

# Bolsonaro leads pro-coup rallies amid military parades on Brazil's bicentenary Independence Day

Tomas Castanheira  
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On Wednesday, during the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Brazil's independence, President Jair Bolsonaro and his far-right supporters staged a series of demonstrations advocating the establishment of an authoritarian dictatorship in the country.

Less than a month before Brazil's presidential elections, for which Bolsonaro has been systematically plotting a coup inspired by Donald Trump's actions on January 6, this September 7 marked a critical turning point. It saw an unprecedented unification in the streets of the supporters of his fascistic political project and the military forces, with the generals' acquiescence.

In several cities, the president's supporters took to the streets with banners advocating an intervention of the armed forces against the judiciary and the Congress and for the "criminalization of communism" in Brazil.

Bolsonaro attended two events: The first, organized at the Esplanade of the Ministries in Brasília, and the second in Rio de Janeiro, where a massive military parade, traditionally not attended by presidents of the republic, took place.

The official event in Brasília celebrating Independence Day brought together political leaders from Portuguese-speaking countries, alongside representatives of the most reactionary sections of Brazilian society, such as the ultra-rightist remnants of the Portuguese royal family that ruled Brazil and businessmen investigated for advocating Bolsonaro's coup. Portugal's president Marcelo Rebelo, supposedly inclined to the "left", posed at the event alongside Bolsonaro as the latter held a flag of Brazil with its slogan "Order and Progress" replaced by "Brazil without abortion" and "Brazil without drugs."

Also in Brasília, as he spoke to his supporters, the

president evoked episodes from Brazilian history, including the military coup of 1964. Comparing them to the current elections, he ominously declared, "History can repeat itself. Good has always won over evil." In Rio de Janeiro, referring to Workers Party (PT) candidate Lula, the favorite in the polls, and to "leftists" in general, he claimed that "these kinds of people have to be extirpated from public life."

Analyses in the corporate media highlighted the "moderation" of Bolsonaro's tone in relation to his speeches at the previous year's Independence Day, when, in demonstrations of the same pro-coup character, the president announced "an ultimatum to everyone in the three branches of government."

These same analyses concentrated their fire on the "*machismo*" characterizing Bolsonaro's speech in Brasília, in which the Brazilian president led the crowd in chanting "*imbrochável*" (a grotesque term meant to describe himself as immune from sexual impotence). The Uol Channel, linked to *Folha de São Paulo*, interviewed the Deputy Sâmia Bomfim of the pseudo-left Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL). She declared in relation to "the *machismo* aspect of Bolsonaro": "I really hope he regrets very much being like that because I believe it is one of the main elements that can make us defeat him in the October elections."

For the bourgeois and upper middle class elements that dictate public opinion, this is a far more serious reason for opposing Bolsonaro than his active planning of a coup d'état.

But the newspapers could not ignore Bolsonaro's absolute success in his main objective: that of diluting any barrier between the military celebrations and his fascistic political rallies.

*Estado de São Paulo* columnist Marcelo Godoy described the events in Rio de Janeiro: “The military platform next to the Copacabana Fort was taken over by Bolsonaro supporters in green and yellow T-shirts as the announcer accented the candidate’s name and the crowd responded: ‘Myth!’ The president got off the stage and went to greet his supporters while the Army cannons fired their salutes.

“All under the eyes of two members of the Army High Command, the military commander of the East, Gen. André Luiz Novaes, and the chief of the ground forces Teaching Department, Gen. Flávio Marques Barbosa, as well as general officers from the Navy and Air Force.”

In addition to the “on land” demonstrations, supporters of Bolsonaro held a so-called “jet-ski parade” off Copacabana Beach with military ships in the background. In photos, speedboats and jet-skis campaigning for a dictatorship in Brazil posed with US Navy warships sent to participate in the military celebrations.

These developments debunk all the assurances given by the media, as well as by the pseudo-left parties, about both a supposed “constitutional commitment” that would prevent the armed forces from supporting a coup by Bolsonaro and a supposed “defense of democracy” by US imperialism.

The political analyst Igor Gielow, from *Folha de São Paulo*, also acknowledged that Bolsonaro “has effectively hijacked the celebrations of the Bicentennial of Independence” and “also the military.” From this, he concluded: “It remains to be seen if, in the hypothesis of Bolsonaro’s January 6, in the image and likeness of the one in the USA by Donald Trump, there will be any General Mark Milley (American Chief of Staff) saying ‘no’ to arbitrary acts.”

The comparison between the coup in preparation by Bolsonaro and the one promoted by Trump in the United States is apt. But the conclusion that such a coup can be averted by a kind of “Brazilian Mark Milley” is both false and telling in relation to the bankruptcy of bourgeois politics in Brazil.

In the United States, the Democratic Party and the corporate media have put all their trust in the defeat of Trump’s coup efforts by the military. Gen. Mark Milley was declared by the *New York Times* and others as the savior of American democracy for having

distanced himself from the president at the time of his coup attempt. But, as the *World Socialist Web Site* has analyzed in detail, Milley was instrumental in helping Trump advance his coup plans until almost the very last moment, and his break with the president was due to the uncertainty of the success of such a coup. Moreover, Milley’s intervention was unable to prevent Trump’s fascist supporters from laying siege to the Capitol building for 199 minutes without any effective police or military intervention.

The trust placed by the Democrats in backroom maneuvers with the military and the state against Trump’s coup threats has only permitted him to continue to develop the kind of fascist movement never seen before in the United States, as acknowledged by Biden himself. Attempts by Lula and his pseudo-left satellites to copy this recipe are setting the stage for a catastrophe in Brazil.

The events of this September 7 reinforce the call of the Socialist Equality Group (SEG) for an independent working class mobilization against the authoritarian plots of Bolsonaro and the military.



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