

Against the pension reform, the general strike in Brazil occurs amidst great political polarization

Tuesday 18 June 2019, by [MAGALHÃES Bruno](#) (Date first published: 17 June 2019).

In recent weeks, polarization has deepened in Brazilian politics. Amidst the enormous difficulties of parliamentary articulation of the government and serious denunciations of corruption against the Bolsonaro family, a general strike took place on June 14 that paralyzed some categories of workers, carried out actions throughout the day and culminated in large mobilizations in the main cities at the end of the day.

The strike was centered on the struggle against the pension reform proposed by the government, which increases the minimum retirement age, modifies the payment rules for retirees and pensioners, and still withdraws a series of rights for Brazilian workers. Despite being rejected by the majority of the population, this reform is Bolsonaro's main promise for the financial market and the main issue of bourgeois parties' support for his government.

This strike occurred in the midst of the recent disclosure by journalist Glenn Greenwald, of the news site Intercept, of dialogues between promoters of Operation Lava Jato and the then judge Sérgio Moro (current Minister of Justice) that prove the conspiracy for the prison of Lula, ex-president who led the polls in the last elections. In the case of corruption, the messages affect the credibility of the government's most popular figure and call into question the legitimacy of the government itself. The attacks on Glenn have already begun, using "fake news" and homophobic offenses to disqualify his work, and they raise the need for great international solidarity for the journalist.

In addition, last month there were large mobilizations of youth and education workers against Bolsonaro, materialized in the demonstrations of May 15 and 30 that brought millions to the streets after announcements of cuts in funds for public education. Part of a spirit of resistance that was present since the beginning of the year, the demonstrations demonstrated the possibilities opened up for confrontation with the extreme right and are inserted in the context of the social dispute. On June 26, the extreme right also went to the streets in defense of the government and seeks to reorganize itself, marking the obvious danger of its strengthening among the right-wing camps in the country.

The PSOL has stood out in all these struggles, both in the fight against the Reform of the Previdência and in the defense of the fight against corruption in the various spheres of power. Our militancy is the front line of the youth and the combative union sectors while our parliamentarians are daily resisting the attacks in the parliaments. One example is our federal congressman David Miranda, Glenn Greenwald's partner, who has excelled in defending the right to information in the face of Intercept's leaks.

The willingness to confront Bolsonaro is growing, despite the strengthening of the hard core of bolsonarismo before other sectors of the right. In the midst of the complex situation, the possibilities

open up in the struggle for workers' rights, for the valorization of education and against indignation in the face of systemic corruption. The movement of students and education workers is the protagonist, calling for a big march to Brasilia during the next meeting of the National Union of Students, just as the right wing is also organizing for national demonstrations in the coming weeks. The stage is open, increasing more and more the tone of polarization in the class struggle.

The support of comrades from all over the world is very important right now. The increase of authoritarianism is a real danger that surrounds Brazil and must also be combated from outside the country, putting pressure on the government and spreading its absurdities internationally. All solidarity is necessary to sweep away the growing authoritarianism of Bolsonaro and the extreme right, we will not back down in our struggles!

Bruno Magalhães

P.S.

• 17 JUN 2019:

<https://portaldelaizquierda.com/en/2019/06/the-general-strike-in-brazil-occurs-amidst-great-political-polarization/>