

PROMISED LAND

IN THE COMIC STRIP OF NEOLIBERALISM, THE HUNGER OF THE LANDLESS IS COLLATERAL DAMAGE.

IN THE MEANTIME, UNCOUNTED MILLIONS OF THE LANDLESS IN BRAZIL, FORCED FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE BY DROUGHT, MECHANIZATION, TIGHT CREDIT, FOREIGN COMPETITION AND HYPERINFLATION, ATTEMPT TO SURVIVE IN THE MARGINS OF BRAZIL'S TEEMING CITIES.

OF COURSE YOU'RE HUNGRY! YOU'RE WORKING THIS OBSOLETE LITTLE FARM WHEN THE FUTURE OF BRAZILIAN AGRICULTURE LIES IN HUMONGOUS EXPORT-ORIENTED GENETICALLY MODIFIED MONOCULTURES!

BUT— AND THIS IS THE BEAUTY OF THE THING— YOUR HUNGER WILL GUIDE YOU TO THE EXACT PLACE WHERE YOUR LABOR POWER RIGHTFULLY BELONGS!

EVENTUALLY!

HEY!

LEAVE SOME FOR US!

A MAZON ARM'S SECURE COMMUNITY

HUMAN VERMIN!

PICKING THROUGH THE GARBAGE FOR THEIR SUSTENANCE!

MILLION ACRE INVESTMENT

HOW CAN PEOPLE LIVE LIKE THIS?

"YOU CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS" IS, IN FACT, A SLOGAN OF THE MST (LANDLESS MOVEMENT), A GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION THAT HAS SHAKEN UP BRAZILIAN POLITICS BY REFUSING TO ACCEPT NEOLIBERALISM'S ANTI-HUMAN LOGIC.

OCCUPY!

RESIST!

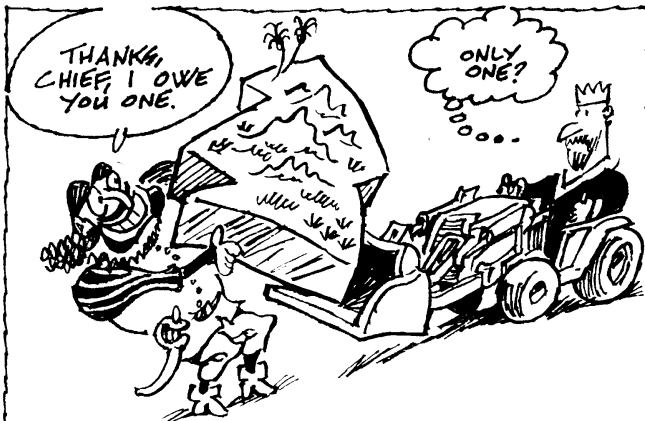
PRODUCE!

(THAT'S ANOTHER ONE)

TODAY, OVER 300,000 MST FAMILIES FARM THEIR OWN COOPERATIVE SETTLEMENTS, CREATED BY UNARMED INVASIONS OF UNUSED LAND BY UNLANDED PEOPLE.

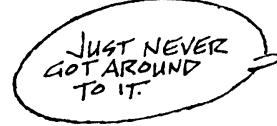
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LANDLESSNESS IS NOTHING NEW IN BRAZIL. DURING COLONIAL TIMES THE PORTUGUESE CROWN CONFERRED HUGE TRACTS OF LAND UPON A FEW NOBLE FAMILIES.



EVEN TODAY, 2% OF BRAZILIANS OWN HALF THE ARABLE LAND, THE SECOND HIGHEST CONCENTRATION IN THE WORLD, AFTER PARAGUAY.

BRAZIL HAS NEVER HAD AN AGRARIAN REFORM.



THE 1988 CONSTITUTION CALLS FOR EXPROPRIATION OF "RURAL PROPERTY WHICH IS NOT PERFORMING ITS SOCIAL FUNCTION," BUT GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES HAVE BEEN MINISCULE.

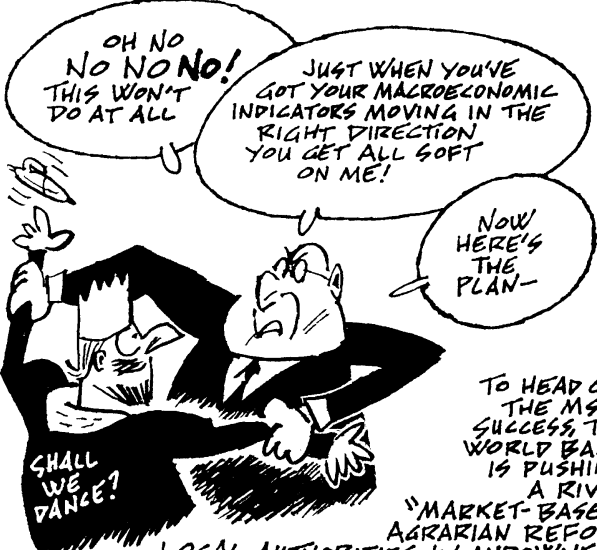


BUT WHEN THE MST OCCUPIES AND FARMS AN UNDERUSED PROPERTY, IT PRECIPITATES A LEGAL PROCESS THAT CAN FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO EXPROPRIATE LAND (WITH COMPENSATION TO THE PREVIOUS OWNER, WHICH THE SETTLEMENT REPAYS).



IT MIGHT NOT BE THIS EASY. BUT IT WORKS! AS THEY ACQUIRE LEGAL TITLE, THE SETTLEMENTS ORGANIZE VOLUNTARY COLLECTIVE SECTORS AS WELL AS FAMILY FARMS, HOMES, CLINICS, SCHOOLS, AND SOMETIMES PROCESSING PLANTS, CREDIT UNIONS, ETC.

AND AS THEY PROSPER THEY INCREASINGLY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (A SETTLEMENT CAN GENERATE FOUR TIMES THE INCOME OF A RANCH). SOME MUNICIPALITIES EVEN PETITION THE MST TO INVADE!



TO HEAD OFF THE MST'S SUCCESS, THE WORLD BANK IS PUSHING A RIVAL "MARKET-BASED" AGRARIAN REFORM: LOCAL AUTHORITIES + LANDOWNERS "NEGOTIATE" THE SALE OF THE WORST LANDS TO POOR FARMERS, SADDLING THEM WITH HUGE DEBTS.

THE RESULTING FARMS ARE NOT LIKELY TO SUCCEED, BUT THE ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE THE MST MIGHT. THE GOVERNMENT HAS CUT ITS AGRARIAN REFORM BUDGET BY HALF AND THREATENS TO REPEAL THE CONSTITUTION'S EXPROPRIATION CLAUSE.

