

# Workers Party marks second anniversary of coup attempt hailing Brazil's military and condemning socialist revolution

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Wednesday marked two years since the attempted coup of January 8, 2023 led by Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro and a section of the military.

Since the last anniversary of the fascist uprising in Brasilia, critical revelations have emerged about the dictatorial conspiracy and the wide participation of military forces that far exceeded Bolsonaro's most radical supporters.

The response of the Workers Party (PT) government to these developments was to organize a ceremony on Wednesday that only differed from last year's "Democracia Inabalada" (Democracy Unshaken) event in that it was even more reactionary, deceitful and politically cowardly.

The main point of the event was welcoming as guests of honor the three Armed Forces commanders, who were reportedly uncomfortable in making their appearance and remained silent afterwards. Lula initiated his speech explaining that they had been invited "to show this country that it is possible to build the Armed Forces with the purpose of defending national sovereignty."

Lula's attempt to ingratiate himself with the military on the basis of a nationalist appeal is absolutely reactionary. On the one hand, it aims to deliberately conceal Brazil's massive social antagonisms under the banner of "national unity," the same slogan invoked by the 1964 CIA-backed military coup to violently suppress social and political opposition. The military dictatorship famously used the slogan "Brazil, love it or leave it" as it tortured, assassinated and exiled tens of thousands of workers and students.

At the same time, Lula seeks to contain and gloss over the acute political crisis in the country by aligning himself with the same military apparatus implicated in the coup plot. This strategy corresponds to the broader agenda of the Brazilian ruling class, which seeks bury the lessons of the January 8 episode by turning reality on its head, presenting the military as the "saviors of democracy."

This narrative is completely absurd in the face of

conclusive evidence that the whole of the Armed Forces command participated in discussions with the former president about the plot to overthrow the elected government and install a dictatorship. Less than a month ago, Bolsonaro's vice-presidential running mate, Gen. Walter Braga Netto, and a number of high-ranking officers were arrested for their involvement in an advanced plan to assassinate Lula, his vice-president and the head of the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE).

Completely falsifying this episode, which mobilized essential forces of the Brazilian bourgeois state, Lula claimed to have escaped from an assassination attempt by "a bunch of irresponsible people, I would say, a bunch of lunatics."

Alexandre de Moraes, the Supreme Court judge and former head of the TSE, also spoke at the event, fraudulently attributing responsibility for the coup attempt to freedom of speech on the internet. Promising to advance his campaign to censor the internet he announced: "The great cause of it all hasn't been overcome, it hasn't been regulated."

In what was perhaps the most politically significant section of his speech, Lula counterposed the defense of abstract (bourgeois) democracy to a vicious attack against the legacy of social revolutions, in particular, that of the 1917 Russian Revolution. He said:

It's impossible to imagine a better form of governance ... outside of democracy. It's so good that it allowed a lathe operator, without a university degree, [Lula himself] to become President... it can't happen in any other regime. ... Take a photograph of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and there isn't a worker in the picture. You take a photo of the Cuban Revolution and there aren't any workers either, because they were intellectuals ... because historically it was always thought that workers were good for

nothing except working.

Developing on this point, he referenced the major strike movements of the Brazilian working class from 1968 to 1978 that challenged and brought down the military dictatorship four decades ago. Lula, who emerged on the political scene alongside his Workers Party in the midst of this process, concluded: “the Brazilian working class has a lot, a lot to do with the conquest of democracy in this country.”

The profound political contradictions in Lula’s statement were laid bare by the fact that he is unable to mention any significant conquest of the Brazilian working class other than having himself, a rotten ex-trade-union bureaucrat, elected president for the third time. In fact, the government’s event on Wednesday was notable for its failure to draw any audience outside of the black-tied state bureaucracy.

Lula’s denunciation of the Russian Revolution is a gross slander. It is an established fact that the October 1917 Revolution was the product of the conscious support of the majority of the Russian working class for the program of socialist revolution defended by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. The October uprising, the only successful taking of power by the working class in history, was based on the soviets and factory committees that directly represented virtually all Russian workers.

While it is the case that guerrilla movement led by Fidel Castro was led by petty-bourgeois nationalists and never founded upon such organs of workers power—and, therefore, was not a socialist revolution giving origin to a workers’ state—the 1959 Cuban Revolution did win support from the popular masses in putting an end to the US-backed Batista dictatorship.

When Lula speaks of “democracy” he is simply referring to the bourgeois electoral system and its rituals that disguise the rule of capitalism over the entire society. It is highly revealing of the historically treacherous role played by the PT that Lula gave such a speech as his government is being cornered by the same financial elite that promoted his return to power and now demands that it implement ever more brutal austerity measures against the working class.

Despite Lula and the PT’s insisting that “democracy prevailed” in order to numb popular consciousness, the social, economic, and political contradictions that underpinned the January 8 coup attempt are only being aggravated.

At the international level, the return to the White House of Donald Trump, an open ally of Bolsonaro, exacerbates the tensions in Brazil’s political system. The Brazilian coup

plotters were openly inspired by Trump’s fascist political strategy that led to the January 6, 2021 invasion of the US Capitol.

To mark the second anniversary of the fascist coup attempt in Brasilia, Bolsonaro announced that he was officially invited by Trump to the US presidential inauguration, demanding the release of his passport currently held by the Federal Police amid ongoing coup-related investigations. Trump’s move is a deliberate provocation against the Brazilian government. Whether its authorities refuse Bolsonaro’s request or bow to US pressure, diplomatic and internal political tensions will only escalate.

This provocation is linked to the Trump administration’s brutal imperialist agenda that aims to exert total and ruthless control over Latin America. Furthermore, it is in direct continuity with the previous attempts of billionaire Elon Musk, now a leading member of Trump’s cabinet, to destabilize Brazilian politics and promote the fascist forces claiming the legacy of the January 8 coup attempt.

In response to the growing US imperialist pressures and the global economic crisis, the burning question facing the Brazilian ruling class is preparing the suppression of the coming struggles of the working class. The nationalistic appeals of the Workers Party to the military not only pose no resistance to imperialism and resurgent fascism but rather constitute direct collaboration with their aims.

If the fascists failed two years ago, they are already looking to their next and better prepared attempt under more favorable domestic and international conditions. This danger can only be answered by a struggle in Brazil, in the United States and in every country to disarm the bourgeois state and transfer political power to the hands of the working class.

In other words, it requires that workers take up and develop the strategy of international socialist revolution that animated the October 1917 Russian Revolution and that is today represented by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).



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