The video is grainy, typical of cell phone footage, but there is no doubt as to what it shows: a sheer granite cliff. Bullets fired from police helicopters hovering just outside the frame ping off the rock, raising puffs of dust. A man falls from the ledge into the abyss. He is shirtless, wearing only board shorts, like so many young men in Rio de Janeiro. Out of control, he bangs against the vertical granite wall on his way down. His blue backpack remains stranded on the rock face as he plummets. It isn’t clear if he died before falling or if he perished upon impact. What is certain is that he did not survive.

Versions of this video, taken by residents of nearby buildings on October 10, 2016, were beamed from cell phone to cell phone as Rio natives, known as cariocas, discussed the daylong shoot-out between police and gang members that shut down the subway and several main thoroughfares in the Copacabana and Ipanema neighborhoods.¹ What gripped the attention of locals was not just the graphic horror of the death of a young man police later described as a suspected drug dealer or the fact that two other suspects died and three officers were injured that day. Deaths at the hands of the police happen in Rio every day. In 2015, 644 people were killed by officers on duty,
according to Rio de Janeiro state’s Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP), or Institute for Public Safety, charged with gathering and analyzing public security data. What made this gun battle stand out was its location and timing; together, these factors sent a clear and worrisome signal of a broader failure.

The gunfire exchange was in Pavão-Pavãozinho and Cantagalo, conjoined favelas that straddle the peaks crowning the tony neighborhoods of Ipanema, Lagoa, and Copacabana. During the previous two months, in August and September, crowds of Olympic and Paralympic visitors had surged through these posh streets on their way to canoeing, rowing, swimming, and other sporting competitions. These favelas were among the first to benefit from an ambitious security program launched in December 2008 and became showcases for the program. Known by its Portuguese acronym, UPP, for Unidades de Policia Pacificadora, or Units of Pacification Police, it was the flagship security program during the years Rio prepared for the World Cup and the Olympics, when it had raised public expectations of a policing paradigm shift and garnered widespread media attention.

The UPP program was striking in that it did not promise to crack down on drug trafficking in Rio. Its goal was narrower, and, perhaps, attainable: to take control of favelas that had been under the influence of drug trafficking gangs and, in doing so, reduce violence in these communities and their surrounding areas. It would do this by bringing specially trained police into favelas and establishing regular patrols. Officers and residents would, theoretically, develop relationships that over time could reverse the animosity and lethal violence that had long characterized relations between law enforcement and favela residents.

Expectations in Rio were high; no policing program on this scale had ever been attempted and certainly none that proposed to leave behind the old, lethal policing methods. But cariocas were also deeply skeptical—none more so than the favela residents. Drug gangs had been occupying favelas, largely unchallenged by the state, for decades. While living under the control of heavily armed drug dealers was undesirable, few felt any allegiance to the police, whom they knew from violent, spasmodic incursions that left bodies in their wake. Despite this legacy, positive results in the first two and one-half years had
raised hopes among cariocas and even among favela residents. These included a reduction in the rate of violent deaths in favelas with UPPs by nearly 75 percent and a reduction in the rate of death at the hands of police.\textsuperscript{4} By late 2010, 92 percent of residents of UPP favelas and 77 percent of residents of favelas without UPPs approved of the program.\textsuperscript{5}

So when cariocas heard the gunfire exchange and witnessed the police kill a young man in broad daylight—less than two weeks after the 2016 Paralympics’ closing ceremony—in the relatively privileged Pavão-Pavãozinho and Cantagalo, they knew the UPP program was in trouble. It was a signal that Rio had apparently failed to curb violence and gang control of favelas and to change the police force’s approach to patrolling favelas. In a coincidence that nevertheless exacerbated Rio residents’ fear and uncertainty regarding the future, the man who had masterminded the UPP program and headed state security for nearly a decade, José Mariano Beltrame, announced his resignation the following day.\textsuperscript{6}

What happened to the program? What role did Rio’s megaevents play in its development? This chapter will attempt to answer these questions by examining the course of Rio state’s UPP program in the years leading up to the World Cup and Olympics and exploring how it was captured by the megasporting event’s agenda, schedule, and priorities, which strained the program, expanded it beyond capacity, and helped undermine its chances of success, with tragic consequences.

SECURITY AND BRAZIL’S MEGAEVENT STRATEGY

When Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva flew to Copenhagen in October 2009 to defend Rio de Janeiro’s bid to host the 2016 Olympic Games, it wasn’t the country’s first try. Brazil had made two previous attempts and lost. But this run was different. Brazil was different. The economy was stable and growing. Lula, as he is known to Brazilians, was first elected in 2002 then reelected for a second term in 2006. During his first seven years in office, poverty decreased by more than 50 percent as millions joined the middle class.\textsuperscript{7} A significant oil discovery just beyond Rio de Janeiro’s coastline attracted
investment, generated jobs, and suggested there would be funding to salve historical deficits in areas like health and education well into the future. The president himself was a powerful symbol of what could be achieved in this new Brazil. He had left the impoverished northeast to become a steel worker in São Paulo’s industrial heartland, only to rise as a union leader into politics and, ultimately, into the presidency. The message—one welcomed by many Brazilians, who gave him popularity ratings above 80 percent—was that if he could overcome seemingly insurmountable barriers, then so could Brazil.

There were other elements that made Rio’s bid for the 2016 Games—Brazil’s bid, as the president’s presence made clear—more promising than the previous attempts. By 2009, Rio was not just a candidate city. Its bid was the culmination of a multiyear development strategy in which municipal, state, and federal interests aligned to attract major sporting events: “Politically, hosting the Games was a key part of then-President Lula da Silva’s strategy to re-brand Brazil on a global stage, and offered a form of soft power to advance Brazil’s political weight regionally and within the international community. For the state, hosting the Games was understood as an opportunity to showcase Brazilian modernity through displays of initiative, civility, organization, and urban growth.” This strategy included the successful hosting of the 2002 South American Games following a relocation from Colombia, Rio’s victorious candidacy for the 2007 Pan American Games, and Brazil’s securing in May 2007 of the 2011 World Military Games. Three months after the closure of a successful Pan American Games, FIFA awarded the 2014 World Cup to Brazil. Rio entered the dispute for the 2016 Games against Chicago, Tokyo, and Madrid as the declared gateway into an up-and-coming nation on its way to becoming the world’s sixth largest economy—a nation that had already proved its mettle as the host of prominent international sporting events and was the chosen host of the world’s premiere soccer championship.

Despite the surfeit of good economic news, Brazil’s success in securing other global sporting events, and president Lula’s charisma, Rio’s victory was not guaranteed. The city would have to build venues from scratch and overhaul major infrastructure, including airports and
public transportation. The biggest concern, however, was security—one of the major weaknesses in previous bids.\textsuperscript{10} Rio’s 2016 Olympic bid specifically promised “a safe and agreeable environment for the Games.”\textsuperscript{11} Cariocas were well aware of the challenge this posed. An analysis of the bid book found the word security was used 230 times—more than any other noun.\textsuperscript{12} It was, arguably, Rio’s single biggest obstacle—not only to hosting a major international event but also to drawing the investment and assuming the greater international prominence desired by elected authorities. This was a multifaceted effort, involving more than sporting megaevents. Rio state’s marketing budget, for example, would nearly double from $69.4 million in 2008 to $115.1 million in 2010.\textsuperscript{13}

A closer look at the security situation in Rio as it prepared to host the Pan American Games reveals why the International Olympic Committee needed so much reassurance on this front. The Pan, as Brazilians called it, was expected to draw 5,000 athletes and approximately 60,000 tourists when it opened in July 2007. It would be the largest international tournament held in Brazil in forty-four years and the largest in Rio de Janeiro since the 1950 World Cup. Hosting an event of this magnitude raised a number of challenges, but its success was crucial. Not only would it raise the city’s profile and demonstrate its capacity to welcome the Olympics, the most notorious and prestigious international sporting event.\textsuperscript{14} It would create opportunities for tremendous investment and send a clear signal that Rio—like Brazil—was a global player.

But first, Rio would have to curb the violence that marred its image, discouraged visitors, and imposed such a heavy burden on its population: between 2000 and 2006 the city averaged one murder every 3.5 hours, according to Rio de Janeiro state’s ISP,\textsuperscript{15} charged with gathering and analyzing public security data. During the last week of 2006, when cariocas settled in to celebrate Christmas and New Year’s, a dispute among gangs and police flooded the nightly news with gruesome images of burning buses and police raids in favelas that left eighteen dead.\textsuperscript{16} On January 1, 2007, a new governor, Sérgio Cabral, took the oath of office, promising a regime of law and order.\textsuperscript{17}

One of Cabral’s first acts was to appoint Beltrame as head of state security. Beltrame was a native of southern Brazil, an outsider to Rio
de Janeiro state’s notoriously corrupt police force. Few knew what to expect when he took office with a public security crisis on his hands and seven months until the start of the 2007 Pan—an event that would put Rio under unprecedented scrutiny.

Beltrame took immediate action to mitigate the influence of gang leaders, transferring those suspected of ordering attacks in Rio from local prisons to maximum-security federal penitentiaries in the far south of the country. Then, on June 27, 2007, with sixteen days to go until the Pan American Games, with a mandate from the governor and support from a federal task force, Beltrame ordered the invasion of the Complexo do Alemão. This ensemble of favelas with a population of approximately 70,000 was the headquarters of Rio’s most powerful criminal organization, the Comando Vermelho, or Red Command. The operation was bloody: nineteen people were killed that day. Human rights organizations denounced the massacre; independent investigations later found widespread evidence of extrajudicial executions.

Over the following two weeks, 8,000 National Force and Federal Police officers poured into Rio to secure it during the Pan American Games. This made for a tense month, but one in which there were no incidents involving the national sports delegations and in which “the feeling of safety was great,” according to the head of National Public Security, Luiz Fernando Corrêa. The effort had the desired effect. Two months later, on September 13, 2007, Rio de Janeiro officially submitted its bid for the 2016 Olympics, with promised security improvements heavily emphasized. A month after that, FIFA gave Brazil the 2014 World Cup and another security challenge.

The Pan might have been pulled off without any attacks on tourists or athletes, as the head of national public security noted, but the heavy-handed approach to selectively ensure safety for some at the expense of others made for denunciations from human rights groups: “Murder is not an acceptable or effective crime-control technique,” wrote Philip Alston, the United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, in a report. Rio would need another solution. The goal was not only to secure Rio for the Games but also to shed the image of a bloody gangland where a lethal and corrupt police force was part of the problem. The task was substantial: in 2007 active-duty police officers killed
1,330 people in the state; 902 of those deaths were in the city of Rio, according to ISP.\(^{22}\)

In his first four months as governor, Cabral sought inspiration abroad. The month after he took office, he visited Bogotá and Medellín to see and hear firsthand the results of the *Plan de Convivencia y Seguridad Ciudadana*, or Plan for Coexistence and Citizen Security, developed by Hugo Acero. Built on the pillars of *mano dura* (heavy hand) and public works, the program was credited with reducing violence precipitously: during Acero’s nine years as head of Bogotá’s public security department (1993–2005), the city’s homicide rate dropped from eighty to eighteen per 100,000. During Cabral’s visit, Acero explained that it was necessary to connect public safety and citizenship, a process that started by taking back territory controlled by criminal organizations then winning over the population with social programs.\(^{23}\) In April 2007, Cabral visited Rudy Giuliani, crediting the former New York mayor’s “zero tolerance” approach to law enforcement with a drop in crime rates and calling his tenure “a success.”\(^{24}\)

**THE UPP AS SOLUTION**

The first opportunity to implement some of these ideas came by chance, according to Beltrame.\(^{25}\) On November 18, 2008, during a torrential downpour, Rio police staged an operation in the favela of Santa Marta—a community of around 10,000 residents perched on a steep hillside in the middle-class neighborhood of Botafogo. The community was controlled by the Red Command, but internal disputes had removed its leader; one hundred officers easily occupied the favela. Only once they were in place did Beltrame call the governor and say he intended to keep them there and try something new. That was the first time he used the word *pacification*. The base established in Santa Marta would become the first in Rio state’s new public security initiative.\(^{26}\)

From the beginning, the implementation of the UPP intended to highlight the differences of this new approach. The Santa Marta incursion and occupation happened without a shot being fired. Once the base was established, the person appointed to command it was a charismatic woman—Captain Pricilla Azevedo. The officers recruited
for the twenty-four-hour patrols were young, in a conscious decision to avoid older officers steeped in the culture of confrontation, corruption, and animosity toward favela residents.\textsuperscript{27}

The program started without an official name or even a publicly stipulated structure, budget, or objective. The state laws that officially created the UPP, establishing it under the authority of the military police, and the one that set UPP officers aside from other military police personnel, stating that they would need differentiated training, were not signed by the governor until January 21 and 22, 2009, respectively.\textsuperscript{28}

Despite the very basic legal parameters and the lack of any officially designated structure, objectives, or officer training specifications, the police occupied five favelas under the program’s guise in its first year. The communities added immediately following Santa Marta had significant symbolic value. The second UPP was in Cidade de Deus, or City of God, which had its takeover by criminal networks portrayed by a blockbuster Brazilian film of the same name. The third one was in Jardim Batan, where in 2008 a newspaper photographer had been kidnapped and tortured by members of a militia—one of various groups of armed, off-duty state agents who abuse their access to arms to control low-income areas.\textsuperscript{29} The other UPP units created that year were, like Santa Marta, relatively small communities nestled in Rio’s touristy beachside neighborhoods: Babilônia/Chapéu Mangueira in Copacabana, and Cantagalo/Pavão-Pavãozinho, between Ipanema, Copacabana, and Lagoa.

Municipal, state, and federal authorities promoted the UPP widely within Rio, Brazil, and beyond as evidence of security improvements. Positive headlines followed as the program gathered support from the media and public opinion. Series like the award-winning \textit{Democracia nas Favelas}, or \textit{Democracy in Favelas}, by Rio’s largest newspaper, \textit{O Globo}, played a major role in promoting UPPs. The articles portrayed the police as a victorious force with a positive influence on the community, and the discourse about favelas was framed in terms of citizenship and participation, in contrast to traditional mainstream media approaches that had historically portrayed the communities as the source of crime or the site of violent clashes.\textsuperscript{30} Brazil’s conservative news magazine, \textit{Veja}, awarded the head of Santa Marta’s UPP, Pricilla Azevedo, its Carioca of the Year award.\textsuperscript{31}
Most significantly, when the Brazilian delegation went to Copenhagen at the end of 2009 to argue before the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that Rio was fit to host the Olympics, Azevedo was included in the delegation. Much like the 230 repetitions of the word security in Rio’s bid book, her presence on the podium next to the mayor of Rio, Eduardo Paes, Governor Cabral, and President Lula was a clear message to the members of the IOC: safety will not be a problem.

Indeed, Rio’s presentation in Copenhagen embraced the IOC’s vision of the Olympic Games as a global platform that could burnish the city’s image and provide impetus for it to renew its infrastructure and overcome social problems; Azevedo’s presence on the stage cast the UPP program as part of this renewal, spurred even by Rio’s candidacy. As academics Darnell and Millington summarized, “The state has positioned the Games in support of economic and social development, urbanization and industrialization, environmentalism, improved security, and tourism, all of which are understood to create a secure and modern Brazil, albeit in terms commensurate with the current dominant political economy.”

In his speech to the IOC, Paes highlighted this aspect of Rio’s proposal, telling members that the Games would “accelerate my vision for the city.” More than that, he said, “the Games’ master plan is the city’s master plan. They are one and the same.” In Brazil, the security infrastructure, including the military and the civil police forces, is under the control of the state, not the city; but no matter: all three levels of government were backing the city’s claim with political and financial capital.

IOC members responded to this message, choosing Rio as host of the 2016 Games, prompting an emotional celebration among the Brazilians in Copenhagen, including tears from President Lula and a raucous party along Copacabana beach. Once authorities returned home, however, they had a sobering reminder of the challenges ahead.

EXPANSION

Two weeks after the IOC vote, war broke out between rival gangs for control of a favela called Morro dos Macacos, near the Maracanã Stadium, which was slated to host seven World Cup games in 2014.
and Olympic events two years later. Drug traffickers shot down a police helicopter; nearly three dozen people died in the ensuing firefight, including two officers. Ten buses were set on fire. The image of a man’s body stuffed into a shopping cart and left by the side of a road made national and international news. The headlines that followed spread just the kind of image that Rio de Janeiro authorities feared and were trying to eradicate: “Twelve dead and helicopter downed as Rio de Janeiro drug gangs go to war,” in The Guardian, and “Rio police kill 7; total of 33 dead in drug war,” in Reuters. The New Yorker’s October 2009 issue carried an article entitled, “Gangland: Who controls the streets of Rio de Janeiro?”

State authorities responded by rapidly expanding the UPP program. It went from five units with a total of 712 officers at the end of 2009 to 13 units with a total of 1,279 officers by the end of 2010—including one unit in Morro dos Macacos. In November 2010, after attacks in which gang members torched dozens of cars and buses in retaliation for the law enforcement offensive into their territory, a force of 2,700 police and military personnel invaded the Complexo do Alemão. This time they went in to stay, establishing UPP bases within it.

This was the largest, most complex, and most symbolic police operation to date under the UPP program. Police had not entered Alemão since the bloodbath that preceded the Pan American Games in 2007. Once inside, officers planted a Brazilian flag on its highest peak—a ritual crafted to convey a strong message about state control of territory. This image was widely reproduced by local and foreign media.

According to André Rodrigues, a political scientist at the Rio-based think tank Instituto de Estudos da Religião (ISER), the Alemão invasion generated tremendous expectations among the population. But it was also the moment when a narrow policing program that held some promise as a way to curb violence and heavily armed drug traffic when deployed in a handful of smaller favelas was definitively pushed too far: “There was a need to consolidate gains and structure the program before continuing. This didn’t happen. This was the most significant factor in its later degradation.”

After its initial occupation in November 2010, the Complexo do Alemão continued under army control until June 2012. Its five UPP units required 2,000 officers, and there were simply not enough UPP police prepared for the job. However, soldiers are not trained as
police and certainly not trained in the proximity policing methods theoretically employed by the UPP program. Conflicts escalated between soldiers and local residents; in their first five months in Alemão, soldiers arrested seventy-five people for disobedience, disrespect, threatening behavior, or resistance. Most significantly, the program became, in Alemão, simply an occupying force. The repercussions of this for the community and for the program’s credibility would take time to unfold but would prove disastrous.

The program’s growth had even outpaced the development of the regulations outlining its basic structure and establishing its goals. This only happened two months after the Alemão invasion, when state decree #42,787 was signed by the governor and published in the state register on January 7, 2011. This was the first decree to institutionalize what previously had only been suggested in Beltrame’s speeches and interviews. Among its measures, these were particularly noteworthy:

Article 1 laid out the program’s philosophy as inspired by the principles of “proximity policing” and stipulated the criteria for targeting communities: “poor communities, with weak presence of government institutions and a high degree of informality” and “the opportunistic installation of overtly armed criminal groups.” It also laid out the program’s goals: “To consolidate state control of communities under strong influence of armed criminal organizations. To return to the local population the peace and tranquility needed for the full exercise of citizenship, guaranteeing social and economic development.”

Article 2 laid out the four steps of the program’s deployment within a community: the entrance into the community; the security situation’s stabilization; the UPP’s implementation within the community; and, finally, evaluation and monitoring of the impact of police actions.

Articles 5 and 6 established the minimum number of UPP officers per community, according to size, and specified that the UPP officers’ training would have an emphasis on “human rights and in the doctrine of community policing.”

Essentially, the program proposed to occupy territory controlled by criminal gangs and reduce armed confrontations. According to Ignácio Cano, coordinator of the Laboratório de Análise da Violência, or Laboratory for the Analysis of Violence, at the Universidade do Estado
do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), the state university of Rio de Janeiro, this statement represented a very important paradigm shift in how the police force defined its work:

The traditional public security policy in Rio de Janeiro consisted in periodical invasions of the slums by the police, in which they shot and killed a few members of the drug dealing groups. They left and returned a few months later to start the cycle again. It was a very detrimental policy, which killed lots of people, caused a lot of insecurity, and never dismantled any criminal circle. . . . Officers had never seen anything different. The UPP was an alternative. . . . Entering, shooting and killing was not the only way. 

Five new UPP units were inaugurated in 2010. By the end of 2011, after three full years of existence, the UPP program had delivered significant positive results. There were problems in Alemão, where the population chaffed under army control and alleged rights abuses during a public audience with federal prosecutors, but the news elsewhere was largely positive. The most dramatic evidence of provisional success was a reduction in lethal violence: there were sixty fewer violent deaths per 100,000 residents in favelas with UPPs, according to a study coordinated by Cano. A later study, which looked at different UPP favelas through 2013, found specifically that there were twenty-nine fewer police killings per 100,000 residents: a startling 60 percent reduction in lethal violence by police. The dissemination of these initial results meant the UPP program had a “very strong social and political impact, with widespread and generally very positive media, eliciting great interest not only locally, but also nationally and internationally,” Cano’s report concludes.

INSTRUMENTALIZATION

The political acclaim and positive media coverage that followed, however merited, largely obscured the program’s flaws, its narrow scope, and its reduced potential for expansion in the interest of casting its initial success as evidence of broader public security and socioeco-
nomic development fueled by the city’s embrace of megaevents. The program’s promise and potential, degraded as it was, pushed into fast-paced expansion to meet a time frame and agenda that were set by the need to make the city appear safe in time for the World Cup and the Olympics. This link was established early on, during Rio’s candidacy for hosting the 2016 Games. It was strengthened as the program was widely used in billboards and television advertisements by Governor Cabral and even by then candidate for president Dilma Rousseff, who said she would expand it to other states.52

The accelerated pace it set left little room for consolidating gains, learning from mistakes, or correcting midcourse, said Col. Robson Rodrigues, the UPP’s commander until 2011: “The UPP started without a plan and laid-out objectives. We had to learn and correct the course along the way. There were positive results. But there were also political appeals, demands. It became a political platform. We fell into traps.”53

In order to better understand how this happened, it is worth examining several factors that contributed to the discrepancy between the rhetoric and the reality of the program’s expansion. First, the UPP’s scope: although it was presented in the media and in political discourses as a solution for the complex security challenges in the city and state of Rio, it was never a security policy, but something much more focused: a favela policing program. Even within the universe of Rio’s favelas, it was extremely restricted. The city of Rio has between 600 and 946 favelas or complexes of favelas, depending upon the definition used.54 The state of Rio has far more. The UPP program’s explicit goal was to reach forty units by 2014—a very small fraction of them.

Second, the units’ locations were clearly selective. Although Beltrame repeatedly said in interviews and speeches that the program was meant to benefit locals, not Rio’s preparations to host megaevents, their siting suggested otherwise: all but two of the first seventeen were in the city’s affluent south side or in the part of the north side that formed a belt around the Maracanã Stadium. These would be the areas of greatest visibility and circulation during the megaevents, but they were not the areas with the greatest need. The highest homicide rates were in the outskirts of metropolitan Rio, in a region known as the Baixada Fluminense.55 But the Baixada, far from beaches, stadiums,
and Olympic venues, was largely overlooked. The Baixada region eventually got one UPP, the Mangueirinha unit, in 2014.

Third, the UPP’s high cost also ruled out its expansion to the rest of the city and certainly to the remainder of the state. UPP officers required special training and unique infrastructure. One of the program’s defining characteristics was the high ratio of officers to residents. Whereas the state had an average of 2.3 military police officers per 1,000 residents, the UPP program averaged sixteen officers per 1,000 residents. Maintaining one hundred UPP officers cost the state about R$6 million a year ($4 million at 2011 conversion rates). By the end of 2011, 3,494 UPP officers were in the field. Although Rio state’s total security budget had shot up from R$2.6 billion in 2007 to R$3.7 billion in 2011 and would increase to R$5 billion in 2013, with fully 88 percent of the total going to payroll (numbers corrected for inflation), it was clear the UPP program was consuming a disproportionate amount of the security budget. Expansion at this rate was clearly unsustainable.

Fourth, surveys indicated that from the start the people at the core of the program—UPP police and residents—tempered any expectations with heavy doses of skepticism about the program, its intended beneficiaries, and its future. Direct exposure to factors such as the ones mentioned above, among many others, meant UPP officers did not universally embrace the UPP program and that significant tensions remained between them and favela residents. A 2010 survey of UPP police found that despite the fact that 66 percent felt residents welcomed them, 70 percent would prefer another assignment within the police force. The survey also revealed the underlying difficulties in resolving Rio’s historically situated security problem. In particular, officers believed that the program’s focus was ensuring safety during the World Cup and the Olympics (70 percent); that the unit locations were intended to reassure the middle class (68 percent); that the program was intended to win votes (65 percent). This was terrible for morale and performance and made for cracks in the UPP program that would widen as the program expanded.

The favela residents surveyed in 2010 placed their hopes in the UPP program even as they shared police cynicism. Although 87 percent agreed UPPs were important to reduce violence and 80 percent wanted
the program to remain in their community indefinitely, 54 percent thought the program would remain in place only through the Olympics. Only 35 percent believed traffickers would not return to their community. Moreover, 80 percent recognized that there were tensions between the officers and residents, with one-fourth of youth between sixteen to twenty-five reporting police aggression during the frequent frisking to which they were subjected. Subsequent attitude surveys of UPP police and favela residents reflected deteriorating conditions, relationships, and expectations. 60

Fifth, there was a significant delay or an outright failure, depending on the community and the specific service, to follow police intervention with the resources, civic engagement, and urban improvements that were supposed to go hand in hand with the policing effort. Despite Beltrame’s repeated emphasis on the importance of social investment following police incursion into a community, 61 the UPP Social, billed as the social counterpart of the policing program, was only created in August 2010. It was implemented under the Secretaría de Estado de Assistência Social e Direitos Humanos, or the State Social Welfare and Human Rights department, then under the leadership of the economist Ricardo Henriques. 62

This new institution’s goals were to gather information about community needs, articulate connections with public and private services and civil society, and improve access to resources and services. The ultimate objective, Henriques wrote, would be to provide services and access within these communities on par with those available in any other neighborhood in Rio, thus integrating favelas served by UPPs into the urban fabric. This, in turn, would consolidate the state’s territorial control. 63

However, very soon after its creation and immediately following the 2010 state and federal elections, the UPP Social program was transferred from the authority of the state into the hands of a city planning think tank, the Instituto Pereira Passos (IPP). This weakened the link between the policing and social aspects of the program and reduced its reach. The IPP had the resources and know-how to map needs but lacked (by design) the capacity to deliver services.

Furthermore, observers repeatedly found that much like in the UPP program itself, there was a gap between discourse and reality in
the workings of the UPP Social. Observers related little effective popular participation in meetings, with residents generally disbelieving the program would take their thoughts and needs into consideration.\footnote{IPP president Eduarda LaRocque, in a candid commentary, seemingly confirmed this perspective. Asked about the opposition of Rocinha residents to a proposed cable car project—they preferred improvements to basic sanitation—she said, “the priorities are those of the city of Rio de Janeiro as a whole. We are paying taxes to invest R$1.8 billion in Rocinha, so society as a whole has to identify the priority. (We do not) have to cater to what the favela wants.”}

Later, then mayor Paes would sever the only remaining tie between the social program and the policing effort—the name—by rebranding it as Rio Mais Social in August 2014. The change did little to improve expectations among experts who said the city had largely failed to invest in social programs in UPP favelas. According to Ignácio Cano, of UERJ, “The UPP today is a police program. The social part is a decoration that hasn’t changed the quality of life in communities.”\footnote{This reinforced the feeling among favela residents that the UPP was not principally a means to integrate their community into the city and connect it to resources and services, but largely a police occupation intended to serve needs that were not their own. Surveys reflect this. In 2010, 66 percent of UPP officers felt welcomed by residents; by 2012 that number dropped to 44 percent; and by 2014, to 25 percent. Officers surveyed in 2014 said residents manifested most frequently: hate/anger/hostility (36 percent); mistrust/resistance (17 percent); indifference (10 percent). This shift in attitudes came alongside the increasingly frequent evidence of drug trafficking in the community (70 percent of officers said this was very frequent by 2014) and illegal bearing of arms (35 percent said this was very frequent in 2014).}

Despite the growing dissociation and the perception of dissociation between the UPP’s stated objectives and its reality by residents of UPP favelas and UPP officers, nine new units were created in 2012—including, finally, the ones in Alemão. Seven more were inaugurated in 2013. This expansion included the largest favela in Rio, Rocinha, and raised the number of UPP officers in the field to 5,280. As the program grew, allegations of corruption, human rights abuses, and
killings by police officers, including UPP officers, mounted. In 2013
the number of people killed by Rio state police officers started to tick
up again, after decreasing for six years straight. The number of deaths
at the hands of police had dipped significantly, from 1,330 in 2007 to
416 in 2013. By 2014, the year of the World Cup, that number went
up to 582. By 2015 it reached 644, according to ISP.68

One emblematic case was the disappearance of the construction
worker Amarildo de Souza. He was last seen going into a UPP base
in his home community of Rocinha in July 2013. Twelve UPP officers
were later sentenced in connection to his torture and death. This case
and a growing number of documented police abuses were a blow to
the police’s and specifically to the program’s credibility. As Human
Rights Watch’s July 7, 2016, report on police violence states in its
conclusion, “UPPs led to a decrease in crime and police killings initially
but unlawful killings and other police abuses have played a central role
in the unraveling of the project.”69

CRISIS

The UPP program reached its breaking point in 2014. During the first
semester, as Brazil geared up to welcome World Cup visitors, two
UPP units were inaugurated, and police backed by the Armed Forces
invaded the Maré Complex, conjoined favelas with a population of
130,000. It was a violent operation that left sixteen dead. Soldiers
patrolled Maré throughout the World Cup.70 Beltrame’s promise was
that the community would have its own UPP units before the Olympics. That never happened. By December 2016 there were not enough
resources or trained officers to accomplish the task.

In early 2015, with shoot-outs regularly interrupting daily life
in UPP favelas, governor Luiz Fernando de Souza (who succeeded
Cabral in the post after serving as his vice governor) signed decree
2015/45,146 institutionalizing the UPP program and creating an exec-
utive commission to oversee it, so it would not be extinguished by a
subsequent administration. Nevertheless, to favela residents the pro-
gram remained firmly identified with the megaevent cycle that was
coming to a close in the city: a survey of residents in twenty UPP favelas
between 2014 and 2016 revealed that most believed the UPPs would end after the Olympic Games. They might be right. Independent of the program’s official status and the intentions of elected officials, the finances of the state of Rio de Janeiro were so dire by 2016 that the acting governor decreed a state of financial emergency and appealed to the federal government for financial help in meeting Olympic obligations.

There were budget cuts across the board, with a one-third reduction for the security department. Although Rio state’s investment in security was more than double the investment in health and one quarter greater than the investment in education between 2008–15, Beltrame’s successor, Roberto Sá, took over in October 2016 a department with an estimated debt of R$500 million and a widening credibility gap.

Distrust in the program, its objectives, and in the intentions of elected authorities was highest among those who ideally should have been most involved in its success, such as community leader Raúl Santiago, a lifelong resident of Alemão and founder of the Papo Reto, or Straight Talk, a youth collective: “The only thing that changed with us with UPP and the Olympics was the discourse. We had interventions, we had more police, more violence, more segregation. The reality we see is the opposite of the official discourse. Public policy has to involve more than guns.”

**CONCLUSION**

By the time the 2016 Olympics opened in Rio, what started as a small, focused favela policing program that broke from existing law enforcement paradigms and had some positive initial results was largely denatured. This process took place as its laudable, if initially poorly articulated, goals and methods were subsumed under city, state, and national officials’ overarching desire to present an image of Rio de Janeiro and, by extension, an image of Brazil as safe for some—tourists, investors, athletes—even if that safety came at the expense of the welfare of others—favela residents themselves. The need to control favelas and to present an image of favelas under control, that is, under
law enforcement or if necessary military control, through national and international media was prioritized over the more difficult and long-term process of training officers in a new way of policing and thereby winning their confidence in the program and the trust of favela residents.

This was also true of the social aspect of the program. When long-term needs of the communities and their residents clashed with the short-term needs linked to the hosting of megaevents (as in the case of Rocinha residents who wanted basic sanitation, not an expensive but high-profile and tourist-friendly cable car to the top), the short-term, megaevent-driven objective was prioritized, even at the cost of the community’s engagement and allegiance. Any long-term improvement in security within favelas would have to be linked to an improvement in standards of living within these communities. This should have meant an extension of public services such as mail delivery and trash collection on the same standards as are available in other city neighborhoods and, more than that, equal access to civil and human rights. The violence that burdens Rio and Brazil extrapolates differences in income or access to resources; it also lays in the differentiated treatment of rich and poor, even by state agents and institutions such as the police. The incorporation of favelas into the urban fabric required a different way of policing, certainly, but it also demanded much more than effective policing. The UPP Social, later renamed Rio Mais Social, failed in this role.

It is impossible to know if the UPP program would have had another, slower, and possibly more positive trajectory had the city not been chosen to host the 2016 Olympics. But by looking at the program’s evolution, starting with its inception on December 2008, its rapid escalation, and its subsequent exhaustion, it is clear that the program’s promise helped secure its capture and subjection to the broader political objectives that also drove Rio’s candidacy: the need to improve the city’s, and consequently Brazil’s, image and attract investment.

Its unraveling comes at great cost in opportunities and in lives. As the UPP lost credibility, gangs began openly bearing arms again. They also began targeting UPP officers, and all officers, directly. Deaths of military police ticked up: twenty-three died on duty and sixty-five off
duty in 2015; in the first ten months of 2016 alone, twenty-nine died on duty and eighty-seven off duty.77 Scenes like the confrontation in Pavão-Pavãozinho were once again regular features in the lives of cariocas. By October 2016, 846 people had been injured or killed by stray bullets resulting from shoot-outs in Rio state, according to the police.78

Despite the institutionalization of the UPP program, a look at the state’s finances suggests its post-Olympic future is uncertain. This is no longer a problem for the men responsible for Rio’s candidacy, its preparation for the Olympics, or the UPP’s escalation—Mayor Paes, Governor Cabral, President Lula, and state secretary for security Beltrame. They have all left office. One officer who remains is Maj. Pricilla Azevedo, who once went to Copenhagen to help reassure IOC officials that Rio would be a safe and agreeable place for the Games. She’s now head of the program and has a daunting task ahead.

NOTES

2. Instituto de Segurança Pública (www.isp.rj.gov.br/).
4. Ibid.
8. Simon Darnell and Rob Millington, “Modernization, Neoliberalism and Sports Mega-Events: Evolving Discourses in Latin America,” in Mega-


11. Official Rio Olympics website, question no. 23, on security at the Games.


15. Instituto de Segurança Pública (www.isp.rj.gov.br/).


18. Personal interview with José Mariano Beltrame, August 1, 2013.


22. Instituto de Segurança Pública: (www.isp.rj.gov.br/).


25. Personal interview with José Mariano Beltrame.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.


32. Darnell and Millington, “Modernization, Neoliberalism and Sports Mega-Events.”


41. Personal interview with André Rodrigues, June 11, 2015.


45. Ibid., p. 2.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
50. Cano, Borges, and Ribeiro, Os Donos Do Morro.
55. Cano, Borges, and Ribeiro, Os Donos Do Morro.
56. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
63. Ibid.


68. Instituto de Segurança Pública, or Institute for Public Safety (www.isp.rj.gov).


74. For the investment figures, see http://br.transparencia.gov.br/tem/?estado=RJ.

75. Marco Antônio Martins, “Sucessor de Beltrame Assume Seseg Com Divida de R$100 Milhões,” *G1*, October 17, 2016 (http://g1.globo.com/rio-de-janeiro/noticia/2016/10/sucessor-de-beltrame-assume-seseg-com-divida-de-r-100-milhoes.html).


77. Number of on-duty military police deaths comes from the Instituto de Segurança Pública, or Institute for Public Safety (www.isp.rj.gov.br); the number of off-duty military police deaths comes from the Fórum Brasileiro
de Segurança Pública, or Brazilian Forum for Public Safety (www.forumseguranca.org.br).
