: Censorship; Great press; Brasília; Military dictatorship; Press Freedom.

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Introduction

Censorship has been used systematically in Brazil in different political periods, mainly when authoritarian governments were installed in the country. As an example, the Press and Propaganda Department (DIP) was created during *Estado Novo* (1937-1945)¹ to institutionalize and systematize censorship of the press and public entertainment. One of DIP's famous actions against the press was the invasion and takeover of the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*, in March 1940, controlling it for five years (SMITH, 2000). Many of the characteristics of censorship in Estado Novo survived after the end of the government and were maintained after the Brazilian Military Dictatorship (1964-1985), including the

¹ Estado Novo was the Brazilian political regime established by Getúlio Vargas in 1937.

prohibition of publications considered as a threat to the political and social order, and the criteria for censoring public entertainment. Minimal change was seen from DIP to its successor, the Public Entertainment Censorship Service which was responsible for censoring public entertainment in the Military Dictatorship, and which became the Division of Censorship on Public Entertainment (DCDP), in 1972.

Censorship in the Military Dictatorship was diffused and employed various ways for repressing the press. During that time, censorship to public entertainment was legalized by DCDP which controlled content based on morality matters. At the same time, a secret face of censorship was employed by the Ministry of Justice which dictated what political content could be published by the press.

Furthermore, other methods of coercion and intimidation to the press were employed during the Military Regime, such as surveillance, arrest, prosecution and torture of journalists; tax audits; and control of government advertising and loans from public banks and other financing, which were released in accordance with the collaboration and subordination of the newspaper or magazine to the regime.

There was also interference in the sale and distribution of printed copies, such as apprehensions of publications, arrest of sellers, and attacks on newsstands.

In the present work, all measures of repression against the press were considered as tools of the censorship apparatus as they were adopted to coerce and dissuade journalists and the media, enforcing them to produce information aligned with the government's interest only. In this sense, various methods were employed with the direct or indirect purpose of "prohibition on publishing and disseminating ideas, news, images and concepts that [were] considered by the authorities as elements capable of shaking the government's authority, or the order social and moralities", in accordance to the concept of censorship presented by Cunha and Cavalcanti (2008, p. 76).

Still with respect to repression, it is important to analyze the idiosyncrasy of the relationship between the leading local press, branches of major Brazilian newspapers in Brasília and journalists based in the city with the censorship apparatus of the military regime. As the federal capital, it emerged in Brasília, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, a symbiotic condition between journalistic practice and government sources. At the same time, there was a governance and a local citizen experience in which a city resident could have contact with the federal government to the same extent as other Brazilians, as if they were residents of any other city in the country.

Due to the lack of research on the theme of censorship with the same variation in time and space, including about Brasília, an exploratory-descriptive study was carried out

to understand the repression of the press that took place in the city. The qualitative research was a result of documentary analysis of archival materials available at the National Archives (AN), court proceedings conducted in the Superior Military Court (STM) available in the project *Brasil: Nunca Mais*², and the final reports of the National Truth Commission (CNV), the Memory and Truth Commission of the Union of Professional Journalists of the Federal District (SJP-DF), and the National Truth Commission of Journalists. The study also carried out interviews with journalists Armando Sobral Rollemberg and Hélio Marcos Prates Doyle, regarding the role of journalists in the Military Dictatorship.

Censorship in the Brazilian Military Dictatorship (1964-1985)

Censorship has been going on for a long time in Brazil, and dates to the beginning of the Brazilian colonial period. It is also the reason for the late arrival of the press in the country in 1808 (CARNEIRO, 2002). Despite being revoked in 1821, censorship controlled the press during the First Reign (1822-1831), as in the case of the persecution of journalists and newspapers by Minister of Foreign Affairs José Bonifácio in order to punish those who confronted D. Pedro I. (NUNES, 2010). The Brazilian Republic is born under the sign of censorship with incidents of “jamming”³ newspapers considered monarchists (MARTINS, 2008). Similarly, the Department of Press and Propaganda (DIP) was created during Vargas Government, in 1939, which was the censor body of the period and which also served as a basis for censoring public entertainment during the Military Dictatorship (GOULART, 1990).

During the military regime, a repression apparatus was created to monitoring, pursuing, and punishing the government's political enemies. Censorship by the Division of Censorship on Public Entertainment (DCDP) and the Office Information Service (SIGAB) of Ministry of Justice was one of the three parts of the repressive system, along with information collection and surveillance/repression, in charge by the departments of political and social order (DOPS), the Military Intelligence and the DOI/CODI system (Center for Internal Defense Operations - Deployment of Operations and Information) (NAPOLITANO, 2014). Over two decades, the military regime adapted itself to the new circumstances that were arising, both with the purpose of institutionalizing itself, as well

² The English version of the book was published by the University of Texas Press, in 1998, and is entitled *Torture in Brazil: A Shocking Report on the Pervasive Use of Torture by Brazilian Military Governments, 1964-1979*.

³ Jamming (from the original *empastelamento*): confused piled up of typefaces. Mix of types (FARIA & PERICÃO, 2008, p. 278).

as facing challenges. However, despite the adaptation, the double goal of security and development were maintained, in the sense of obtaining control and eradicating conflicts, as well as stimulating economic growth at any price (SMITH, 2000).

During repressive incidents with the cultural sector, the censorship processes were articulated in different ways regarding structure and targets. Due to the general impression that political intervention could be brief, the early years of the military government did not demand censorship services as much. Between 1964 and 1968, it existed in isolated ways, as in the case of the shutting down of the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* (FICO, 2002).

Censorship of the press was intensified and became routine after the implementation of Institutional Act Number 5 (AI-5), on December 13, 1968 (FICO, 2002). In this second stage, censorship of public entertainment was structured in accordance to the Censorship Law, from November 1968, and the Decree-Law No. 1,077, of January 1970, which established censorship and centralization of the censorship process at the DCDP, in Brasília, in 1972. Regarding the press, censorship of news was mainly carried out through "little notes"⁴ from the Office Information Service (SIGAB) of Ministry of Justice (NAPOLITANO, 2014). The third stage of repression started with the end of censorship, in 1978, in which censorship emphasized morality matters, cooling police control over cultural opposition to the regime (NAPOLITANO, 2014).

The censorship of public entertainment diverged from the censorship of the press. The first one was legalized, while the latter was exercised by the military government in a shameful way, to the extent that, for some time, the government did not admit its use (FICO, 2002). In this sense, Doberstein (2007) argues that there was an official censorship, carried out by the DCDP, and a clandestine one, mainly carried out by SIGAB. The censorship made by DCDP was bureaucratic at two levels: a preventive (censorship) and a punitive one (court proceedings); allying itself with a coercive censorship exercised by the radical wing of the Army and by the police, mainly produced by Department of Political and Social Order (DOPS) (BERG, 2019). In another hand, "the censorship of the press was implemented through confidential guidelines, written or not" (FICO, 2002, p. 258).

⁴ The "little notes" were taken to each newspaper by a lower-level police officer. (...) The little note was presented to a member of the newspaper's staff, someone with a certain degree of responsibility. Whoever received it, copied its content, and it was not allowed to make a copy, even of longer prohibitions (SMITH, 2000, p. 141).

In general, the censorship of public entertainment regarded themes of behavior or morality, while the censorship of the press concerned itself, more frequently, with political subjects. However, censors specializing in political censorship did not refrain from objecting to nudity, for example, as well DCDP censors were also always on the lookout for political issues. With the difference that moral censorship was proudly assumed in the Division, but the use of censorship on public entertainment regarding political issues was treated in a confidential manner and caused discomfort to censors (FICO, 2002). Therefore, the moral censorship practiced by the DCDP was known to the public while the political censorship exercised on the press, both by the Division of Censorship on Public Entertainment and SIGAB, was confidential. The newspapers could not question it or indicate its existence to the readers.

In addition to the censorship applied to the press, the military regime also had a series of other types of control over journalistic companies and journalists, called by Smith (2000), as "diffuse animosity". The author argues that such actions were so widespread in the regime that they did not need a central direction or coordination, consisting, among other things, of pressures against newspaper companies, based on the blocking of publicity and public funding. Or even, making use of seizures of newspaper copies; pressure on owners, directors and journalists through legal proceedings; or denial of credentials to professionals to cover government agencies; including the kidnapping and torturing of those who publish "subversive" information. For this study, all forms of interference in the production and circulation of news were considered as parts of the censorship apparatus. As a result, it identified several "diffuse animosity" actions used in the territory of the Federal District against journalistic associations, journalists, and the media.

The great press in Brasília

The mainstream press during the period of Military Dictatorship consisted of traditional newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations, from the main cities in the country, mainly São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, which had the most widely circulated and reputable media companies. However, all other large and medium-sized cities also had their newspapers. In terms of style and presentation of the news, the mainstream press was commonly classified as liberal, just as its political identity was in the sense of supporting the status quo, as it was the case, for example, with the newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo*, *O Estado de S. Paulo*, *Jornal do Brasil* and *O Globo* (SMITH, 2000).

Regarding the function of the press in Brasília, it is important to note that all major media had branches in the city since it was the headquarters of the Federal Government. At the beginning, journalists came from other cities and settled in the newly opened capital to meet the professional demand of that time. Catanhêde (1993) reveals that the journalist's choice to work in Brasília was generally related to the professional and financial advantages that were offered in the city. Among the benefits were: a higher salary, more than twice that of other places; the possibility of living well and almost for free in the properties provided by *Nova Capital (Novacap)*; the financing of private vehicles by some newspapers; in addition to the possibility of double job, working in the press and featherbedding in public agencies.

“All journalists were also civil servants”, says Evandro Carlos de Andrade. Castelinho was a DNER attorney, Fernando Pedreira was a chancellery officer at the Itamaraty, and Evandro himself, was a treasurer of the Ministry of Finance, until 1971. This is just to open a list that would save virtually nobody from the old days of Brasília” (CATANHÊDE, 1993, p. 83).

In Brasília, even local journalism was, almost always, national journalism, so that these circumstances led to the emergence of “special relations” between newspaper owners, branch directors of affiliated broadcasters, and the different sectors of the Republic's branches (LIMA, 1993). For example, the magazine *Fatos e Fotos* was created through a promise made to the President of Brazil, Juscelino Kubitschek (JK), by Adolfo Bloch, president of Bloch Publishers, that he would establish a tabloid in the country's new capital.

The symbiotic relationship that came from the JK government (1956-1961) with *Fatos e Fotos* certainly continued in the military regime. A document from the National Information Service (SNI), dated October 28, 1971⁵, to the Minister of Justice, denounced that two magazines of the Bloch Publishers group, *Manchete* and *Fatos e Fotos*, together with *Realidade* magazine, had published stories exalting Mao Tsé-Tung's communist China: “the stories which were published show[ed], almost exclusively, positive aspects of COMMUNIST CHINA in all sectors, from cultural progress to improving people's living standards”. The document also presents the privileged relationship of these magazines with the censorship system, as showing the existence of handshake deal between the directors of these magazines with the Federal Police Department (DPF). They would not

⁵ Document available at the National Archive (AN), reference code: BR RJANRIO TT.0.MCP, AVU.249.

be censored in advance if committing themselves to publish stories in accordance with the Government's political view only⁶.

The magazine *Fatos e Fotos* was again denounced to the Minister of Justice, in 1977, by a judge of the Court of Minors of São Paulo. According to the magistrate, the edition n°. 818, dated April 25, 1977, brought three stories that violated moral principles: "Woman with a woman does not work", "Regarding the Death Squad" and "The Englishman Michel Ireland killed the girl". He also presented a statement from the Press and Literature Advisory, which attested:

"these three stories are against moral principles. In our view, these stories should not appear in magazines, or any other open access disclosure agency, because, in addition to not contributing to the solution of the problems presented, they are terrible examples to anyone. And, moreover, it is scientifically proven that people who are apparently normal, but potentially abnormal, find in these examples a reason to externalize their abnormalities. It is common for these abnormalities to repeat after they are released in the press."

In response to the complaint, DCDP's director informed the judge⁷ that a warning was forwarded to Bloch Editores SA, affirming that the magazine would be sent to censorship if they continued to publish that type of story.

The relationship between the journalist and sources was symbiotic in Brasilia, mainly because they were mostly official sources, composed of bureaucrats from the "first echelon" of the federal government (LIMA, 1993). Furthermore, in addition to the repeated contact with a small number of sources of the same type and the existence of few consolidated journalists, analysts and political commentators in this function in Brasilia, Lima (1993) highlights the social and/or geographical proximity as one of the factors which contributed to the symbiosis. Also, even kinship could arise in this context due to the city offering limited leisure options, with journalists or their children attending the same schools and universities, the same restaurants, clubs and living in the same neighborhoods as their main sources or their children. For this reason, the author stresses that it is necessary to take into account these professional and social implications in the

⁶ Resolution n°. 209, of April 16, 1973, determined that magazines should register with the DPF and could be released from censorship. It could be revoked if "reasons justified by the interest of public morality arise". However, in accordance with the document, liberation seems to be an atypical attitude in 1971.

⁷ Report, statement, and response of the DCDP available at AN, fonds Division of Public Entertainment Censorship, section Censorship, series Publications, with reference code: BR DFANBSB NS.CPR.PUB.338.

journalist's practice and/or in the construction of news in Brasília, especially in a country where prevails the hierarchical authority of "do you know who you are talking to?"

Some of the trained and active journalists in the city also had a direct kinship with people at the highest government level which sometimes influenced the interaction between these professionals and the repressive bodies. In a testimony given to Memory and Truth Commission of the Union of Professional Journalists of the Federal District (SJP-DF)⁸, journalist Hélio Marcos Prates Doyle described a situation that illustrates the distinctive treatment that could exist in Brasília. In September 1970, agents of the Federal Police (PF) went to the *Correio Braziliense* where Hélio worked at the time and said they would take him to give evidence. After a maneuver by his boss who said he would be released only after the end of his shift, Hélio had time to make phone calls, including to his father, Hélio Proença Doyle, minister of the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) at that time. Hélio was taken to the Army's Criminal Investigations Squad (PIC) and personally interviewed by General Antônio Bandeira. After being released, his father told him that he was listening to the interrogation in the room next to the one where he was. This situation was only possible due to the intervention of ministers of the Supreme Federal Court (STF), with whom his father had a good relationship. According to his testimony, there was intervention by the ministers Oswaldo Trigueiro⁹ e Vilas Boas¹⁰, who was even his neighbor, and minister Gallotti¹¹. Regarding the episode, Hélio also included: "naturally this happened due to the interference of these ministers of the Supreme Federal Court, a privilege that we could have here in Brasília, due to this situation" (DOYLE, 2013).

Something similar was reported by the journalist Armando Sobral Rollemberg¹² regarding his arrest in 1973. When he left the building where magazine *Veja* operated, he was arrested and sent to the car parking of the Army Ministry. However, beforehand, he managed to ask the magazine's driver to inform his boss, Pompeu de Souza, that he was being taken to censorship. Later, Armando found out that Pompeu was with the director of *Jornal do Brasil*, Carlos Castello Branco, at that time, and together they called several political figures, who intervened for his release. He learned of the appeals made, for example, by congressmen Francelino Pereira and Thales Ramalho, who were also his

⁸ Interview available at the National Truth Commission (CNV) archives at AN, with reference code: BR RJANRIO CNV.0.DPO.00092000405201470/4. (DOYLE, 2013).

⁹ Oswaldo Trigueiro de Albuquerque Mello, STF minister between 1965-1975.

¹⁰ Antônio Martins Vilas Boas, STF minister between 1957-1966. Therefore, he was already retired at the time of Hélio Doyle's arrest.

¹¹ Luiz Octavio Pires e Albuquerque Gallotti, STF minister between 1949-1974.

¹² Interview given to the author on 19 Feb. 2020 (ROLLEMBERG, 2020).

sources. As well, he had the support of his father, Armando Leite Rollemberg, who was minister of the Federal Court of Appeals (TFR) at the time and who spoke personally with General Antônio Bandeira, head of the DPF (ROLLEMBERG, 2013, 2020)¹³.

Even though there were such “privileges”, journalists from Brasilia had their careers affected by government persecution, with episodes of dismissals and restrictions on professional practice due to the stories they published and their political militancy. In an interview, both Hélio Doyle and Armando Rollemberg recollected that one of the retaliations they were subjected to regarded the failure to receive credentials to cover some government agencies, such as the Planalto Palace, the military ministries and the Itamaraty (DOYLE, 2020; ROLLEMBERG, 2020). Such restrictions mainly related to their past political actions from the student movement in high school and university.

For instance, Hélio reported that while working for the journal *O Estado de S. Paulo*, he covered Itamaraty without credentials, based on a gentlemen's agreement, from July 1971 to the end of 1972, and even making two international trips with Minister Gibson Barbosa¹⁴. However, a suspicion about him began due to his arrest and of his wife at the time. During a trip to Africa, where he was going to accompany the minister again, his presence was forbidden and he was prohibited to fly on a plane from Brazilian Air Force (FAB) due to a detention associated to his wife's relations with the political organization *Ação Popular* (DOYLE, 2013, 2020). After being definitively removed from covering Itamaraty, he started to cover the National Congress and in parallel, doing the international coverage for *Estadão*. In one of these covers, he was arrested again whilst visiting the Press Association of Uruguay, in 1973. After the coup in that country's government, the police started to detain everyone who arrived there. That is why, the PF asked the newspaper not to send him abroad anymore. Another episode about the issuance of credentials that Hélio revealed was related to the coverage he did in the Presidency of the Republic, in 1976, where he was replacing a colleague and had a provisional credential for a month, but when *Folha de S. Paulo* asked for a definitive credential for him, it was denied (DOYLE, 2013, 2020).

Denial of credentials was one of the processes used by the military regime to coerce journalists. In addition to the cases of Hélio Doyle and Armando Rollemberg, mentioned above, it appears that restrictions on coverage of certain areas of the government were

¹³ Interview available at the National Truth Commission (CNV) archives at AN, with reference code: BR RJANRIO CNV.0.DPO.00092000405201470/3. (ROLLEMBERG, 2013).

¹⁴ Mario Gibson Alves Barbosa started his diplomatic career in 1939, and was Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1969-1974 (FUNDAÇÃO GETÚLIO VARGAS [FGV], 2009a).

widely used with journalists covering politics from Brasília. In a document from SNI¹⁵, dated May 5, 1980, there is a newspaper clipping from *Jornal de Brasília*, of April 1, 1980, where journalist Carlos Castello Branco, president of the Union of Professional Journalists in DF, enquired about the Army Ministry's refusal to give credentials to journalist Rosalba Ribeiro da Matta Machado. The credentials had been requested by the magazine *Isto É*, and received, as a return, from the head of the Public Relations Office of that body, a refusal without any clarification, only stating that they "had no justifications to show".

An article by *Jornal de Brasília* also confirmed that the same procedure was used with other journalists, such as José Seabra Neto, from *Folha de S. Paulo*, Juarez Pires da Silva¹⁶, and Maria Olga Curado from the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*, whose credential was revoked for publishing articles that displeased sectors of the Ministry. According to the report, the denial was revealed to Maria Olga verbally, as usual, and informed that from the following day she would no longer be able to attend the Ministry of the Army. Therefore, in accordance with the *Jornal de Brasília* article, the attitude of the Ministry consisted of "arbitrary acts, which the authorities have become accustomed to, [attitudes that] do not correspond [to] the spirit of democratization promised by the current government", aiming to "intimidate accredited journalists in the area, forcing them to publish only information that is convenient to the occasional bosses".

Violations of press freedom and the professional practice of journalists in Brasília went beyond the government's refusal of credentials and existed in other models of persecution and repression. In a survey available in the Preliminary Report of the Memory and Truth Commission of SJP-DF, the restrictions were:

- a) presence of censors in newsrooms
- b) censorship of journalistic content (texts and images)
- c) confiscation of equipment or journalistic content (tapes, films, and reports)
- d) breach of confidentiality in correspondence and telephone conversations
- e) violation of the content of reports sent by telex or postal mail
- f) veto over the participation of professionals in the coverage of certain events or areas of government
- g) surveillance of journalists
- h) psychological pressures
- i) surveillance of associative actions by the Union of Professional Journalists of the Federal District and the Brasília Press Club
- j) damage to equipment and cars owned by professionals
- k) pressure on newspaper companies to sack or not hire journalists

¹⁵ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.80007626.

¹⁶ The article does not inform where he worked.

According to the testimonies collected by the Memory and Truth Commission of SJP-DF, persecutions were made to some journalists mainly because of their student activism and political ties, being difficult to establish a direct causality with their professional practice. For example, in the arrests of Hélio Doyle and Armando Rollemberg, they recognized that the episodes were not related to journalism directly, except for Hélio's arrest in Uruguay (DOYLE, 2020; ROLLEMBERG, 2020). However, it is also possible to observe, in some cases, that a publishing of an article triggered a series of repressive reactions.

Repression on journalistic practices

The journalist José Fábio de Andrade Mendes left his newspaper column at *Correio Braziliense* due to censorship, as stated in the SNI document of August 3, 1972¹⁷. The document shows the effect of censorship on the profession of a journalist, to the point of having to resign due to the cuts he suffered, also revealing how the press was monitored by the government. The document is part of a nine-page dossier on the journalist. Monitoring by law enforcement agencies was the most cited violation of rights in the survey carried out by the Ministry of Justice's Amnesty Commission and handed over to the National Truth Commission of Journalists, representing 32% of the 129 cases of persecution (FEDERAÇÃO NACIONAL DOS JORNALISTAS [FENAJ], n.d.).

Arrests and firings of journalists were also part of the daily lives of these professionals in Brasília with the government repressing who published something they did not approve. For instance, Carlos Chagas responded to three investigations carried out by the Military Police while he was the director of the Brasília branch of the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*. The first one related to a note by *Estadão* on a young doctor who had been kidnapped and beaten by hooded men in the cerrado. The day after the news, a sergeant from the Planalto Military Command went to the newsroom and asked who was responsible for the note. Chagas replied that since the note was not signed, it was his responsibility. For refusing to hand over the name of the note's author, Chagas was arrested and sent to Army Headquarters (CATANHÊDE, 1993). In another case, he also refused to disclose the name of the author and the sources of a report on the military invasion of University of Brasília, in 1977. For that reason, Chagas was prosecuted again in a Military Police investigation, based on the National Security Law and in the Press Law. The case was subsequently dismissed by the military justice (FGV, 2009c).

¹⁷ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.72048811.

In 1975, Luiz Gutemberg also felt the state's repression when he was surrounded by agents, taken to an underbrush, and pressured to confess the source of a story. During this period, Gutemberg worked for the *Jornal de Brasília* and despite the intimidation, he did not reveal that his source was Robert, the son of General Médici (DOYLE, 2013, 2020).

Hélio Doyle told in an interview that another case in which Gutemberg was involved concerns the news on September 7, 1975. As *Jornal de Brasília* did not come out on Monday and Brazil's independence celebration took place on Sunday, he asked the reporter Elizabeth Teixeira to do an impressionist story, so that the celebration would not go unnoticed in Tuesday's edition. In her story, she reported two cases; in the first one she recounted that an admiral had fallen off a horse, and questioned what this admiral, a Navy officer, did on a horse? In the second one she stated that, after all, the trash was left on the street (DOYLE, 2013, 2020). Due to these statements, the military viewed their story as a criticism of the Armed Forces and started to pressurize the newspaper to fire the reporter. To avoid Elizabeth's dismissal, Gutemberg tried, as a subterfuge, to publish fake letters from readers criticizing the story, so that an editorial note would come out apologizing to the Armed Forces, and saying that the report had been done with a training team. However, the Army did not accept it and the company had to sack the journalist. The event was accompanied by the resignation of more than twenty professionals from *Jornal de Brasília*, in solidarity with their colleague and in protest at the measure taken by the newspaper (DOYLE, 2013, 2020).

As well as Elizabeth, journalist Antônio Carlos Scartezini was also fired from the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*, in 1977, due to an article he wrote. The article stated that congressman Sinval Boaventura¹⁸ told one of his sources that he would vote for Geisel's candidate - Figueiredo (Chief of the SNI at that time) in the fight for presidential succession, despite supporting Silvio Frota (Minister of the Army) openly. As a result, in the following day, *Estadão* announced that the congressman denied that information, and stated - without even consulting Scartezini, a solid and reliable source - that the Brasília branch committed a mistake. The journalist was on a trip when news of the newspaper's retraction came out and before returning to Brasília, he was informed that he had been fired. The dismissal was a request of General Silvio Frota who asked it directly to the director of *Estadão* (SCARTEZINI, n.d.).

Media reports about government's repression could cost the responsible journalist dearly. For example, the arrest of D'Alembert Jaccoud, in August 1971, was the reason he

¹⁸ Sinval Boaventura was Federal Deputy to Arena Party between 1967-1975 (CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS, n.d.).

stopped working in journalism for a while. His arrest was due to information he passed to the *New York Times* on the assassination of former congressman Rubens Paiva by repression agencies. A telegram from the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the United States Department of State, on August 21, 1971¹⁹, reports that *New York Times's* correspondent in Rio de Janeiro, Joe Novitski, went to Brasília to investigate D'Alembert's arrest. The telegram confirmed that D'Alembert was arrested due to his assistance to a communist to install rural terrorist cells in Brazil, although Novitski's assumption was that D'Alembert was arrested due to the authorities attributing him the responsibilities for Rubens Paiva's articles. Another letter from the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro to the United States Department of State, of September 27, 1971²⁰, describes the conversation between lawyer Claudio Lacombe and the American Ambassador of Salvador, Alexander F. Watson. Lacombe affirmed that the accusations of D'Alembert being with a Chilean terrorist in the apartment of former congressman Márcio Moreira Alves were obtained through a confession signed by a whistleblower who was allegedly tortured. Therefore, he also believed that D'Alembert was still in prison because of the information he had passed to the *New York Times* on the death of Paiva. D'Alembert's widow, Gioconda Metoni, testified to the Memory and Truth Commission of SJP-DF:

"his arrest was due to the *New York Times* article, because he told of the arrest of Eunice [Rubens Paiva's wife] and their thirteen-year-old girl, as. Because Eunice came to Brasília to hear news and he accompanied her, he tried to deliver a letter to Médici, which was a difficulty, and really tells everything in detail" (METONI, n.d., p. 82).

As a result of his arrest, D'Alembert was dismissed from *Jornal do Brasil*, from the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (Incra), where he was the editor, and later sacked from *Veja*. As he had no place to work with journalism at that time, he started his career in law (METONI, n.d.). Regarding the dismissal of D'Alembert from *Jornal do Brasil*, Scartezini affirms that he was opposed to that and was also fired as a result (SCARTEZINI, n.d.).

Further dismissals were reported in the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*, of August 13, 1980²¹, including the resignation of journalist José Seabra Neto from *Empresa*

¹⁹ Document available at AN with reference code: BR RJANRIO CNV.0.RCE.00092000538201527/240.

²⁰ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR RJANRIO CNV.0.RCE.00092000538201527/242.

²¹ Resolution n. 36/19/AC/80, from SNI – Central Agency, of August 19, 1980. Available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.80009693.

Brasileira de Notícias (EBN), for being pressured by the company due to problems at the press conference given by the Minister of Social Security. Seabra Neto was indicated as the responsible for a rage between the Minister of Social Security, Jair Soares, and the Minister of Planning, Delfim Neto. However, according to the newspaper, he was not the cause of the problem. In the same article there is information on another layoff related to the coverage of ministries. The journalist Nadja Barreto was dismissed from EBN for questioning the Minister of the Internal Affairs, Mário Andreazza, about the exclusion of an anthropologist from the *Polonoroeste* project, as the highway which connected Cuiabá to Porto Velho would affect an indigenous reservation. These cases demonstrated how vulnerable journalists were in their job since the publishing of any news that displeased someone at high echelon of the government could result in them being sacked.

In addition to the arrests and dismissals, the great press in Brasília also underwent censorship. In an interview, Hélio Doyle reported that he was the one who received messages from the Federal Police chief officer, Hélio Romão, while he was at *Jornal de Brasília*. These messages were sent to Hélio Doyle by telex or telephone and consisted of orders to prohibit news releases. Doyle also affirmed that he often learned of some news from the censorship prohibitions and that he once had direct contact with Hélio Romão, who went to the newspaper's office to bring him an important censorship message (DOYLE, 2013, 2020). A local event that was prohibited from being reported by the press was the investigation of the death of Ana Lídia, a seven-year-old girl who disappeared from her school in the neighborhood of Asa Norte, on September 11, 1973, and had her body found in a shallow grave near of University of Brasília. During the investigations, the sons of the Minister of Justice, Alfredo Buzaid and the Senator Eurico Resende were suspects of the crime (FERREIRA, 2019). As Hélio Doyle affirms, all local newspapers were forbidden to report on the case and, although sending reporters to the hearings, they could not publish anything about them (DOYLE, 2020). Journalists from *Correio do Planalto* (CP), Murilo Murça and Mário Eugênio said that the first time CP had problems with censorship was due to *Siroba's* comic book²² on Ana Lídia's case. In an interview given to the first edition of *Cidade Livre*, by March, 1977, they also reported that another type of censure on CP was the ban on naked girls that appeared on the front page of all its editions (GURGEL, 2011).

Another form of government's censorship to the press was throughout the control of advertising.

²² Cartoonist Silvio Roberto de Farias.

Blocking advertising revenue could be done in several ways. If a publisher depended directly on government advertisements, they could simply be suspended. If a publisher had succeeded in minimizing the use of public advertising, then the regime could pressure private advertisers to cancel their ads. Virtually any company was vulnerable to such measures. With these tactics, the regime could reach both the mainstream and the alternative press (SMITH, 2000, p. 78).

In this context, the SNI circulated, mainly in the early 1980s, a list of press companies in which the dissemination of publicity, advertisements, and official acts by entities of the Federal Public Administration was not recommended. These magazines and newspapers were characterized by the “dissemination of themes hostile to the Government, by the publication of subjects against morality and the national interests, as well as by supporting actions of groups of extremist ideologies”²³. In the list, the press companies were organized by state or city, and amongst those from the Federal District, there was *Folha Trabalhista*, included on June 23, 1981²⁴, with the claim that it was a “publication without a defined periodicity, which unduly entitle[d] itself as a body of the working classes and the Armed Forces”. On August 3²⁵, *Jornal dos Estados* also started to figure in this list because the newspaper “challenge[d] the regime and attacke[d] the military”.

Government advertising control was also used by the Federal District Government (GDF) to influence the media in its favor. The newspaper *Cidade Livre* exposed it on its first issue, of March 1977:

(...) the current Governor of the Federal District controls the dissemination of news about him in the local press through advertising budget: if a newspaper publishes news that contains criticisms on the performance of any government agency, it cuts its advertising until the newspaper redeems itself, and publishes a flattering note about another facade work announced by “our” government (GURGEL, 2011, p. 127).

The FENAJ Report also presented some cases of physical and psychological torture to journalists. D’Alembert Jaccoud suffered psychological torture, and Romário Schetino and Alexandre Ribondi were physically tortured. In a testimony given to the Memory and Truth Commission of SJP-DF, Armando Rollemberg exposed the physical violence he suffered during his arrest. D’Alembert was threatened with death, stag of a false shooting, and assembly of weapons (METONI, n.d.). Although Romário Schetino was not yet a journalist when he was tortured, his testimony amongst others reveals that these

²³ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.LLL.82002325.

²⁴ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.81016551.

²⁵ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.83035539.

barbarian actions took place in a few meters from the Planalto Palace, and inside of Ministries of the Army and Navy premises. Among the cruelty techniques, there were reports of beatings, sticks being hit in the shins so that people were always on their feet, Russian roulette and shocks in the hands and testicles (RIBONDI, n.d.; ROLLEMBERG, 2013; SCHETINO, n.d.).

Was there resistance?

Even with the repression on the mainstream media, stories against government interests were published deliberately, constituting moments of resistance from the press professionals. Even though they were aware that they could suffer retaliation, some journalists took the risk of publishing stories on political arrests and torture. While in the *Jornal de Brasília*, Hélio Doyle reported, in an interview, that he bypassed the censorship on two occasions. The first one regards the publication of a note on the arrest of Honestino Guimarães²⁶, and in the second occasion, the newspaper reported the prison of Marco Antonio Tavares Coelho²⁷. According to Doyle, the first news did not give him any problems, however, for the second one he was prosecuted by the National Security Law, which was later reverted to the Press Law and then lapsed (DOYLE, 2013). Hélio acknowledged that from the business point of view it was irresponsible to publish them, as he knew it would have consequences, but they took the risk anyway (DOYLE, 2020).

Armando Rollemberg also reported another case of an article published intentionally against government interests. Whilst he was working for *Correio Braziliense*, he published a report with the first list of torturers from the Military Dictatorship. As a result, he was scolded not to do this without consulting his superiors, and confirming he had no major complications regarding that matter (ROLLEMBERG, 2020).

Another case of deliberate disclosure against the military government is presented in the book *Brasil: nunca mais*²⁸. What happened to journalist José de Arimatéia Gomes Cunha stands out because it was a government harassment of a professional who was “notoriously identified with the Military Regime and a propagandist of its achievements” (BRASIL: NUNCA MAIS, 1985, p. 146). In the column *Visto, lido e ouvido*, of *Correio*

²⁶ He was president of the National Student Union (UNE), and arrested in 1973. He was never seen (União Nacional dos Estudantes [UNE], 2015).

²⁷ A Former congressman, he was a member of the PCB and arrested on January 18, 1975. He was tortured at the DOI of the II Army, in São Paulo (FGV, 2009b).

²⁸ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8.MIC, GNC.AAA.85051211.

Braziliense, on March 5, 1972²⁹, Ari Cunha exposed the torture suffered by Hecilda Mary Veiga Fonteles de Lima, in Brasília, carried out when she was pregnant. For this reason, Ari Cunha was prosecuted by the Military Justice for a crime against National Security and Political and Social Order. He was later cleared of the charges.

Professional associations of journalists in Brasília were also scenarios of persecution, as well resistance to government repression. *Clube da Imprensa*, although subjected to SJP-DF, had its image separate from it and was used as a meeting place for journalists. In an interview around 1977, Moacir de Oliveira said that *Clube da Imprensa* was reoccupied and became a place for debates, with space open to political parties and cultural manifestations, leading to surveillance and persecution of its members (OLIVEIRA, n.d.). There were frequent bomb threats and, during the *Feira das Possibilidades*, an event in which there was a series of debates, it were thrown sharp devices in the road that gave access to the club to puncture the tires of the cars. Moacir also recorded that, on other occasions, sugar was put in the gas tanks of the cars of those who were gathered at the club (OLIVEIRA, n.d.). As well as Moacir, Hélio Doyle recalled similar situations, adding an episode in which a film by Renato Tapajós about the strikes of *ABC Paulista* was being shown at *Clube da Imprensa*, and it was interrupted by PF which seized the film by end of the screening (DOYLE, 2013, 2020).

Clube da Imprensa was also the place where the carnival block *Pacotão* was idealized, in 1977. *Pacotão* took the streets for the first time at the 1978 carnival, taking on a political tone since 1979, both in its music and banners brought by the participants. It started small, with the participation of about 100 people in the first meeting and reached 50 thousand people in *Diretas Já*. The block was under indirect repression, with the infiltration of SNI agents, who confiscate the protest banners. At some point, an informal message from the SNI came via GDF's Secretary of Communication, informing that they would not repress the *Pacotão* if they did not offend the President and the First Lady. (OLIVEIRA, n.d.). At that time General João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo was in power.

It was also possible to identify moments of resistance to censorship by the press professionals in the Superior Council of Censorship. In 1979, the Council became a reviewing body for censorship, with the participation of representatives of civil society in the decisions (NAPOLITANO, 2014). In the governmental process of trying to give

²⁹ Newspaper clipping inside of the judicial proceeding available in the *Project Brasil: nunca mais*, with reference code: BNM 417. Available at: <http://bnmdigital.mpf.mp.br/pdf/>. Accessed on Abr. 4, 2020.

legitimacy to the censorship process, Armando Rollemberg participated in the Council as substitute member of Pompeu de Souza, both as representatives of the Brazilian Press Association (ABI). He reported that they agreed to act “as the anti-censorship”; in other words, to prevent something from being censored (ROLLEMBERG, 2020). The effect of this attitude can be observed in a document from the Minister of Justice, Ibrahim Abi-Ackel, to General Newton Cruz, head of the SNI, on July 8, 1980:

To date, the Superior Council of Censorship has not prohibited the exhibition of any cinematographic film. The final decision on the exhibition of the films, either in its full version or by cutting scenes, has been committed to the Minister of Justice, in an appeal, by the contrary vote, expressed in some cases, by the representative of this Ministry in the Council, Dr. Octaciano Nogueira.

The extreme liberality of the Superior Council of Censorship elapses from the following causes:

a) the liberatory attitude of the members of the Council, representatives of the communication sectors³⁰ (Italics added)

As the cases provided, it was possible to identify the repression of the mainstream press in Brasilia during the military government which used various ways to try to control, manipulate and intimidate the news production and circulation. Nevertheless, it was possible to identified examples in which several journalists resisted persecution, both in their professional activities, as well as from their political relationships and actions, even under strong state control.

Conclusion

The repression of the military government over the press in Brasilia and its professionals took place in a diffuse and varied manner, in accordance with what occurred at the national level, as described by Smith (2000). The carried out research with the selected documentation found cases of violations of press freedom that were in line with the testimonies collected by the Memory and Truth Commission of SJP-DF, confirming the findings, especially regarding to: veto the participation of professionals in coverage certain State events or areas, surveillance of journalists, pressure on newspaper companies to dismiss or not hire journalists, and legal proceedings under the National Security Law. In addition to the cases of media repression in Brasilia: the identification of censorship based on morality matters, the privileged relationship of certain press companies with the DCDP and the blockage of public advertising funds. Also, censorship

³⁰ Document available at AN, with reference code: BR DFANBSB V8, MIC.GNC.AAA.80010652.

existed in newsrooms in Brasília via orders sent by telex or telephone, similarly to what happened to other newspapers and magazines across the country.

Despite the repression on media and journalists in Brasília, it was possible to identify acts of resistance related to journalistic activities, although they seemed to be sporadic and unorganized among press professionals, or even newspaper companies. It also identified cases of resignation due to censorship and in solidarity and protest for the sacks of other colleagues under the government's demand. Similarly, there had been deliberate publications which would not please the military. Many of Brasília's journalists resisted through political engagement, and participation in the alternative press and professional organizations.

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RESUMO:

A censura na Ditadura Militar brasileira tem origem nos processos de repressão à imprensa institucionalizados ainda no Estado Novo. No governo militar, além da censura prévia, existiu também uma repressão difusa aos meios de comunicação, exercida a partir de métodos como: vigilância, perseguição e punição de jornalistas, e coação dos veículos da imprensa a partir de auditorias fiscais e controle de publicidade governamental, entre outros meios. Neste contexto, o presente trabalho tem como objetivo principal analisar a relação da grande imprensa nacional presente em Brasília, dos maiores veículos da imprensa local e dos jornalistas baseados na cidade, com o aparato censório do regime militar. A partir de uma pesquisa exploratória e descritiva, com abordagem qualitativa, foi realizada uma análise documental dos materiais presentes em arquivos, comissões da verdade e de entrevistas com jornalistas. Verificou-se que apesar da repressão à grande imprensa em Brasília, também existiram iniciativas de resistência.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Censura; Grande imprensa; Brasília; Ditadura Militar; Liberdade de imprensa.

RESUMEN:

La censura en la Dictadura Militar tiene su origen en los procesos de represión contra la prensa institucionalizada en el Estado Novo. En el gobierno militar, además de la censura previa, también hubo una represión generalizada a los medios de comunicación, ejercida con base en métodos como: vigilancia, hostigamiento y castigo a periodistas y coacción de vehículos de prensa basada en auditorías fiscales y control publicitario gubernamental, entre otros medios. En este contexto, el presente trabajo tiene como objetivo principal analizar la relación de la gran prensa nacional presente en Brasília, de los mayores vehículos de la prensa local y de los periodistas radicados en la ciudad, con el aparato de censura del régimen militar. A partir de una investigación exploratoria y descriptiva, con un enfoque cualitativo, se realizó un análisis documental de los materiales presentes en archivos, comisiones de la verdad y entrevistas con periodistas. Se encontró que a pesar de la represión de la prensa dominante en Brasilia, también hubo iniciativas de resistencia.

PALABRAS-CLAVES: Censura; Gran prensa; Brasilia; Dictadura militar; Libertad de prensa.