Morenoite “balance sheet” on Greece’s Syriza: a cover for popular frontism in Argentina

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The International Workers League–Fourth International (LIT-CI) published an August 1 article titled “Revisiting SYRIZA: a strategic debate for Marxism today,” presenting a review of the Greek experience between 2012 and 2015.

Its purpose is to distinguish this organization from other similar Pabloite and Morenoite tendencies by claiming that it warned from the outset that the strategy of Alexis Tsipras, leader of the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), would end in capitulation.

The article is directed at the current debate within the Argentine left, where sections of the electoral bloc, the Left and Workers’ Front–Unity (FIT-U), and other organizations are discussing the construction of a “broad center-left” or “broad front” as an alternative to the current Argentine government headed by the fascist President Javier Milei.

The LIT seeks to position itself as the consistent revolutionary voice against reformist illusions. But what the article conceals is as significant as what it says, and its function is to obscure the fact that the tendency advancing this critique shares both the class character and the strategic orientation of the object of its criticism.

Campaigning for Argentina’s Syriza

The LIT’s relationship to the FIT-U is fluid. The Argentine PSTU is not a component party of the front, which comprises three Morenoite tendencies, the Socialist Workers Party (PTS), Socialist Left (IS) and the Workers’ Socialist Movement (MST), along with the Workers Party (PO). Since 2011, PSTU members had been brought onto FIT ballot lists as “external” candidates.

In September 2025, that arrangement collapsed. The PSTU published a statement announcing that its militants had been barred from the FIT-U lists, including Daniel Ruiz, a worker activist running for national deputy for Chubut. According to the PSTU, the PO, IS and MST agreed to proceed as before, and it was the PTS that refused—citing the PSTU’s criticisms of Myriam Bregman and other PTS leaders for their show of solidarity with Peronist former President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, and an altercation at a student gathering in Brazil.

The episode is instructive, but not in the manner the PSTU intends. Its own statement at the time declared that it is not a member of the FIT-U, does not share the general orientation of the front or of its constituent parties, and considers the parliamentary conduct of their leaders far removed from the practice expected of revolutionary parties. It further acknowledged that the front, once progressive as an electoral expression of class independence, is now exhausted in the face of the new political reality. And having established all of this, it announced that it voted for the FIT-U, campaigned for it, and will do so again.

This is precisely the logic the LIT condemns today when others apply it to Syriza. A political formation is characterized as inadequate, exhausted, alien in its class orientation—and then supported at the ballot box on the grounds that it represents “the possibility of confronting the bosses’ parties in the elections.” The backing the LIT offers the FIT-U is the same “critical support” that Pabloite and Morenoite organizations offered Syriza, resting on the same evasion: the substitution of a tactical assessment for an analysis of the class character of a political tendency. What the affair actually demonstrates is that the whole dispute unfolds within the framework of the bourgeois electoral system, over access to ballot lines administered by the capitalist state.

A difference of principle, not of nuance

The most recent article presents the LIT’s record on Greece as one of a consistent Marxist critique. It is not. The difference seperating it from the position adopted by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) is one of fundamental political principle and class orientation.

The ICFI identified Syriza in advance of its coming to power as a bourgeois party—not a reformist workers’ party, not an “atypical bourgeois government,” and not a “popular front” that could be pushed to the left. Writing on January 24, 2015, the day before the Greek election, the WSWS stated: “Despite its left-wing façade, Syriza is a bourgeois party that rests on affluent layers of the middle class. Its policies are determined by union bureaucrats, academics, professionals and parliamentary functionaries, who seek to defend their privileges by preserving the social order.”

On this basis the ICFI called for no political support whatsoever to Syriza, not even critical support.

The LIT characterized Syriza as an “atypical bourgeois government” or a “popular front”—categories to obfuscate its class character. For the LIT, Syriza headed a government of working-class origin that had taken a wrong turn; it never regarded it as a bourgeois party from the outset. The distinction is decisive. If Syriza was a bourgeois party, there was nothing to be “pushed to the left,” and the necessary task was the construction of an independent revolutionary alternative. If it was an “atypical bourgeois government,” the task was to correct its orientation. That is what the LIT maintained, insisting that Syriza should break with the euro, nationalize the banks and repudiate the debt—as though a bourgeois party could be

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persuaded to change its spots by means of mass pressure or programmatic criticism.

This is not a historical question confined to Greece. The LIT's largest section, the Brazilian PSTU, applies the identical method to the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, characterizing it as a "preventive popular front," while presenting the Workers Party (PT) administration as mixed in its class composition, part working class and part bourgeois, and therefore susceptible to pressure from the left. The PT is nothing of the kind. It is a bourgeois party that has administered the Brazilian state on behalf of finance capital for two decades and now presides over the country's rearmament.

The practical content of that characterization was on open display on July 24, when Lula attended the official reactivation of Avibras, Brazil's largest arms manufacturer, at a ceremony assembling the three chiefs of the Armed Forces, government ministers, private investors—and the leadership of the Metalworkers Union of São José dos Campos and Region (SindMetalSJC), affiliated to the CSP-Conlutas federation led by the PSTU. The union's president, PSTU member Weller Gonçalves, spoke alongside Lula and handed him a document declaring the reactivation of the arms making assembly lines as "a great victory for our country" and crediting the union with having prevented Brazil's main defense industry from being handed over to foreign capital.

Most revealing is Gonçalves's own account of how the campaign proceeded. Government representatives, he disclosed, initially objected that Brazil was not at war, and that investment in Avibras would raise the question of why the money was not going to healthcare, education and infrastructure. The Morenoite leadership lobbied to insist that workers' taxes must fund the arms industry. It thereby helped establish the political conditions for the PT government to present rearmament as a national priority, ranking it as important, if not moreso, than social spending.

The LIT also sought to subordinate workers to Syriza and its plans to impose European austerity diktats. During the July 2015 referendum convoked by Syriza on whether to accept a deal with the IMF, European Central Bank and European Commission, the LIT called for a "No" vote without breaking from Syriza. "It was not a question of breaking the dialogue with workers, but instead of acknowledging their legitimate expectations, intervening in the real movement and letting the masses live the experience for themselves," the LIT explains in their August 1 piece.

Responding precisely to the same formulation advanced at the time, regarding the Syriza victory, the ICFI wrote in February 2015:

> The International Committee of the Fourth International rejects with contempt the political excuse offered by the petty-bourgeois pseudo-left to justify support for Syriza and its pro-capitalist agenda—that a Tsipras government is a necessary "experience" for the working class, from which it will somehow come to understand the necessity for genuinely socialist policies.
>
> Such sophistries are advanced only to oppose the emergence of a revolutionary movement of the working class, a development possible only through a relentless political exposure of Syriza.

Ahead of the referendum, the ICFI explained that it was a reactionary fraud designed to lend democratic legitimacy to the looting of Greece by the banks. Exposing the rank cynicism of Tsipras and his cohorts, it unequivocally warned two days before the referendum that it was designed as a political trap:

> Were Tsipras to concisely explain to working people the content of his referendum, he could say: heads the EU wins, tails you lose. Coming only months after Syriza won an election pledging to end five years of austerity, the referendum has been called to give political cover for a surrender to the EU. Had Syriza intended to fight, it would have had no need to call a referendum on EU austerity already rejected by the Greek people.

Events confirmed this assessment: shocked by the 61 percent "No" vote, Tsipras crawled back to Brussels where he accepted an EU-dictated austerity package harsher than the one Greek workers had voted overwhelmingly to reject.

The evasion of class analysis

A recurring device of Morenoite revisionism is to analyze a political formation in terms of its program and strategy while never making a serious examination of its class character. The LIT's article asks whether the Thessaloniki Programme was viable, rather than the question Marxism poses: which class interests did Syriza's program serve?

The article gestures at this question—"To what class interests has SYRIZA succumbed?"—but does not develop it, because the answer applies with equal force to the LIT itself. Following Syriza's betrayal, the ICFI advanced a working definition of the political phenomenon to which both belong. The pseudo-left, it explained, denotes parties, organizations and ideological tendencies that employ populist slogans and democratic phrases to advance the socioeconomic interests of privileged and affluent strata of the middle class.

It continued, stating that the pseudo-left "opposes class struggle, and denies the central role of the working class and the necessity of revolution… The economic program of the pseudo-left is, in its essentials, pro-capitalist and nationalistic."

The characteristics enumerated in that definition describe the FIT-U milieu as exactly as they describe Syriza. The pseudo-left is anti-Marxist, rejecting historical materialism for subjective idealism and the philosophical irrationalism of the Frankfurt School and postmodernism. It is anti-socialist, counterposing supra-class populism to the independent political mobilization of workers. Its economic program is pro-capitalist and nationalist in its essentials. It promotes identity politics as a means of securing a more favorable distribution of wealth within the richest tenth of the population, seeking greater access to social privilege rather than its destruction.

This is the social physiognomy of Syriza: university lecturers, professionals and trade union functionaries whose material interests were bound to the preservation of the euro, the European Union and the Greek state. It is equally the social physiognomy of the Argentine pseudo-left, whose base among students, academics, professionals and the union apparatus produces the same orientation—toward parliamentary representation, state funding and institutional positions rather than the conquest of power. The LIT cannot conduct this class analysis because it would be an analysis of itself. Its criticism therefore remains on the level of "mistaken strategy" and never reaches the terrain of class.

The omission of Moreno

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The article makes no mention of Nahuel Moreno, the founder of the political current from which the LIT-CI and its national sections descend. This omission is the precondition for the article's central claim. Morenoism is a Latin American revisionist variant of Pabloism—the tendency headed by Michel Pablo that adapted to Stalinism and bourgeois nationalist movements in the post-war period.

The ICFI documented this record in its statement of March 18, 1987, "No to Stalinism and the Popular Front! Build the Fourth International!", which traced Moreno's decades-long adaptation to Peronism—including a period in which his organization published a newspaper declaring on its masthead that it operated under the discipline of General Perón—and his explicit repudiation of the theory of permanent revolution. It documented the participation of Moreno's Socialist Workers Party (PST) in the class-collaborationist conferences convened by Perón in 1974, at which the PST pledged to struggle for the continuity of the Peronist government. As the ICFI concluded, the politics of the PST disarmed the Argentine working class, demoralized its advanced elements and paved the way for the fascist-military coup of 1976.

Moreno himself described what he was building. He wrote that the formation of a centrist party of the legal left was his principal political and organizational objective, adding that such an organization was consciously the opposite of a proletarian Bolshevik party. Nearly four decades later, his heirs maintain this formulation as the alternative to reformism.

The Argentine context

The article concludes with three pillars: independent mobilization, self-organization, and the transitional program. What has the LIT done with these principles in Argentina?

It orients to an electoral front competing for seats in the Argentine bourgeois parliament, and campaigns for that front even while declaring it exhausted. In May 2022 the FIT-U co-sponsored a "Federal March" in Buenos Aires alongside organizations belonging directly to the Peronist government of Alberto Fernández, an event its leaders themselves presented as a "united front" with the Peronists. It builds no organs of independent workers' power; it builds an electoral machine for Parliament and union positions. This subordination of workers to Peronism was directly responsible for the election of fascistic President Javier Milei.

The article's invocation of "imperative mandate, recallability of officials, rank-and-file committees, open assemblies and rotation of responsibilities" does not alter this. These are mere slogans to mask a political fraud. German Social Democracy before 1914 possessed impressive democratic structures, which did not prevent it from voting for war credits in August 1914. The decisive question is the building of an independent workers' party fighting for power and intervening in rank-and-file organs of struggle for this purpose, not the establishment of democratic assemblies to re-direct workers back to the union bureaucracies and bourgeois politics.

The article's real purpose emerges from the context it presents, indicating that Milei's offensive is contracting not only the state budget but the political horizon of the Argentine left. The LIT presents itself as an opponent of proposals for a "broad center-left." Yet its objection to "breadth without a program" is a maneuver to establish itself as the revolutionary leadership within the FIT-U milieu, to press its claim for readmission from a supposed position of principle.

The FIT-U is a centrist obstacle to the development of revolutionary leadership. The LIT wishes to provide it a left façade, to better channel working class opposition into bourgeois politics.

Conclusion

The LIT-CI's article is a carefully constructed political document that uses a balance sheet of Syriza to position Morenoism as the consistent Marxist current in the present Argentine debate. It conceals the essential point: the LIT shares the same fundamental class character and strategic orientation as those whom it criticizes. Moreno set out consciously to build a centrist party of the legal left; all his political heirs are still building it, and still quarreling over its ballot lines.

The lesson of the Greek experience is that no petty-bourgeois party, however radical its declared program, can defend the interests of the working class. The working class requires its own party, independent of every faction of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, armed with an internationalist revolutionary program and oriented to the conquest of power and the abolition of capitalism. That party is being built by the International Committee of the Fourth International.

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