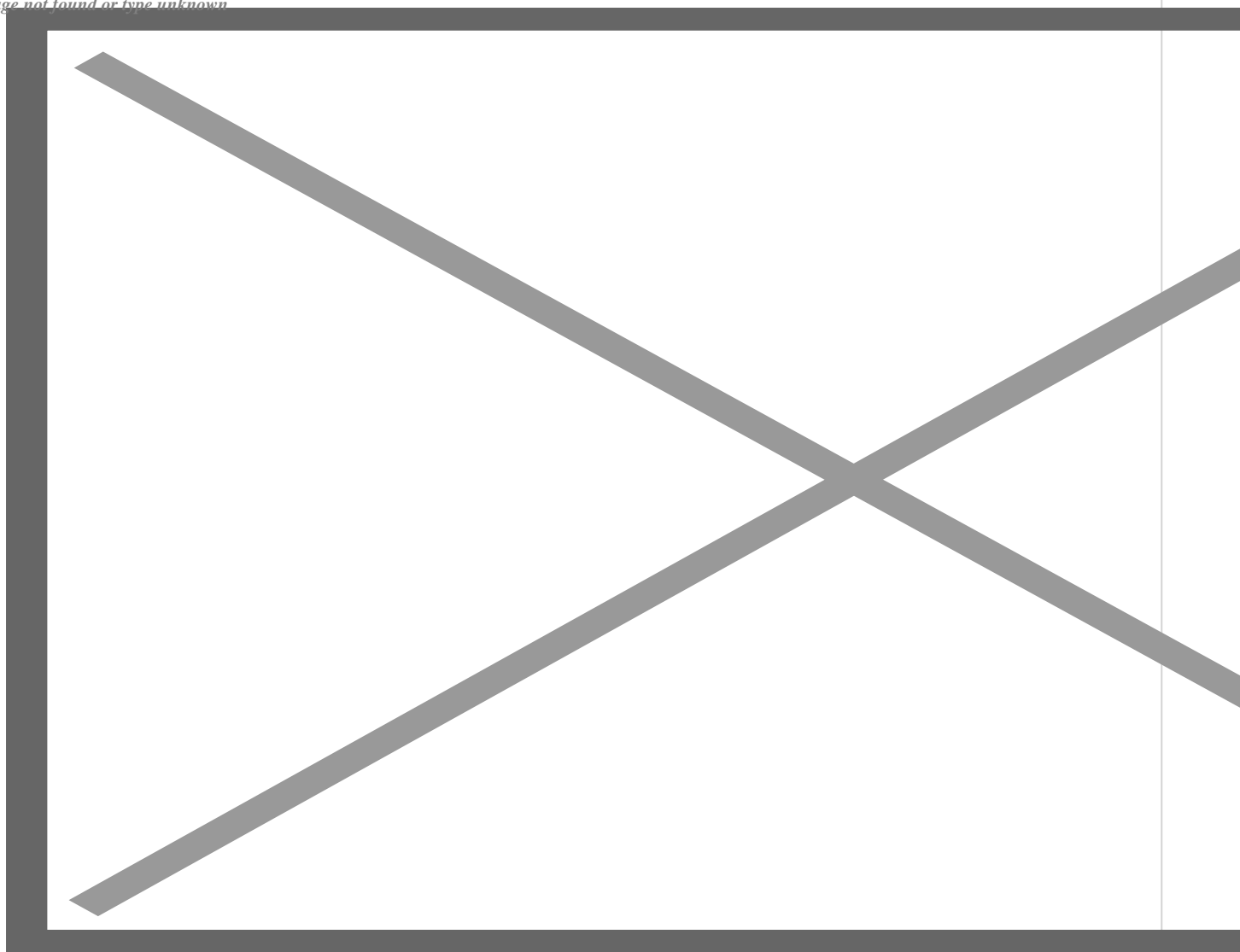


Brazilian Minister of Defense justifies 1964 military coup

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?Braga Netto has justified the military coup that plunged the country into a tyranny similar to others in the Southern Cone for more than 20 years.

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Brasilia, March 31 (RHC)-- Brazil's new Minister of Defense, Walter Braga Netto, recently appointed by President Jair Bolsonaro, recalled that the events that led to the 1964 coup d'état, whose anniversary falls on Wednesday, "must be understood and celebrated" with historical context.

On March 31, 1964, a military regime was installed in Brazil that lasted for 21 years amid movements in the barracks and the departure from Brasilia of President João Goulart, who in turn had replaced the resigned ruler, Janio Quadros.

Braga Netto's words come in the midst of a serious political crisis that resulted on Monday and Tuesday in the replacement of six ministerial posts, among them, the Defense Ministry itself, and the replacement of the three heads of the Armed Forces.

Braga Netto, in an "Order of the Day Allusive to March 31, 1964" issued last night, expressed that "the events occurred 57 years ago, as well as any historical event, can only be understood from the context of the time", in a text in which he abounds that at that time the regional instability derived in Brazil in a "scenario of insecurities and serious political, social and economic instability", as well as "a real threat to peace and democracy".

According to the Minister of Defense, "the Movement [that led to the coup] of 1964 is part of Brazil's historical trajectory. Therefore, the events of that March 31 should be understood and celebrated," the document adds.

Braga is not the only one: the current ruler, Jair Bolsonaro, an army reserve captain, is a defender of that military dictatorship and already last year, on the previous anniversary, he said that it was a "great day of freedom."

Braga Netto, a reserve general, replaced on Monday in the defense portfolio General Fernando Azevedo e Silva, who was replaced hours after Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo announced his resignation.

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