From resistance to the struggle for a socialist society

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Since the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff of the Workers' Party, PT, we are essentially in a coup situation. Today it is also clear that it is not only a constitutional overthrow by Congress. There is a consistent front extending from the powerful entrepreneurial association of Sao Paolo, FIESP, the large media groups, under the leadership of "Rede Globo", to the bourgeois courts, not only in the person of Judge Sergio Moro, but also in the form of the Supreme Court, STF.

The deputies and senators of the right-wing putschists are obviously involved in all kinds of corruption scandals. At present, this is also extending to the executive branch, where President Temer and his ministers are swamped with accusations and up to their necks in trials. The honourable Judge Moro and the Supreme Court STF are not exempt from this, as they are apparently delaying the proceedings against the right-wing putschists while speeding up the proceedings against PT officials, especially Lula da Silva, whom they have now convicted in two instances without any concrete evidence.

The coup has clear objectives that we can identify: Removal of the PT from the government; the condemnation of Lula as the clear leader of the PT; the dismantling of the PT as the party created by the working class and still regarded by the majority of workers as "their" party; Enforcement of the neoliberal austerity policy through attacks on workers' and pensioners' rights; radical reduction of state expenditure in respect to public service and social services and accelerated privatisation of public wealth and companies.

Therefore, we can summarise that this is a coup against the entire working class, not only an attack on their rights, but also on "their" organisations, such as PT, CUT and the trade unions. This attack is also directed at democratic freedoms as written into the constitution, such as the right of association, the right of assembly in public places and the right to form trade unions. Not only did we see police raids against student assemblies at universities and against trade union assemblies, we also saw Lula convicted without evidence, for political reasons, to prevent him from standing democratically in the next election.

Against the military intervention in Rio de Janeiro

The most recent attack is the military intervention in Rio de Janeiro, ordered by a decree of President Temer. The public safety of the state of Rio was placed under the command of the army's General Braga Netto, who declared on the day of the intervention: "Rio is now the test laboratory for the whole country" (G1 Rio, 27.2.2018, 21:54). In other words, there is a risk that the entire 2018 election process will not take place at all. The next step in the coup could indeed be military intervention throughout the country. Unfortunately, however, we have to note a certain passivity among some on the left with regard to the intervention in Rio. Many people pretend that it is an isolated phenomenon and play down the danger of an expanded military intervention.

In the current situation, the Brazilian left must not disintegrate. The united front against the attacks on workers and pensioners must continue for the next confrontation, now above all the defence of democratic rights. Parties such as the PSOL and PCB have correctly recognised that the conviction of Lula without evidence is an attack on the democratic right of his candidacy, while at the same time remaining politically independent of his political campaign itself.

The PSTU, on the other hand, has not recognised the coup d'état as such since the beginning of the coup and has therefore entered into a de facto united front with the putschists, with the pseudo-radical slogan "Away with Dilma -
away with everyone". They continue this today by demanding that Lula be arrested for corruption, echoing the line of the putschists.

On the other hand, there is the problem of the position of those sectors of the PT that continue to defend their alliance with parts of the putschists. For example, in Minas Gerais, the Governor, Pimentel, of the PT, has not broken with Temer's party, the PMDB, which breaks valid collective agreements with public service unions and he continues the privatisation policy of Aecio Neves, his neoliberal predecessor. In Ceara, it was the Governor himself, Camilo Santana of the PT, who approached Temer to demand military intervention in his state.

The left must stand firm in this situation and, above all, demand that the PT break with its bourgeois partners, organise demonstrations in defence of democratic freedoms and against military intervention, and stand for Lula's right to stand as a candidate for the presidency.

The 2018 elections
In this difficult situation, we must use the united front tactic correctly to crush the putschists' plans. In the electoral process, despite the differences on the left, it is clear that we must use the election to confront the enemy, the putschist right, which wants to advance the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. We must therefore be clear that there must be an end to any alliances with these right-wing parties. We can clearly see the consequences of class collaboration in the fate of the PT. There must finally be an end to the old song that "without alliances there will be no victory".

Although PT policy managed to lift Brazil "mercifully" from the UN's map of starving countries, it was its alliances with the bourgeois parties that dragged the PT into the maelstrom of corruption and robbed it of its identity. Worst of all, it led it to make crucial attacks on workers' rights when in government. The other problem is that the campaign in defence of Lula is focusing entirely on the legal challenge, as if there could be any hope of independence of the bourgeois putschist courts.

If we have elections this year, we must be aware that this will be a decisive moment in the confrontation with the putschists and the fascists around Bolsonaro, not only at the ballot boxes, but above all on the streets. The parties of the left must organise themselves for this confrontation. The working class must enter this confrontation prepared, or there is a threat of severe defeat and confrontation with the fascists.

The PT has confirmed Lula's candidacy and claims that it has no "Plan B". Even if we do not agree with the policy of the PT, Lula's candidacy is a candidacy for resistance to the coup. Therefore, if the PT does not have a replacement, this will lead to confrontation, as Lula's arrest is fairly certain. If there are presidential elections in 2018 without Lula's participation, this will be an obvious fraud to legitimise the coup in front of society and the international community.

For a socialist society
We, the militants of the Liga Socialista, are aware of the importance of left unity at this crucial moment. With the coup, the false, bourgeois democracy has shown its true face. It has exposed itself as a dictatorship of capital that attacks the people, through its instrument, Congress, in relation to the rights and concessions they have won through decades of proletarian class struggle.

The bourgeois institutions have failed. We do not feel obliged to cure the bourgeois state, on the contrary, we must destroy it in order to build a new socialist state on its ruins.

In order to advance the fight for a socialist society, we need a leftist candidacy that is independent of the bourgeois parties, the entrepreneurs and bankers. This candidacy should be based on the social movements and trade unions and form a true army of workers, built up by councils in the districts and the different sectors of the economy. It should aim at the establishment of a government of the workers of the country and the cities.

The programme should focus on: the reversal of all privatisations; the withdrawal of all attacks by the coup government, especially the labour reform; the conversion of Petrobras into a 100 percent state-owned enterprise, as
well as the nationalisation of mineral resources and mining rights that have been sold off, such as Pre-Sal; the automatic increase in minimum wages in line with inflation; expropriation of companies that carry out mass redundancies and those that boycott or hinder the economic policies of the workers' government, and of companies that are central to the country's economy; securing public pensions by taxation of the rich; nationalising the media without compensation under the control of the workers; an agricultural reform that expropriates large estates and agribusiness; progressive taxation of large assets and inheritance.

Let us defend our rights and achievements!
Defence of democratic rights!
No exclusion of Lula from the presidential election!
Stop the military intervention!
Away with the Putschist Temer!
General elections immediately!

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