Brazil's Coup

To the Editor:

I wish to object to one statement in your editorial on Brazil (Dec. 18), which holds that the military had a "good case" for overthrowing the constitutionally elected Government of João Goulart in 1964.

Since when does any nation's armed forces have such a right? What of the repression and cultural terror which followed the so-called revolution of April 1, 1964—the mass arrests, censorship and anti-intellectualism in the name of anti-Communism? Or of the new regime, allegedly opposed to corruption, maintaining some of the most corrupt politicians in Brazil in office because they backed the coup?

We are reminded of the cartoon which appeared in a Rio de Janeiro newspaper in mid-1964 showing workmen building prisons. The revolution is now moving "from a destructive to a constructive" phase, the caption read. And finally we are reminded of the breathless haste in which the Johnson Administration moved to recognize that regime. The Brazilian people deserve better than this.

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