

**Brazil 2014**  
**John of God, Umbanda, Guarani, and**  
**Non-Lethal Weapons**

In April I was invited to make an opening presentation for a Military Police non-lethal weapons course in Vitoria, Espirito Santos, Brazil. This is an area of about 3 million people most gringos never heard of.



This is the new class



Here is the bilingual presentation that was translated simultaneously by Mario Magalhães, an advisor to the governor, and who served as our driver throughout the stay in Vitoria. Having lived in Canada he not only speaks fluent English, he has an amazing knowledge base for international security affairs. After a head injury Mario acquired a photographic memory.



At lunch with the state commander of Military Police, COL Edmilson



This was our host, Major Marsuel Riani, who saw to every wish while also creating the non-lethal weapons program.



Mario Magalhães, Maj Riani and me on tour



With the commander of the MP Special Operations Battalion in Espirito Santos



At the first Umbanda ceremony. Mario informed us that a taxi would not take us to this favela due to the danger of violence.



Here on local television describing the NLW course for the public



The high priestess and followers



Victoria with Antonio Carlos Magalhães, a long-time friend from Condor



This is the local area of the ceremony which lasted about six hours and into darkness.



Victoria seemed to be recognized by the group and they told her she had to stay for the second part of the ceremony.



We also went to Aracruz about 70 km north of Vitoria and visited the Guarani indigenous people. I was surprised to find Guarani that far north as we had seen some in Curitiba several years ago. There are about 7000 Guarani people in this tribe and most of the remaining 30,000 are in the

south. To be considered Guarani they must marry within the tribe and keep the language.



The elected local chief, Peiru, offered us raw oysters with lime juice.



After the photo with his headdress, Chief Peiru note that Americans care more about indigenous people than do Brazilians. That was quite a controversial statement with our local police escort, Captain Edcendro who simply stated “That is a point of view.”



I did eat the oyster.



Victoria and Mario's wife, a practicing psychotherapist, joined the service.



The ceremony continued



In Vitoria we attended another Umbanda ceremony. It was very hard to find, even for our police escorts using cell phones.



This is the entrance to the area of the ceremony. There is no way that we would have gone into this favela alone at night.



Our hosts took us to many local sites, including this, the governor's palace. Maj. Riani's wife, Jacqueline (an MP Sergeant) accompanied us on several trips.



Where Pope John Paul spoke in Vitoria



A statue of Yemanjá the very powerful Umbanda goddess of the sea



Vitoria has several miles of pristine beaches which become to focal point of weekend activities for the people of the area.

**Then we visited John of God in Abadiânia.**



Entrance to Casa de Dom Inacio



There are over 300 living mediums that assist João in the healings. In addition, they claim there are many discarnate entities that also help. They include Chico Xavier the famed Brazilian medium whose work has just been successfully analyzed at the University of Sao Paulo.



When we visited in 2006 there were hundreds of people. When we arrived on 1 May, there were thousands waiting. They came in tour bus loads from all over the world.



A major difference between highly educated Brazilians and most Westerners is that spiritual healing is accepted as a norm, not something unusual.



This is the area that leads into the sanctuary and where he demonstrates physical surgery. They are far more restrictive of photography now but mostly as a practical matter. The woman has placed a photo in the triangle, symbol of the casa, and prayed for remote healing of that person. I did that later.



Many people meditate on the grounds, even when João is not present.

Famous cases, such as Wayne Dyer, and exposure by Oprah, have increased attendance. Selected healing raises many questions – especially why some are healed and others not. Of the number of patients we saw arrive in wheelchairs, all left in them. Still, there is a room full of braces and wheelchairs that have been discarded.



The crowds gather long before he comes out. Lines also form to go into the sanctuary. According to João, the spirit entities begin healing people while they are in the waiting area.



Free soup is available to everyone



The store has expanded considerably since we were last there.



This is the pousda that we stayed at. Hotels can be arranged on line, as well as taxis to and from the airport in Brasilia.



Many items have signs “Blessed by the Entities” at the casa and in town. Several new hotels have sprung up since our last trip. The small town is dominated by Casa de Dom Inacio.

Some are healed, but most leave without a noticeable physical change. There is no doubt João de Deus is the real deal.



Victoria resting after a healing ceremony



This is where I left a photo of a friend with a brain tumor. Positive results were indicated.