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Brazil

For an alternative in Brazil

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Neither Lula, nor Alckmin! HeloÃ-sa Helena President!

We reproduce here the Manifesto of the Left Front, founded at the appeal of the PSOL, PSTU and PCB.

We launch this appeal from Quilombo dos Palmares, inspired by the strength of the struggle of Zumbi [1], so as to build the Left Front and proclaim the candidacy of HeloÃ-sa Helena for the Presidency of the Republic. [2]

Just as the resistance of the slaves and a strong abolitionist movement were necessary to put an end to slavery in the past, today, in order to suppress modern slavery and create a just and sovereign country, workers, peasants, the middle classes, intellectuals, artists, Brazilian youth and poor people should also arise and mobilise.

The Brazilian people cannot condemn themselves to choose between Lula and Alckmin, two candidates who defend the same neoliberal programme and the same political practice of corruption which undermine the National Congress and the government. The candidacy of HeloÃ-sa Helena is a real alternative for the Brazilian people faced with these candidates supported by the bankers.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/HeIHel23.jpg>]

The Left Front wants to liberate the country from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism. Inside this front, workers, the unemployed, the millions of men and women who are in the informal economy, living with difficulty from their labour, workers' political and social organisation, independent activists, all have their place. As well as all the Brazilians revolted by corruption and submission in the face of big finance capital and the bankers.

We will struggle together in the streets and in the mass organisations to win the electoral support of the workers against the two blocs of the dominant class, PT and PSDB-PFL [3].

THE PT AND THE PSDB GOVERN FOR 20,000 FAMILIES

The electoral battle is part of the struggle of the people. In the elections, we will show that the bankers and the big bosses, represented by the politicians and the conservative parties, are in power and do not represent an alternative for Brazil. We will present a new alternative faced with the governmental bloc of the PT and the bourgeois "opposition" of the PSDB-PFL.

These groups only oppose each other to occupy more political space, to see who will occupy the governmental machine, but they are agreed on the essentials; on the neoliberal economy and for the defence of institutions marked by corruption. It is only a struggle to see who will benefit from the privileges of power.

The PSDB and PFL have already shown with FHC [4] that it is the bankers who govern really, that they daily make use of the corruption in the government. But the right is not only in the PSDB-PFL, it is also in the Lula government.

The banks have obtained more profits with the PT government than at the time of FHC. It is not then by chance that they offered 7.9 million réis to the PT and 4.3 millions to the PSDB during the 2004 elections.

Lula will pay the bankers nearly 520 billion réis of interest on the public debt. But 70% of this mountain of money will go into the accounts of Brazil's 20,000 richest families. During this time, the government spent 5.5 billion réis per year for the Family Purse, a programme of social assistance used above all as an instrument of electoral clientelism.

To fight the concentration of wealth, defend the people and change Brazil, the Left Front presents a series of proposals, makes an appeal to struggle and requests your vote.

TO CONQUER REAL SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL INDEPENDANCE BY BREAKING WITH IMPERIALISM AND FINANCE CAPITAL

The economic policy of the government is oriented around the goal of satisfying the international markets, with low interest rates, free circulation of speculative capital and the repatriation of profits of foreign companies which make Brazil an exporter of capital to rich countries.

The foreign debt continues to bleed the national resources white. Nearly 40% of the national budget is consumed by the payment of interest on the public debt, leaving less than 5% for investment.

We support the demand of Jubilee South against the debt; suspend the payment of the foreign debt and carry out an audit. In relation to the internal debt, we support an audit conforming to what is laid down in the Constitution of 1988 as well as the analysis of its structure so as to identify the speculators and the big companies to whom we propose to no longer pay anything.

Foreign multinationals make use of strategic economic sectors from which they repatriate the profits to their countries of origin. These sectors - like oil, telecommunications, energy, steel - should be placed under the control of the Brazilian people.

The proposal of a new alternative economic and social project demands structural changes that Brazilian capitalism has never realised and which, in the framework of neoliberal globalisation, are more inaccessible than ever for it because they cannot be obtained without a rupture with imperialist domination.

The elimination of financial tyranny, speculation and the debt burden, the control of capital, the recuperation of the capacity of intervention and state regulation, the extension of public services as well as the redistribution of wealth, the creation of jobs, agrarian and urban reform, the preservation of the environment, are so many indispensable measures to finish with the poverty known by the majority of the Brazilian population and to satisfy the historic demands of the workers and of the people.

With 520 billion réis of debts that Lula has paid to the bankers during his term of office, it would have been possible to effect a great national change and resolve very serious social problems. We can build for example 16 million popular houses (which is the size of the housing deficit in the country) at a unit cost of 12,000 réis and thus offer jobs to the masses of unemployed in the country through the effort of construction.

This sum would allow also to finance a real agrarian reform plan which would allow the 4.5 million landless families to settle at a cost of 17,000 réis each. We could also double the national education and health budget. All these initiatives, which are qualitative so as to resolve the social problems of the country, would cost 394.5 billion réis, or very much less than the absurd quantity of money that Lula has offered to the bankers.

FOR NEW GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS WHICH REPRESENT A NEW POWER UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE WORKERS AND OF THE PEOPLE

The Lula government is at the centre of a political crisis which, as none before, has shown to public opinion the real face of the regime of false democracy of economic power and of corruption. Scandals have brutally revealed the decomposition of its institutions. From the Presidency and the Executive to the judiciary via the National Congress and the political parties, the main institutions of the Republic are henceforth assimilated without appeal as instruments of the dominant classes in the service of corruption and the exploitation of the people.

Lula and Alckmin are representatives of this corruption which reigns in the country. It is not true that the public thinks that in some way “everyone is like that”, because the majority of people do not. The corruption of the politicians and elites is the characteristic of the capitalist system.

The presentation of a proposal of radical democratisation of the regime and of political action should be done, always and systematically, by articulating the denunciation of the decadent democracy of money and of corruption with its opposite; the real democracy of the participation of the workers and of the people. The necessity of radically democratising the regime, by changing its class content, should be repeated forcefully as being a first condition for the application of an emergency programme capable of bringing the country out of crisis and resolving the problems of the majority of the people.

We want the voters to be able to revoke the mandates of those who have been elected and who do not fulfil their promises. We demand the imprisonment and the confiscation of the goods of the corrupt and the corruptors. We desire a radical transformation of popular representation and its mandates, through an exclusive public financing of the electoral campaigns, the democratisation of schedules for electoral propaganda in the media, the revocability of mandates and of the suppression of the barrier clause [\[5\]](#) which renders difficult the representation of parties and candidates without economic power.

These measures should radically attack corruption, decreeing also the end of privileged forums, of banking and fiscal secrecy, by establishing the wage of parliamentarians and those who govern through a referendum and with as basis of departure the minimum wage.

With the project of conquering real popular sovereignty in Brazil, the Left Front announces that, in the government of comrade Heloisa Helena, the Brazilian people will be called, through an intense day of mobilisations, to decide and to give the last word on: relations with imperialism (IMF, FTAA and so on); the foreign and internal debt and the necessity of a real national independence; agrarian and urban reform and a new statute on land ownership; the amount of the minimum wage and budget priorities; the criteria of preservation of the environment and so on.

A NEW ABOLITION IS NECESSARY TO PUT

AN END TO THE MODERN SLAVERY

An immense sector of the Brazilian people still lives in a situation of semi-slavery. To begin with the slavery of poorly paid waged labour and dismantled social rights.

Twenty two million Brazilians live with a minimum wage which is one of the lowest in the world. Data from the IBGE show that 46.7% of families suffer from hunger, a rate which reaches nearly 70% in the Northeast. During this time, the 5,000 richest families in the country (0.01% of the total families) concentrate a wealth equivalent to 46% of all the wealth generated every year in the country (GDP).

If Lula or Alckmin are elected, the situation will only get still worse. Lula is already committed to leading a labour reform which will represent a terrible blow for the historic conquests of the workers. The so-called "Super Simples" project, in discussion currently in the National Congress and which affects the rights of the workers in small and medium enterprises is an anticipation of this reform.

A RADICAL POLICY SO AS TO CONFRONT SUPEREXPLOITATION IN BRAZIL SOURCE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND OF THE INCREASING INSECURITY OF WORK

GUIDELINES OF THE LEFT FRONT'S PROGRAMME:

We want a plan of public works so as to reduce unemployment, at the same time as the reduction of working time, without loss of wages. We want to double the minimum wage immediately. For a profound agrarian reform under the control of the workers of the countryside. We demand the abrogation of neoliberal reforms, starting with the reform of social welfare. No to reform of the labour market and of trade union rights by the government and the IMF. No to the reform of privatisation of the university. We desire the immediate abrogation of the privatisations of public enterprises, starting with that of Vale do Rio Doce. Cancellation of the partial privatisation of Petrobras. For Brazil's immediate withdrawal from the negotiations concerning the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas).

In defence of the working woman, we demand the creation of crèches for children from 0 to 6 years. We fight against all forms of racial or sexual discrimination.

Moreover, we recommend severe taxation of the big fortunes and profits of the banks and big companies. The public control by workers and consumers of the production of essential goods is a necessity so that the redistribution of wealth is a reality and to put an end to the enormous inequalities which are the shame of our country.

From Quilombo de los Palmares, we call on the workers to revolt, once again, against slavery. The dignity of workers commences by their right to a job and a decent wage. Audacity, creativity and novelty are necessary. And the novelty is the Left Front.

Internet links

www.heloisahelena50.com.br

www.psol.org.br

www.pstu.org.br

www.pcb.org.br

[1] Zumbi Dos Palmares was one of the most significant warrior leaders of the autonomous kingdom of the Palmares, founded in the 17th century by insurgent slaves in the northeast of Brazil. He remains an icon of the anti-slavery and anti-colonialist movement, and a hero for the Afro-Brazilian community, Brazil and Latin America in general

[2] The Left Front supports the candidacy to the presidency of our comrade HeloÃ-sa Helena (member of the Fourth International's International Committee), senator and leader of the PSOL. Some recent polls indicate a possible electoral breakthrough for this candidacy. In some states she is in second position, behind the outgoing president Lula supported by the Workers Party, but ahead of Geraldo Alckmin, the candidate of the right opposition (PSDB-PFL). Thus in Bahia Lula is first with 55.9%, followed by HeloÃ-sa Helena with 15% and Alckmin with 9.7%. In the state of Alagoas, HeloÃ-sa is second with 18%, according to a poll carried out on August 18- 20. An IBOPE poll on August 18 in Rio de Janeiro shows HeloÃ-sa second with 18%, ahead of Alckmin with 12%. Finally in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, from July to August HeloÃ-sa increased her poll ratings from 9.9% to 16.8%, but she remains third behind Alckmin (30.5%) and Lula (28.8 %).

[3] PSDB-PFL: Currently the main right opposition force, a coalition between the party of Brazilian social democracy and the party of the Liberal Front

[4] Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a leader of the PSDB, was president of Brazil from 1995 to 1999 and from 1999 to 2003. He was behind the alignment of Brazilian economic policy on the ultra neoliberal model

[5] the 500,000 signatures required to obtain recognition as a party