



Brazil, July 8 ? Lula remains in prison

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On the morning of July 8, a Sunday, social networks in Brazil were excited by the news that the judge of the Federal Regional Court of the Fourth Region (TRF4), Rogério Favreto, had granted Habeas Corpus to former President Lula, after a petition was filed by three Workers' Party, PT, parliamentary deputies, Wadih Damous, Paulo Teixeira and Paulo Pimenta, on Friday, June 6. It seemed that Lula would be released soon.

According to Miguel Martins, published on July 9, at Carta Capital website, "Favreto also questioned the reason why Lula was imprisoned: the refusal of Cármen Lúcia, the president of the Federal Supreme Court, to apply the Constitutional clauses 43 and 44, which rule out imprisonment when appeals are still in progress, as was the case with Lula. In short, Favreto demanded the immediate release of the former president."

What no one expected was that the federal executive would not obey the judgment. In fact, the coup mongers of the government were plotting against Lula's freedom, and called in the "Anti-corruption" Judge, Sérgio Moro, who was on vacation in Portugal, but nonetheless immediately ordered Lula not to be released. He then set the presidents of TRF4, Judge Carlos Eduardo Thompson Flores and Judge João Pedro Gebran Neto, against Judge Favreto.

Gebran Neto demanded that the files on the Lula case be sent to his office and ordered his continued imprisonment. He said that Favreto had been "misled" by the PT deputies. Favreto, however, was not to be intimidated and ordered the return of the files to his office and gave the Federal Police an hour to release the former president. Before the Federal Police delegate could implement that decision, Flores issued another decision suspending the release order issued by Favreto.

This decision, and the way it came about, makes very clear the political character of "justice" as an institution of the coup mongers, who use it when and how they want, disregarding even the judicial hierarchy.

The reactions were immediate. There were demonstrations in several cities as the protest movement mobilised again, enraged by what happened on Sunday. People clearly see this as a purely political persecution of former President Lula. There is no justification for condemning a man without concrete evidence against him or keeping him imprisoned without a trial according to the law. Now, even worse, was the manoeuvring by Judge Moro, of 1st Instance, to prevent compliance with the Habeas Corpus ruling granted by the 2nd Instance Judge.

It is clear that the coup plotters are terrified that Lula could run for the presidency, because they know he can win the election and that the more they pursue him, the more his ratings in the opinion polls will increase. All that remained for the coup leaders was to flout the democratic freedoms, guaranteed in the Federal Constitution, to keep Lula in jail and prevent his candidacy.

This case will not be won in any court in the country because they are all under the control of the coup plotters. Even during the military dictatorship, when a lawyer obtained a sentence freeing a political prisoner, he/she was released. Today, we see the exact opposite. The Justice Department itself manipulates the system to prevent a political prisoner from being released, even with a Habeas Corpus ruling granted to him by a judge.

At the same time, we can see that the bourgeois state that was already shaken by the crisis of capitalism, is now increasingly weakened by the political crisis created with the coup. The austerity policies that attack the working class,

uprooting rights, destroying jobs, and cutting wages, increase the unpopularity of the coup government. The consequence is clearly seen in Lula's ratings in the polls. These events of July 8 exposed the desperation of the coup makers and showed their weaknesses. They are "paper tigers".

We have to take advantage of the turmoil caused by the controversial events in the judiciary and continue to work to intensify the mass mobilisations. Trade union leaders need to leave union headquarters and discuss with the rank and file to raise awareness that there is no possibility of a stable life under the coup government. The attacks on rights and past gains, wage losses and mass sackings will always be a constant threat and the unions will not be able to prevent this by formal negotiations with the bosses. The only way out for the working class is to "prepare the weapons" because fighting is necessary and only victory interests us.

This cause can only be won on the streets, with the people mobilised and willing to face the coup plotters and to wrest power from them with the strength of the working class and then to elect political representatives responsible only to them. Only in this way will we defeat the coup plotters and revoke all the measures taken by these thugs who have taken the state by storm.

But even that is not enough! The coup made it clear that the bourgeois state and its institutions are bankrupt. The Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary exist only to serve the interests of a minority, enriched by the exploitation of the working class and of the natural wealth of our country. We do not need a state like this. This type of state will never serve the interests of the working class, even if it is governed by a workers' leadership. We have seen what happened to the PT government which, despite taking measures that benefited millions of workers with reform policies, nonetheless brought about a class collaborationist government that favoured multinationals, agribusiness and bankers. Even so, when an opportunity appeared, the bourgeoisie came forward with a coup and regained control of the state.

Therefore, we must use the strength that lies in the unity and creativity of workers' and peasants' organisations built during decades of struggle. It is the task of the working class to destroy this bankrupt state and build on its ruins another state, a socialist state, so that we can have a just, egalitarian and democratic society.

? Defend the democratic freedoms!

? Out to the streets! Organise the General Strike!

? Immediate freedom for Lula!

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