

ARREST OF LULA AIMS TO COMPLETE PARLIAMENTARY COUP

With the arrest of ex-president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to serve a 12-year sentence, Brazil's rightwing is attempting to complete its parliamentary coup begun with the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff. A brief recap of the events leading to Lula's imprisonment on April 7 is useful.

In October 2014, Dilma was elected to her second presidential term, garnering almost 52% of the vote. A little over a year later, in December 2015, the campaign for her impeachment began with a petition introduced by president of the Chamber of Deputies, Eduardo Cunha (later driven from office for corruption) claiming Dilma violated the Fiscal Responsibility Act by paying for expenses of one ministry with the budget of another ministry, until the tax revenues were received, an act each of her predecessors had done repeatedly. Dilma was formally removed from office in August 2016.

Michel Temer was installed as president and immediately began to reverse all of the gains of the poor and working class under 14 years of Worker's Party leadership. Temer, in conjunction with the Globo Network, Brazil's largest media empire, began a campaign against Lula, fearing that he would run again for the presidency. This campaign led to charges of corruption against Lula, ending in his imprisonment.

As described by the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity:

"The decision of the Federal Supreme Court (STF) by a vote of 6-5, to not accept the appeal of Habeas Corpus presented by the Lula's defense team, after a marathon trial of almost 10 hours, revived the nefarious day in which the usurper Temer overthrew the Dilma presidency.

Once again the Globo news chain played a key role in the dictates of Washington by reproducing the threats of a coup by sectors of the Armed Forces of Brazil.

The unfounded accusation against Lula about his alleged ownership of a property given to him by a construction company as a governmental favor constitutes a plot of the worst kind. Something like this can only happen when the obscenity of the right, the judicial, the media and the legal apparatus became the executing arm of the oligarchy and imperialism to punish the people, their popular organizations and their main leaders.

This is the case of Lula, the beloved leader with the greatest popular weight in the history of Brazil. They are so afraid of him running as a candidate in the next elections that they made this judicial farce to disqualify him by condemning him to prison. They don't want him physically anywhere near those elections.

We express our absolute repudiation of the rejection of Habeas Corpus that constitutes a violation of the right of every human being to the presumption of innocence, violating the Brazilian Constitution itself and the legality that they claim to defend with total cynicism.

They are the same ones who imposed the phony impeachment against Dilma to remove her from power, the same ones that abuse workers and give away the wealth of Brazil. They are the same ones who a couple of weeks ago assassinated the councilwoman Marielle Franco of the Socialism and Freedom Party for fighting and denouncing the harassment and police abuse in the favelas.

They are the same ones who threw stones and fired shots at two buses of Lula's caravan just a few days ago. Although they appear before public opinion with the anti-corruption discourse, they are the same; they represent the face of fascism.”

The Brazilian Landless Workers Movement, a part of the Brazil Popular Front, has sent the following communique:

Dear comrades,

Yesterday (April 6, 2018) we had a historical day of resistance in São Bernardo do Campo.

Hundreds of solidarity messages supporting Lula and the struggle of the Brazilian people were received from all over the world.

Those were extremely important in the pressure against Lula's imprisonment, but also to strengthen our struggles.

Knowing that we are not alone in Brazil, but that we are millions all over the world makes us stronger!

This week the struggles will intensify and the international solidarity will keep having a strategic role.

Together with all Brazilian popular movements, the Brazilian popular fronts are organizing a calendar of mobilizations for this week, that include some dates for international mobilizations:

1. APRIL 11 - DAY OF ACTION AT BRAZILIAN EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES.

Ask local authorities and supporters to send letters BRAZIL SUPREME TRIBUNAL OF JUSTICE -STF demanding Lula's freedom.

2. APRIL 14: National and international day of action in homage to MARIELLE

*We call for actions for the Brazilian Black and feminist political leader assassinated last month and for Lula's freedom. The slogan will be: **MARIELLE LIVES, LULA FREE!***

3. Support the campaign launched by Adolfo Perez Esquivel, for the NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR LULA.

In solidarity and struggle!

MST INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COLLECTIVE

More information:

For information on Lula's legal case, resistance in Brazil: www.mstbrazil.org

For information on Marielle: <http://www.mstbrazil.org/news/thousands-brazilians-took-streets-protest-murder-councilwoman-marielle-franco> and <http://www.mstbrazil.org/news/%E2%80%9Cmarielle-franco-presente%E2%80%9D-global-protest-movements-denounce-assassination-brazilian-activist>

Email address for Brazil's Supreme Federal Tribunal: secretariageral@stf.jus.br

Sample letter to Supreme Federal Tribunal: <http://www.mstbrazil.org/content/sample-letter-brazils-supreme-federal-court>

Link to petition to nominate Lula for Nobel Peace Prize: <https://www.change.org/nobelparalula>

Link to letter by Adolfo Pérez Esquivel in support of the campaign for Lula for the Nobel Peace Prize: <http://www.mstbrazil.org/content/adolfo-p%C3%A9rez-esquivel-letter-support-nomination-lula-nobel-peace-prize>