

A reply to the Morenoites on support for militarization of Brazilian elections

Statement of the Socialist Equality Group (Brazil)
30 October 2020

The *World Socialist Web Site* received the following letter from a leader of the MRT (Revolutionary Workers Movement), the Brazilian affiliate of the Morenoite “Trotskyist Faction,” which includes Argentina’s PTS (Socialist Workers Party) and the French NPA’s Révolution Permanente faction. The letter criticizes an October 27 WSWs article titled “Brazilian Morenoites support pro-military parties in mayoral elections,” which exposed the MRT’s complicity in the pro-military electoral campaign being waged by the largest of Brazil’s pseudo-left formations, the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL). The author of the letter is André Barbieri, editor of the MRT’s website, *Esquerda Diário*. It is followed by a response from the Socialist Equality Group (Brazil).

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“Does anyone even listen to what these lunatics from WSWs say? For me it was an archaeological experience. After decades of raw degeneration, of full-fledged separation from the working class, and plain opposition against the antiracist struggle—which made WSWs irrelevant in US class struggle—they try their luck with slanders against the Trotskyist Faction. It’s laughable. The healysts say that MRT ‘cooperates’ with the militarisation of politics in Brazil. As they don’t have any work in Brazil—or anywhere outside David North’s own office, for that matter—WSWS needs to hide that MRT is the only left organization in Brazilian soil that opposes a principled struggle against the police (including in the US, with Left Voice) and the militarisation of politics, with which PT and PSOL actually collaborate. WSWs is, of course, obliged to acknowledge that MRT removed its candidates in Rio de Janeiro, repudiating the participation of a military in PSOL’s mayor candidacy. As Trotsky said in light of stalinist’s stupidities, even slanders must have some order of logics. What a pathetic performance by this corpse-like political tendency WSWs represents, trying to resuscitate with episodic throes of stalinist-like difamations. May the earth be light for these folks.”

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Barbieri’s slanderous rant is an accurate measure of the politics practiced by the MRT. As the saying goes, “the style is the man,” and Barbieri’s style is one of empty bluster and insults that reveal a great deal about his own organization.

He asks at the beginning “Does anyone even listen to what these lunatics from WSWs say?” His own hastily scrawled invective is ample evidence that indeed they do, and that the MRT is extremely sensitive about what the WSWs is saying about them. Since the re-launching of the WSWs on October 2, it has had over 2.5 million readers across the globe, including a growing audience in Brazil.

As for the claims that the WSWs has slandered and defamed the MRT, Barbieri’s message merely serves to confirm the substance of our original article in which we stated that the Brazilian Morenoites are “lining up behind the pro-military campaigns being conducted by what passes for the opposition to fascistic President Jair Bolsonaro, including Brazil’s largest pseudo left formation, the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL),” on whose ballot line the MRT is running candidates in Brazil’s November municipal elections.

Barbieri claims this is a slander because the MRT withdrew its slate of candidates in the municipal elections in Rio de Janeiro, where the PSOL carried out its most egregious turn to the military and police, running Military Police Col. Íbis Souza, former commander-general of Rio’s military police, which kills some 1,800 people a year, for vice mayor.

The Morenoites cynically calculated that participating in the Rio campaign would undermine its core political mission, which is that of providing a left cover for the PSOL.

But the Rio campaign is no mere mistake or aberration. The PSOL is running no less than 26 military or police candidates nationwide. In Sao Paulo, where the MRT is waging its major municipal campaign, the PSOL’s mayoral candidate, the anti-Marxist charlatan Guilherme Boulos, met with the Sao Paulo police union last week and promised that if elected he will hire 2,000 more cops. The MRT responded to this support for a buildup of the police by its running-mate Boulos by saying it wanted to “open a debate about the mistakes of such a perspective.”

While the MRT provides the PSOL with a left cover, the PSOL is itself merely the left wing of a pro-military turn by the Workers Party, which is running 126 police and military candidates, and all of the other parties of Brazil’s bourgeois political establishment.

Barbieri himself acknowledges that the PSOL “actually

collaborates” with the “police and militarization of politics,” but claims that the MRT is waging “a principled struggle” by withdrawing a sole candidate in Rio de Janeiro, while continuing to support the party in every other part of the country. Indeed, Barbieri’s candid assessment of the PSOL as an unprincipled and pro-military organization in his letter to the WSWS is a formulation the MRT hides from the public as it relentlessly promotes the PSOL and passes off its most blatant right-wing policies as “mistakes.”

The fact that the MRT is not fully integrated into the PSOL is not for lack of trying. From 2013 to 2017, the MRT directed all its efforts at entering the PSOL, whose leadership decided that it wasn’t worth the trouble, given that the Morenoites were providing them with a left cover in any case.

In 2017, at end of this failed attempt to liquidate the group into the PSOL, MRT leader Diana Assunção wrote an article pathetically titled, “Why won’t the PSOL leadership allow MRT’s entry?” In it she acknowledged that the MRT was “not making any kind of organizational condition, and informing the leaders with whom we met that we would not at first demand any leadership position, if they thought this would alter the internal correlation of forces built by the currents.” In other words, in backroom negotiations with the PSOL leadership, the Morenoites promised to subordinate themselves to the PSOL’s right-wing opportunist politics in return for potential places on their electoral ballot.

In this regard, the MRT was only following in the historic footsteps of the founder of its revisionist tendency, Nahuel Moreno of Argentina, and his Brazilian followers in *Convergência Socialista*, who adopted a policy of entryism into the Workers Party (PT). From the very origins of the PT, they worked—up until the moment of their unceremonious expulsion—to build a party that became the preferred instrument of rule of the Brazilian bourgeoisie, while betraying and attacking the interests of the Brazilian working class.

Today, the MRT plays essentially the same role in relation to the PSOL—a parliamentary split-off from the PT—calling upon workers and youth to “bet everything” on pushing this rotten party leftwards.

This same role is played by all the groups affiliated to the Morenoite “Trotskyist Faction.” Their political commitment to the subordination of the working class to bourgeois parties and the capitalist state found its most naked expression in *Izquierda Diario*’s recent celebration of the MAS victory in Bolivia.

The website hailed the electoral prospects of the veteran imperialist politician, Democrat Joe Biden, declaring, “This defeat of the continental right could be extended if, as everything indicates, Trump loses the elections on November 3.” There is a definite internal political logic to this assessment, given that the Morenoite’s US group, *Left Voice*, is oriented to pushing to the left the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which is itself a faction of the Democratic Party supporting Biden.

What infuriates the MRT in the WSWS article is not that it lied about their policies—it did not—but that it dared to subject their petty-bourgeois nationalist electoral horse trading in Brazil to an objective critique based upon the perspective of a genuinely international revolutionary party of the working class.

Barbieri’s charge that the WSWS is “irrelevant” has a definite logic from the standpoint of the politics of the tendency he represents. It is an organization of the petty-bourgeois pseudo-left, which orients to the interests of the top 10 percent that constitutes the PSOL’s principal base, consisting of upper middle class layers of ever more affluent professionals, post-graduate students, academics, trade union bureaucrats and “left” political functionaries. It appeals to them on the basis of the politics of nationalism, race and gender. The fight to build a revolutionary party based upon the working class and a perspective of socialist internationalism, indeed not only has no “relevance” for the Morenoites, it is anathema.

This is the perspective that guides the revolutionary work being carried by the ICFI and its supporters in Brazil. Barbieri’s claim that the we “don’t have any work in Brazil” is just one more of his lies. The Brazilian Socialist Equality Group (SEG) is still young, but it exists and it fights. Basing itself on the revolutionary program defended by the ICFI in the protracted battle against every form of political opportunism, including the bitter betrayals of the Pabloites and Morenoites in Latin America, the work of the SEG is interacting with a powerful objective upsurge in the struggles of the working class that will give birth to a revolutionary party in Brazil, a section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.



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