

The Morenoites and the Venezuelan crisis: The pseudo-left exposed as aides of imperialism

Tomas Castanheira
26 August 2024

The political crisis triggered by the recent presidential elections in Venezuela is graphically exposing the treachery and subordination to imperialism of the bourgeois governments of the Latin American Pink Tide and their satellite pseudo-left organizations.

Called by the regime of President Nicolás Maduro after closed-door negotiations with Washington, the Venezuelan elections took place against the backdrop of US imperialism's declared quest to secure control of Latin America's strategic resources, which include Venezuela's critical oil reserves. At the same time, the US is fighting to undermine the regional influence of its global competitors, especially China and Russia, which support the Maduro government.

Since Maduro declared himself re-elected at the end of July, the US and its allies have contested the official results and put increasing pressure on the regime in Caracas. The imperialist maneuvers seek to corner the Chavista government in order to extract the deepest concessions or, if possible, to directly install a puppet regime through a coup based on the Venezuelan fascistic opposition and the military.

It is extremely revealing that, in this context, Washington has chosen Brazilian President Lula da Silva of the Workers Party (PT) as its preferred mediator in the political impasse in Venezuela.

The Brazilian government issued two joint statements with its allied governments of Gustavo Petro of Colombia and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of Mexico, demanding the publication of detailed electoral records by Caracas if their official results are to be recognized. Subsequently, Lula disqualified the decision of the Venezuelan Supreme Court and advocated new elections in the country. Lula's statements were issued between calls to Joe Biden of the US, Emmanuel Macrón of France and Justin Trudeau of Canada, who publicly applauded the Brazilian leader's actions.

The dirty work carried out by the Pink Tide governments on behalf of imperialism in Latin America has had a decisive complement in the treacherous policies of the pseudo-left, most prominently of the Morenoite organizations that make up the Frente de Izquierda y de Trabajadores - Unidad (FIT-U) in Argentina and compete with each other for positions in the union and state apparatuses in this and other countries.

In response to the Venezuelan elections, the International Workers' Unity (UIT-CI, its acronym in Spanish), the International Workers' League (LIT-CI), the Trotskyist Fraction (FT-CI) and the International Socialist League (LIS) – the international facades of the rival Morenoite organizations – issued statements with similar content, demanding: "Publicize all records" (FT); "Down with the fraud. We demand respect for the people's will expressed in their vote" (UIT); "Down with the electoral fraud!" (LIT); "Respect the popular will" (LIS).

As their headlines indicate, these documents echo the denunciations and demands of Lula and his allies, directly dictated by US imperialism. They

all support the claim that the results of the elections – which the Morenoites assume were unquestionably won by the fascistic right – are the most genuine expression of the "people's will".

The fact that the terms of these elections were set between Washington and Maduro's bourgeois government, desperate to reach a deal with imperialism, completely behind the backs of the people, has been deliberately ignored by the Morenoites.

To claim that the electoral results express, to any degree, the political will of the workers in Venezuela is a cynical distortion of reality.

Even aside from the blatantly illegitimate origins of this electoral process, the policies advocated by the Morenoites clash head-on with Marxist principles. By identifying bourgeois elections with the expression of the "popular will" they are deliberately concealing the class character of the state, while leaving no doubt about the bourgeois essence of their own politics.

Their backing up the fraudulent bourgeois narrative espoused by the Pink Tide governments exposes the Morenoites as junior partners of imperialism in Latin America. But the imperialist operation in Venezuela has a task especially designated to the pseudo-left: to divert the working class from reaching the necessary revolutionary conclusions in the face of the collapse of the bourgeois order in Venezuela, Latin America as a whole and worldwide.

Among the different Morenoite tendencies, the politics of the so-called "Trotskyist Fraction" – which cunningly tries to differentiate itself from its competitors and sell itself as a genuinely revolutionary tendency – is an exemplary case of how the pseudo-left operates.

The statement put out in the name of the FT's Venezuelan group, Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo (Workers League for Socialism, LTS), and prominently featured on the FT's website, *La Izquierda Diario*, for several days, is a rhetorical exercise in justifying the handover of power to the US-led Venezuelan fascists as a necessary stage in the development of the workers' movement.

Declaring their total solidarity with the protests that have erupted in the country against the "grotesque attempt to rig the elections," the statement reads:

It is a deeply contradictory picture, because the genuine and legitimate democratic and social aspirations of the mobilized people imply not only to defeat the starving and repressive government of savage capitalism of Maduro, but also the assumption [of power] by another reactionary sector, headed by an exponent of the traditional bourgeoisie... subordinated in everything to the interests of US imperialism.

In other words, it recognizes that the demonstrations it supports have a definite political leadership in the pro-imperialist Venezuelan bourgeoisie.

Further explaining what they frame as the “genuine and legitimate aspirations” of these protests, the FT wrote: “we fully understand the anger expressed with the demand that the will expressed by the majority of the people in the votes be fulfilled, *which is ours too.*”

This last phrase (highlighted by us), which revealed the FT’s attitude all too frankly, was surreptitiously removed a few days later from the article posted on *La Izquierda Diario*. But the FT’s political aim remains clear: that the fascist opposition take power supposedly legitimized by the “majority of the people” at the ballot box and, above all, in the streets.

The FT itself makes it clear that it has no factual basis for attesting to the electoral victory of the right-wing candidate, Edmundo Gonzalez. Nor is it able to determine the real social composition and scope of the protests that it presents as the genuine expression of the Venezuelan “people” and its aspirations.

As with the other Morenoite groups, the FT cynically uses the desperate demonstrations by impoverished sections of workers to blame their own capitulation to imperialism on the supposed backwardness of the working class.

Based on their false characterization of these protests, the Morenoites have centered their criticisms of the fascistic opposition on the charge that it is not pursuing its coup plots aggressively enough.

Arguing (as did the FT) that González and his mentor, the long-time CIA “asset” Maria Corina Machado, didn’t “call for the deepening of the mobilization” and “limited themselves to calling for some “popular assemblies of citizens”, the UIT concludes: “[González and Machado] made people believe that it was possible to defeat the government only by the vote, they never warned about the fraud, today it is clear that they continue with their vacillating policy that favors negotiations.”

In response to the fascists’ “vacillation policy,” the Morenoites advocate “giving continuity to the popular protest” (without any differentiation from the fascists) and that the “popular assemblies of citizens,” called by González and Machado, “must be converted into permanent bodies.”

The incredibly reactionary policies defended by these organizations today are a direct continuation of the betrayals committed by Morenoism throughout its history. Although organizations like the FT, UIT, LIT and LIS misleadingly call themselves “Trotskyist,” their common origins and political tradition are the legacy of the sabotage of the Fourth International by the Argentine Pabloites under the leadership of Nahuel Moreno.

In the early 1960s, Moreno definitively broke with Trotskyism to follow a path of opportunist alliances with Stalinism, petty-bourgeois radical movements and bourgeois nationalists throughout Latin America.

In Argentina, Moreno fully subordinated his organization to the Peronist bourgeois leadership in the trade unions and government until the 1976 military coup. After acting to block a revolutionary struggle of the working class against Peronism, he accepted the establishment of the CIA-backed dictatorship, calling it “the most democratic in Latin America.”

Today, behind their “international” facades, the descendants of Morenoism maintain a strictly national political orientation which, in the century of globalization, assumes an ultra-reactionary character.

Among the most sordid examples produced by Morenoite politics in the recent period was the enthusiastic support of the LIT, UIT and LIS for the 2014 “Euromaidan” fascist-led coup sponsored by US and European imperialism in Ukraine, which the Morenoites went so far as to call it a “workers’ and people’s revolution.” The continuation of this orientation was the frenetic campaign by these same organizations for the massive arming of the Zelensky regime by NATO and the deepening of its proxy war against nuclear armed Russia.

In order to understand the crisis facing Venezuelan workers and, more importantly, to point to a progressive way out, it is fundamental to make a

critical balance of Chavismo and the Pink Tide. Its promises to achieve the emancipation of Latin America and even to represent a new path to socialism in the 21st century have, in reality, led to a new period of imperialist interventions and the repressive turn of capitalist states that their governments have cultivated.

A balance-sheet of this political process and its strategic lessons would be incomplete without considering the prominent role of the Morenoites in sowing illusions in the Pink Tide’s bankrupt bourgeois nationalism. To this end, a review of the earlier writings of the “Trotskyist Fraction” itself is quite illuminating.

In a foundational document of their organization (“For a Movement for an International of the Socialist Revolution - Fourth International”), published in 2013, the FT reviewed the reactionary zigzags of its colleagues of the UIT and LIT in relation to the *Chavista* regime over the previous decade.

The FT wrote:

The UIT group in Venezuela went from subordination to *Chavismo* for years, calling to stuff the ballot boxes with votes for Chavez in the 2006 presidential elections, to sealing alliances with organic trade union bureaucrats of the right-wing parties; while the LIT, who also called to vote for Chavez in the same elections, converged in the “No” vote with the bourgeois opposition in the 2007 constitutional referendum. Behind these comings and goings and zigzags, without any anchoring in the firmest class independence and anti-imperialism, is the logic of the “theory of democratic revolution,” a logic which means that in the case of regimes with *sui generis* left-wing Bonapartist traits, such as Chavismo, these currents end up aligning themselves under the supposed banners of “democracy” raised by the right-wing, without denouncing that US imperialism is behind them.

Ten years on, not only does the FT reproduce the policy it had recognized as a cover for the machinations of imperialism, but it insists that establishing a “[political] pole independent from Maduro” with those parties it previously criticized is the necessary basis for an “independent, class and anti-capitalist way out” of the Venezuelan crisis.

Never has the term “class independence” been so abused as in the FT’s statements. Its political trajectory, systematically aimed at rehabilitating organizations and bureaucracies tarnished by their crimes against workers, exposes, in fact, its total antagonism to the interests of the working class. It is a tendency that speaks for the upper middle class subordinated to the capitalist state and imperialism itself.

The struggle for the political independence of the Venezuelan working class does not involve any kind of amalgamation with the treacherous organizations of the pseudo-left. On the contrary, historical experience – including the critical episodes of recent decades – points to the strategic need for total programmatic and organizational independence of the working class from the petty-bourgeois pseudo-left.

Making a critical review of Hugo Chavez’s bourgeois regime on the occasion of his death in 2013, the Latin American editor of the *World Socialist Web Site*, Bill Van Auken, recalled the support given by the international pseudo-left to Chavez’s fraudulent “socialist” rhetoric and his call to build a “Fifth International”.

As the WSWS wrote, the Pabloites’ insistence that Chavez’s initiative was a channel to overcome political “divergences” without the need of “discussing the historical balance sheets of different currents” exposed their interest in concealing the disastrous outcomes of the historical betrayals they were preparing to repeat.

The article continues:

The painting of chavismo in socialist colors by today's pseudo-lefts is a matter not merely of failing to learn these historical lessons, but rather of deep-rooted class interests. They are drawn to Chavez's "21st Century socialism" precisely because of their hostility to the Marxist conception that a socialist transformation can be carried out only through the independent and conscious struggle of the working class to put an end to capitalism and take power into its own hands.

These arguments apply entirely to the political "pole" of the pseudo-left proposed by the FT today.

As Van Auken explained, the mobilization of the working class towards these revolutionary goals in Venezuela and across Latin America depends on the "building of new, independent revolutionary parties, sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International."

The assertive defense of this perspective provoked angry reactions of the supporters of the pseudo-left at the time, which attacked it as a "sectarian delusion" of the ICFI. But the political developments of the last decade have strongly vindicated the scientific basis of these claims.

The countless workers and young people across Latin America being radicalized by the explosive events of the past years, characterized by the ICFI as "the decade of socialist revolution," must draw the political conclusions and take up the task of building this revolutionary party.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact