

Lula is inaugurated as Brazil's president amid deep crisis of bourgeois rule

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Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of the Workers Party (PT), was sworn in Sunday as Brazil's president alongside his vice-president, Geraldo Alckmin. The inauguration ceremony took place under conditions unprecedented in the 40 years since the end of the US-backed military regime that dominated the country from 1964 to 1985.

The inauguration ceremony took place in Brasilia in the absence of Lula's predecessor, the former fascistic President Jair Bolsonaro, as well as his vice president, Gen. Hamilton Mourão, who refused to hand over the presidential sash symbolizing the transfer of power to the elected government.

Alongside his Liberal Party (PL), which has the largest delegation in Brazil's Congress, Bolsonaro refused to acknowledge his defeat at the polls, which he falsely claimed were rigged. In the two months since the election results were announced, the incumbent president has fomented a violent fascist movement calling for a military coup to stop the supposed rise of "socialism" in Brazil.

Far from a passive agent, the Brazilian military directly participated in these conspiracies against the democratic system. The Ministry of Defense, headed by conspiracist Gen. Paulo Sérgio Nogueira, fueled the far-right movement with false allegations of a "relevant risk to the security of the [electoral] process" supposedly identified in a military investigation.

Reportedly, the commanders of the three Armed Forces were divided over whether to give direct support for contesting the elections which they openly discussed with the fascistic president. Even though they did not decide on open support for Bolsonaro's coup attempt, they officially legitimized the fascist demonstrations as a "popular movement" and used the threat of insubordination to extend their political control over the elected government.

The inauguration speeches made by Lula Sunday had the central aim of convincing the Brazilian population that this monumental political crisis was nothing more than a nightmare that is now finally over.

Lula began his first speech, before Congress, with an

extraordinary acknowledgment. He said, "Never have the resources of the state been so misappropriated for the benefit of an authoritarian project of power. Never has the public machine been so derailed from republican controls. Never have voters been so constrained by economic power and by lies disseminated on an industrial scale."

In his second speech, addressed to the audience gathered at the Esplanade of Ministries, the president-elect acknowledged another monstrous aspect of the Brazilian reality. Speaking of the brutal extent of social inequality in the country, Lula mentioned the figures: "700,000 Brazilians killed by COVID. 125 million suffering some degree of food insecurity, from moderate to very serious. 33 million going hungry."

The recognition that an authoritarian project, sponsored by powerful economic interests, was able to take over the state machine and promote the social murder and mass misery of its population can only mean that the current political and social regime in Brazil has totally lost its historical legitimacy. But this is not the conclusion drawn by Lula and the PT, who serve the same social class responsible for these barbaric crimes.

Lula reaffirmed his inalienable commitment to the profit interests of the capitalist class, affirming that Brazil has "sufficient technical, capital, and market capacity to resume industrialization and the supply of services at a competitive level" and that the country "can and should be at the forefront of the global economy."

Promoting the thesis that the mortal economic and political crisis facing the Brazilian working class should be attributed exclusively to Bolsonaro and a few rotten apples, Lula promoted himself as the representative of a "broad democratic front" that brings together the entire rotten bourgeois political system.

He declared in his speech to Congress: "I understood, from the beginning of the journey, that I should be a candidate for a broader front than the political camp in which I was formed, maintaining a firm commitment to my origins. This front was consolidated to prevent the return of

authoritarianism to the country.”

In his speech to the public, Lula called for a “broad front against inequality, involving society as a whole,” “workers” and “businessmen.”

These hypocritical appeals are a dirty disguise for promoting the continuation of capitalist attacks and an amnesty for state forces that are co-responsible for Bolsonaro’s crimes and who continue to foment dictatorial plots.

The cabinet formed by the PT in the image of its fraudulent “broad front” included nine representatives of the openly right-wing Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), União Brasil (Brazil Union) and the Social Democratic Party (PSD).

Less than seven years ago, the MDB was responsible for promoting the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, which the PT classifies as a coup d’état. União Brasil is the product of a recent merger of the very party that elected Bolsonaro in 2018, the Social Liberal Party (PSL); and the Democrats, direct heirs of Arena, the party of the military dictatorship.

But the PT is still seeking to further expand its political alliances in the far-right camp. The newly sworn-in Minister of Institutional Relations, Alexandre Padilha, a historical figure in PT governments, declared on Sunday: “We will talk to the parties that were Bolsonaro’s support base and that, in a first moment, may signal that they belong to the opposition.”

According to Padilha, by approving the budget amendment proposed by the transitional government, “the National Congress gave a demonstration at the end of the year that there is neither *direitão* (right-wing) nor *esquerdão* (left-wing) nor a *centrão* (center).”

Padilha is promoting a unity of interests sought by the PT precisely with the Congress dominated by the PL, which did not recognize Lula’s victory and seeks to build itself as a distinctly fascist party personally led by Bolsonaro.

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The PT’s aim to amnesty the Armed Forces, deeply implicated in the conspiracies against democracy, was made clear by the inauguration speech of Defense minister José Múcio Monteiro, on Monday.

To a restricted audience, composed mainly of military personnel and their families, Múcio affirmed that “Brazil and its Armed Forces”—responsible for a bloody 21-year dictatorship and the exportation of dictatorial regimes throughout the South American continent—“have always positioned themselves in favor of peace, democracy, and respect for institutions.”

Múcio declared his “admiration for all those who preceded

me, especially General Paulo Sérgio Nogueira, whose courtesy and efficiency [sic] in the most harmonious process of government transition.”

The fact that the defense minister chosen by Lula dedicates his mandate to General Nogueira, one of the main agents of Bolsonaro’s dictatorial conspiracy, reveals the mortal crisis of the newly inaugurated PT government.

Marcelo Kanitz Damasceno, upon assuming on Monday the command of the Air Force, the military branch considered to be the most aligned to Bolsonaro, confirmed the military’s expectation of deepening its political domination of the state during the PT administration. “I am absolutely convinced that the Armed Forces will continue to enjoy the strategic projects of the Presidency of the Republic and the Ministry of Defense, as well as gentle and harmonious treatment in defense matters,” Damasceno said.

Seeking to mask the reactionary character of its new government, which already begins as the most right-wing in its history, the PT launched a determined turn to identity politics.

Lula gave special emphasis in his speech to the public on the creation of the ministries of Racial Equality, Indigenous Peoples, and Women, which will supposedly be responsible for overcoming “the backwardness of more than 350 years of slavery.”

Two of these ministries have been assigned to figures linked to the pseudo-left Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL), originally created as a supposed “left opposition” to the PT. The first of them was assumed by Anielle Franco, sister of the murdered PSOL councilwoman in Rio de Janeiro, Marielle Franco. The second went to Sônia Guajajara, vice-presidential candidate for the PSOL in the last presidential elections.

The Brazilian working class cannot confront the immense threats posed by the capitalist crisis outside of a direct struggle against the incoming government headed by Lula and by the pseudo-left layers committed to the PT’s pro-capitalist policies. By seeking the rehabilitation of the crisis-ridden Brazilian bourgeois regime and the implementation of new capitalist attacks on the working class, they provide the necessary space for the fascist forces within the state to prepare a bloody coup.



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