

# AND Editorial – Smokescreen

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The denunciation published in “O Estado de São Paulo” caused a huge fanfare last week, according to which the Minister of Defense, Walter Braga Netto, would have threatened the president of the Chamber, if he did not guide the PEC of the printed vote. According to the newspaper, the military said, through an interlocutor, that “without the printed vote there will be no elections in 2022”.

Immediately, two reservations must be made: first, democrats and revolutionaries cannot take as absolute truth a single line coming out of the press monopolies, the leaders of the ruling classes or their official and unofficial spokesmen. Even more so, in a scenario of crisis and very deep division, in which desertions and diversionary maneuvers are gaining prominence in the enemy camp, absorbed by a fierce internal struggle.

Secondly, and more importantly, if such a statement was given in those terms – and everything indicates that it was, it was the threat of a fact, in such a way that even the reserve general officer Santos Cruz, today a staunch anti-Bolsonarist, would have been outraged with such “politicization of the barracks”, outrage that he would not have exposed if he had not known, from reliable sources, that Braga Netto’s nonsense was in fact a concrete fact, is no more forceful than those that have come to light, by order that brought the accusation against Pazuello (for having participated in a political rally, which is forbidden by law) and imposed a century-old secrecy to its internal processes. Not to mention the Note signed by the same Minister and by the commanders of the Armed Forces on July 7, harshly reprimanding a timid speech by the president of the CPI, Omar Aziz.

What is concrete is that, on the same day that the press monopolies leaked this threat by the Minister of Defense, Bolsonaro divided the government once and for all, elevating Ciro Nogueira to the position of minister. Why would someone in a position to stage a coup d'état make such a maneuver, to save the mandate – and freedom – at the cost of great demoralization before his own base? Is it not, by chance, the clear case of a weak government, forced to maintain itself at the cost of large bribes while waiting and working for new conditions, of chaos, that will allow it to drag the generals along? Is not Braga Netto's alleged threat, like the previous one published in a joint note from the commands of the three forces, an attempt to coerce "whoever cares" not to target the CPI against the Armed Forces? And more: would it not be a position that would allow them to question the outcome of the next elections, if the march of events forces them to disrespect them? Was not this alleged threat the same one stated by the then Army Commander, General Villas-Bôas, on the eve of the 2018 elections, when the Bolsonaro stabbing incident occurred, when he said that "the next government" assume "without legitimacy"?

In the end, both the note of 7 and Netto's alleged message are less a defense of Bolsonaro than of the Armed Forces themselves as an untouchable corporation (almost a caste), backbone of the old reactionary State. This is because their genocidal and corrupt nature becomes more and more open; not only their complicity, but also their protagonism in the massacre of more than 550,000 Brazilians in little more than a year, in addition to the benefits accumulated by the generals, which generate discontent among the military itself. In July alone, the Three Stooges (Heleno, Ramos and Braga Netto) accumulated salaries in excess of 100,000 reais. It is these indecent privileges and the cloak of silence over their centuries-old crimes that the gorillas defend. In fact, the military government is a fact, it is there, wide open for whoever wants to see it, installed in spite of the elections,

and even legitimized by them, an ideal situation for the outcome of the coup. This is what AND has been saying since 2017.

Opportunism, as part of the old order, takes advantage of this smokescreen to turn the legitimate spirit of popular discontent into docile marches for “legality”, and even in defense, as you see, of the electronic voting machines, undoubtedly more vulnerable to external manipulation than paper bills. In any case, the mechanism itself does not matter: there is no authentic democracy founded on the latifundia, the big bourgeoisie and imperialism. Under the heel of these monopolies, elections can only be a farce. By the way, one of the voices echoing Braga Netto’s statement was that of the Yankee ambassador Todd Chapman, for whom “the commitment to democracy must be seen as non-negotiable” and “the cancer of Brazil is not the coup, but corruption”, citing only cases practiced by the PT governments. As can be seen, Brazilian democracy, for him, is part of his business. This does not mean that they do not support the ongoing military coup, as long as it is presented, in a minimally convincing way, as a spokesman for democracy, even if it leads to another regime, and as long as it serves their plans for Latin America.

Here, a historical caveat is necessary. It is not under any circumstances that they can win the quarters, and more specifically those in which they can place themselves; nor do they depend on the mere will, or even the conviction, of a few fools. More than once, national political life recorded coup movements of this type being defeated by their own peers, which made it appear to many that there was a “progressive” side in the Armed Forces, when such arbitration, in reality, was only an expression of their tutelage over our banana republic as a whole. After each failed coup attempt, their leaders were amnestied – a totally different standard than that applied against popular and revolutionary uprisings – and

the power of the "legalist" generals was strengthened tremendously. This happened many times, as after the integralist uprising of 1938, in the "Novembrada" of 1955, in the episodes of Jânio's resignation in 1961, in the defeated threat of "reopening" made by General Sylvio Frota in 1977. In the current scenario, case If the extreme right-wing Narista de Bolsillo rushes to try to consummate the coup d'état, to avoid defeat and the eventual arrest of its leader, such an outcome is most likely.

Does this mean that there is no possibility of installing a huge military regime? No. As long as there is an order based on the oppression of the immense majority of the workers by a tiny minority of landowners and rentiers, that possibility will always exist. It is enough that the crisis leads to a growing disorder for this anti-communist generality and North American affiliate to see in the military regime the only way to maintain the unity of the Armed Forces and to carry out the three reactionary tasks of saving the system of exploitation and oppression threatened with collapse. It is enough that the Brazilian people rise up against this secular tyranny, moreover, if this is part of a strategy and not a mere isolated explosion of revolt, reaction will not hesitate to use all its weapons to drown the rebels in blood. This "red line" is the generalization of what the militia calls "social disorder" and "anomie", and we call the deepening of the revolutionary situation. But even this extreme way out will not do without the demagogues of the day and the opportunist politicians, who will first try to make the masses surrender, in the name of the defense of "legality". Which is nothing more than the peace of the cemeteries.

Therefore, it is not in defense of the elections that we must raise our voices, nor of this old and false democracy. The defense of the oligarchic-landlord "democracy" -in fact, a bloody dictatorship over the masses- is incapable of moving the immense majority, a fact proven by the emptying of the

protests of the last 24th. Workers, peasants and intellectuals must demonstrate energetically and radically in defense of democratic freedoms, always threatened – when not repressed – in the validity of this old order. Democratic freedoms that can only be fully guaranteed in a new regime, of Popular Democracy or New Democracy. This is not threatened, since it is yet to come. And it will come.

