

## **Development of Brazil** **by Jeff Alduk**

Before going to Brazil, most of the students only heard of things that went on in the large cities and other places in the country. We all heard the same thing when we told others that we were going to Brazil, "Why are you going there?" or "Isn't it dangerous there?" These were only opinions that people expressed that had no idea what Brazil was truly like or people that just assumed they knew exactly what the country was like. I can speak for everyone that participated in the class, it was an amazing experience and far different than everyone expected.

Brazil is considered to the world to be a rising developing nation. One of the main reasons for their lack of progress is the problems within their own government. The past few presidents for the Brazilian nation have not been what most would consider loyal and trustworthy. Many corrupt scandals have taken place from financial situations to other promises being broken. The current president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, was voted in as the first "working class" president for the nation of Brazil. This brought a lot of hope to the nation because they believed he was going to help correct many of the problems that occurred in the years past. Before Lula was elected, he promised many things to the people which mainly won over the people to vote for him. In 2002, he was elected and for the past four years the people of Brazil are very disappointed. Speaking with our tour guides and others within the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, they proclaimed that Lula promised so many things and has done nearly nothing. This seemed to bother almost everyone we talked to because they hoped for a better government and have been let down severely.

Developing countries, as many would believe, have a great number of people who live below the poverty line. In Brazil, the poor people are very unique in the ways they live. The favelas or shantytowns are where thousands of poor people gather to live in the large cities. In Rio it was very apparent of where the favelas were located. The hillsides of almost the entire city consisted favelas. To the people who were not poor in the cities, these were the most dangerous places and they would never dare to step foot in one of them. Also, the general population has no idea what is in a favela and how they are run. Upon our visit to the favelas, our class seemed to be a little tense due to the rumors that we had heard from so many people about them. We all thought it was going to be the poorest people sitting around selling drugs and holding guns. I believe that most of our thoughts were totally wrong after our day within the favelas. The favelas seemed to be a city within a city. They had their own stores, including banks and jewelry stores, internet cafes, and many other places that a normal city would have. One of the most interesting facts I heard in Brazil was that the bank and jewelry store have never been robbed. Many people would think that a bank or jewelry store would be robbed on a consistent basis in one of the poorest places in the nation. They were never robbed because the people do not want to have any problems with the police because of how the favelas are "governed". The favelas are run by the drug lords of the city. They provide the people with jobs and protection from the police. Many people in the favelas involved in the drug trafficking, but do not use the drugs themselves. They mainly use the drug lords for protection and a source of income. Even though the favelas did seem like a safe place on the tour, it is not a place in which many people would travel to during the night. The

favelas are a key part to the undevelopment of Brazil. The citizens try to act as though they do not exist, but they are also people trying to survive in a developing country.

The growth of many industries in Brazil has given the country the sense that they are becoming more and more developed. First, the oil industry is beginning to help the country of Brazil. Petrobras, Brazil's largest oil company, has become more advanced and has expanded their drilling to many areas. The development of ocean drilling has made their industry grow rapidly. Brazil is now a nation that is almost non-dependent of oil from other countries. They have reached a point where they can produce enough oil for themselves and also export some of it. This is a key factor in helping their economy grow. Another industry that is growing in Brazil is the exportation of many resources from the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon is a vast rainforest that provides so many different things from medicines to fruits that can not be found anywhere in the world. The Brazilians have now began to use these resources to help them grow economically. By having such a large resource of rare commodities, they have a market different than anyone else's in the world.

If the country of Brazil continues to use their unique resources of the Amazon and grow in the oil industry, their economy will improve drastically. The problem with their growth though lies within the corrupt government. Until Brazil has a steady government that is willing to help the people and not themselves, they will be seen as a developing nation and not be able to achieve economic power.