#Trotsky2020: A Morenoite slander against the legacy of Leon Trotsky

Statement of the Brazilian Socialist Equality Group (In solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International)
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On the 80th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky, the Trotskyist Fraction of the Fourth International (FT-CI) produced a special series for its website *Izquierda Diário* under the title "#Trotsky2020."

Far from an objective presentation of the political legacy of Trotsky, the co-leader of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and founder of the Fourth International, the FT's supposed commemoration is an attack on the revolutionary principles for which Trotsky fought during his entire political life.

Despite the name this political grouping has chosen for itself, the FT is not a Trotskyist organization. It is the political heir of the late Argentine revisionist leader Nahuel Moreno, a representative of the Pabloite tendency that sought the liquidation of the Fourth International and was responsible for historical betrayals of the working class in Argentina and throughout Latin America.

The Morenoites of the FT are responding desperately to the resurgence of class struggle on an international scale. The fact that broad layers of the working class are rising up against the capitalist system and its national state is undermining the discredited nationalist trade unions and pseudo-left parties of the upper-middle class to which the Morenoites are oriented.

Their efforts play an important and reactionary role for the ruling class in seeking to divert the global working class from the true program and history of the Fourth International, embodied in the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).

The main element of *Izquierda Diario's* sinister commemoration of the 80th anniversary of Trotsky's assassination is a slickly produced one-hour and twenty-minute video, in which representatives of its organizations in Europe, Latin America and the United States present "different aspects of [Trotsky's] political and strategic elaborations, historically and in their actuality." The final 40 minutes are dedicated to an interview with the group's Argentine leader, Emilio Albamonte.

The "different aspects" presented are bits and pieces from Trotsky's writings of the 1920s and 1930s, with an overriding focus on tactical formulations torn out of their historical context. The video purports to present a review of Trotsky's political struggle: "From the politics of the united front between the great organizations of the workers' movement to combat the rise of fascism... to the entry of Trotskyist militants into the French section of Social Democracy."

The FT's invocations of the demand for the united front and the tactic of entryism in the 1930s are nothing more than an attempt to dress up its present-day opportunist political maneuvers in language associated with the struggle waged by Trotsky.

A falsification of the tactic of the united front

The first speaker, a representative of the FT's German group, spoke of Trotsky's demand for the united front of the Communist Party and Social Democratic Party in the face of Hitler's rise. The next speaker, from Italy, added that Trotsky proposed a united front in that country as well in order to combat "sectarianism."

The FT wants to make people believe that the unprincipled and bureaucratic electoral and trade union alliances that form the basis of its work are sanctioned by policies advanced by Trotsky. Trotsky's fight for the united front as a means of uniting the working class against the menace of fascism, while at the same time exposing the treacherous role of the Social Democratic Party before the masses of workers organized in its ranks and winning them over to a revolutionary policy, stands in stark opposition to the Morenoites' present-day practice.

Thus, Albamonte states that in the midst of the "great revolt of Chilean youth and workers" in November 2019, the FT's group, the PTR (Revolutionary Workers Party), managed to form a "united front with the CUT (Workers' United Centre) trade union, led by the Communist Party." He acknowledged that this would have been impossible when the CP had tens of thousands of members.

This admission points to the fact that this "united front" has nothing to do with either uniting the mass organizations of the working class in struggle or exposing the CP leadership. Rather, it was just a rotten alliance between the Stalinists and the Morenoites for the purpose of diverting the Chilean working class from revolutionary struggle.

When the Stalinists still had a significant base in the working class, they had no use for the services offered by the FT's predecessors. But now that they are absolutely discredited and, what is more, terrified by the rising movement of the working class, they welcome the "left" cover given by the Morenoites to their betrayals.

The same method of distortion of Trotsky's revolutionary perspective is used by the French section of the FT, Permanent Revolution (RP), to justify its reactionary policies. RP spokeswoman Daniela Cobet describes Trotsky's activities in France in 1936 as a desperate attempt to overcome the "very weak" character of his group, guided by an "obsession" with "finding a way to the working masses" rather than "staying on the sidelines." Trotsky offered "a series of tactics, the most daring and varied, seeking to better embody the strategic need of a revolutionary party."

What does Trotsky's struggle to turn the young French Trotskyist movement to the mass working class struggles of the 1930s have to do with the modern-day operations of the RP? The group is integrated into the pseudo-left New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), a party of the upper-middle class oriented toward the Stalinist trade unions and the defense of the military interventions of French imperialism, from Libya to Mali. The NPA is a party openly hostile to the working class. It aligned itself with the attacks of the Macron government on the Yellow Vests, slandering them as a racist and fascist movement.

But the Morenoites insist that this reactionary party, which plays "a

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relatively marginal role," in Cobet's words, is a vehicle for the continuation and development of Trotsky's struggle today.

The NPA as a vehicle for uniting "different traditions"

She states: "To make [the NPA] a tool for the reorganization of a revolutionary extreme left that revives Trotsky's tactical audacity, to build in France a powerful revolutionary party composed of militants coming from different traditions... this is the best homage that can be paid to the great Russian revolutionary 80 years since his assassination."

The FT does not attempt to explain how the formation of a national opportunist party "composed of militants from different traditions" would be a tribute to Leon Trotsky, who fought implacably against Stalinism and centrism to build the Fourth International, insisting that outside of its cadres, "there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name."

The Morenoites' insistence that the legacy of Trotsky is a collection of "daring tactics" that provide a solution to "the problem of isolation" is a tribute not to Trotsky, but rather to those who sought to destroy the international revolutionary party he founded. "Finding our place in the mass movement as it is, wherever it expresses itself, and to aid it to rise through its own experience to higher levels" was Michel Pablo's motto in his efforts to liquidate the Fourth International.

The FT seeks to equate Trotsky's legacy not only to the betrayals of Pabloism, but also to middle class theories that flourished in the universities in the decades after his death. Trotsky is painted in the video as the forefather of post-modernist anti-Marxism.

Andrea D'atri, speaking on behalf of Bread and Roses, the feminist wing of the FT, argues that Trotsky was a proponent of the idea that "not even the most radical material transformations can solve oppression by themselves." She claims that the large demonstrations in the last Women's Day celebrations, dominated by the middle class, would have been seen by Trotsky as the vanguard of the struggle against capitalism.

Continuing on this same basic theme, Marcello Pablito, speaking for the Brazilian Revolutionary Workers Movement (MRT), advocates "the actuality of a revolutionary and socialist strategy that does not limit itself to dissolving racial issues into class determinations."

Pablito states that the "first truth of the revolutionary strategy" consists in exposing the relationship between the "[black people's] struggle, which departs from the fight for our own lives, our own identity and our own culture, and the historical task of our entire class, regardless of the color of our skin."

According to the FT, the potential of this strategy of beginning with the question of race, was demonstrated by the "black fury" aroused in the United States by the police murder of George Floyd, leading to protests in Brazil, "the largest black country outside of Africa."

What the Morenoites do not state is that the "fury" in the United States against racism and police violence was expressed in protests of a multiracial character that spread not only to Brazil, but also to Europe and across the globe, expressing fury over not only racism, but also social inequality, mass impoverishment and the homicidal policies of the world's capitalist ruling classes in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

They did not find a single quote, even a loose phrase, that would allow them to fabricate some relationship between Trotsky's work and their promotion of anti-Marxist and anti-working class identity politics based upon the interests of the petty bourgeoisie.

Trotsky's revolutionary strategy is based on the objective unity of the international working class, determined by its relationship to world capitalist production. With the globalization of capitalism, the unification of the international working class is now greater than ever. Attempts to divide it along racial, gender or national lines serve only the reactionary purposes of the ruling class.

The FT's attacks on the "dissolution of racial issues into class determinations" correspond to the moods of sectors of the upper-middle class, increasingly integrated into the bourgeois state. They find expression in pseudo-left parties such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) in the United States and the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL) in Brazil, to which the FT's groups in both countries are oriented.

It is clear that the FT's "commemoration" consisted of a gross distortion of and slander against Trotsky's political legacy. But there is one more aspect that makes this exercise an especially sordid historical falsification.

In a presentation that was dedicated to the historical interval between the betrayal by the Third International that allowed Hitler to come to power in Germany in 1933 and the assassination of Trotsky on Stalin's orders in 1940, the Morenoites deliberately omitted Trotsky's conclusion from this betrayal—his implacable struggle throughout this period to found a new, Fourth International to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership in the working class.

The founding of this world party in 1938, its subsequent history and the struggles within it are for the Morenoites and their "commemoration" a closed book.

It is remarkable that the presentation made by their US group, Left Voice, consisted of a young woman wandering around the streets of Manhattan reading aloud excerpts from Trotsky's essay "If America Should Go Communist." Her conclusion was that the work showed Trotsky's "immense creativity in thinking through the possibilities of a socialist future."

This absurd attempt to transform Trotsky into some kind of utopian socialist can be made to have any semblance of plausibility only by abstracting his brilliant essay from his struggle—of which it was a part—against anti-communism and the destructive impact of the crimes of Stalinism on the consciousness of the American and international working class.

At the same time, the Left Voice's presentation was totally divorced from the intense collaboration of Trotsky during the years before his assassination with the American Trotskyist movement, the largest party of the Fourth International, which gained significant influence in the American working class. Of this, not a word was spoken.

Morenoism and its hostility to the Fourth International

The central thrust of this entire exercise in historical falsification is to pretend that the Fourth International never existed, consisting of no more than a vision in Trotsky's mind that was buried along with him. In the words of FT leader Emilio Albamonte: "First of all I have to tell you that the Trotskyist movement was decapitated. Deutscher [Isaac Deutscher, Trotsky's biographer, who was irreconcilably opposed to the founding of the Fourth International] defined it as a small boat with a huge sail. That sail disappeared under the Stalinist pickaxe."

After giving this blunt assessment, which dovetails with the principal aim of Trotsky's Stalinist assassins, Albamonte can go back to extolling Trotsky's supposed tactics as a useful means for pursuing influence and positions within the pseudo-left parties of the bourgeoisie, the trade unions and capitalist state apparatus itself.

Why are the Morenoites obliged, on the anniversary of Trotsky's assassination, to obscure and deny what he himself described as his greatest historical achievement, ensuring the continuity of Marxism and

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the fight to build a revolutionary leadership in the international working class by founding the Fourth International?

First, it is because they are incapable of accounting for their own history, and second, because they have no intention of allowing the history of the Fourth International and the struggles conducted within it to interfere with opportunist alliances with any number of heterogeneous revisionist tendencies.

The PTS (Socialist Workers Party of Argentina), the leading organization within the FT, has its origins in the break-up of the Movement toward Socialism (MAS) following the death of its leader, Nahuel Moreno, in 1987.

Moreno broke with the International Committee of the Fourth International in 1963, reunifying with the Pabloite revisionist tendency that sought the liquidation of the Fourth International into Stalinism, Social Democracy and the bourgeois nationalist movements. He subsequently pursued a policy of extreme national opportunism, adapting his party to Castroism and Peronism, as well as to Argentina's Social Democrats and Stalinists. Supporting the right-wing Peronist government of Isabel Peron, his party played a critical role in politically disarming the Argentine working class in advance of the 1976 military coup.

Today, the PTS, which claims "continuity" with the tendency founded by Moreno, pursues a policy of opportunist electoral alliances around the so-called Left and Workers Front (FIT), which subordinates its various components to a program based on left populism and adaptation to the Kirchnerist wing of Peronism.

In 2017, the leader of one of the Morenoites' main allies in the FIT, Jorge Altamira of the Partido Obrero (PO), accurately described the PTS as "Podemos in diapers," referring to the Spanish "left" party that is now the main partner in the PSOE-led bourgeois government that is implementing austerity measures against the working class and a catastrophic back-to-work campaign in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the characterization was on the mark, it did not stop the PO from continuing its opportunist alliance with the PTS in pursuit of parliamentary posts.

The FT's supposed commemoration of the 80th anniversary of Trotsky's assassination is a travesty and, in essence, an attempted second assassination directed against Trotsky's entire revolutionary historical legacy.

It will not succeed. This legacy is embodied in and defended and developed by the International Committee of the Fourth International and its protracted struggle against revisionism. The ICFI is waging a tireless struggle to bring this immense history into the growing international struggles of the working class and thereby build a leadership capable of leading the working class to victory and abolishing world capitalism.

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