INTRODUCTION
This poster is supposed to be a crash-course on the last 10 years of Brazilian politics. While we were in São Paulo and Rio, I noticed that the upcoming elections were mentioned on several of the visits and many speakers referred to the Operation Car Wash as well as the former President Lula. The following research helps paint a better picture of the political situation leading the 2018 elections.

THE POLITICAL CHAOS

2005 Mensalão Scandal
• "Big monthly payment” scandal
• Congressman revealed the ruling party (PT) was paying generous monthly allowances to congressional members in exchange for favorable votes on the PT’s legislative priorities.

2010 Economy Peaks
• GDP growth at 8%
• Lula leveraged the boom to expand social policies such as “Bolsa Família” - a monthly cash transfer program that helps poor families who keep their children in school and ensure they have medical checkups

2012 Mensalão Reached the STF
• The criminal investigation into the “Mensalão” reached the Supreme Court
• Chief Justice Joaquim Barbosa - the first and only Afro-Brazilian judge to ever serve in the STF – became a "prosecutor-hero”
• 12 defendants received jail sentences

2013 "V is for Vinegar”
• Massive protests during the Confederations Cup soccer tournament over the unequal wealth distribution
• June Journey: National protest over rising bus fares and lack of social investment
• In order to signal that the Senate got the message from the protesters, Senate president Renan Calheiros, passed ten legislative measures.
• Among those measures was a plebiscite-raging reform

2014 Lava Jato
• Led by federal Judge Sérgio Moro as well as a group of 9 prosecutors known as the “Nine Horsemen of the Apocalypse”
• Started as a money laundering investigation and became the biggest corruption scandal in Latin America
• Political parties endorsed particular individuals to sit on the Petrobras board of directors
• In return, board members accepted bribes and inflated the price of the contracts to construction firms
• Initial estimates value the bribes at nearly 85 billion.
• Brazilian construction company Odebrecht was deeply involved and was found to have a secret branch used for illegal payments in several Latin American countries, from Hugo Chavez in Venezuela to Pemex in Mexico

IMPEACHMENT 2016
• Dilma Rousseff was a strong ally of former President Lula
• Before presidency she was the former Energy Minister and was part of the board of directors of Petrobras
• Petrobras scandal devastated the PT and Rousseff’s reputation:
  1. Many questioned her competence and judgment for allowing the scandal to happen
  2. Moro released tapes of recorded conversations between Rousseff and Lula in which she talks about appointing the former President to a cabinet-level position that would place him under Supreme Court jurisdiction and “shield” him from the Lava Jato investigation
• The recession paired with the Petrobras scandal led Brazilians to organize massive protests against the Rousseff government
• President Rousseff was impeached on the charges cooking the government’s budgetary books to artificially prop up the economy before her 2014 reelection

MICHEL TEMER GOVERNMENT (MDB)
• Dilma Rousseff’s Vice President
• Became acting president on May 2016
• Reduced the number of ministries from 31 to 22
• Passed a bill labour reform
• Passed a bill on public pension plans
• Signed on Rio’s military intervention
• 87% rejection rating

CONCLUSIONS
A key takeaway that I learned after all the research is that the 2018 elections will be “up for grabs”. With the front-runner in jail, the voting scenario is likely to become more polarized.

Brazilians are tired of the corruption and the current scenario of poverty and violence. This is likely to influence the voter to try something new, and we can start to see that with running candidates that are running for presidency.

The culture of indifference towards politics is changing and now people are talking about the problem, which is a start. We should watch closely the new parties, and new candidates with different backgrounds such as law or business.
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