

Bolsonaro Being Investigated for Jewellery Scandal

news

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Brazil's Supreme Tribunal of Justice (STF) on the 8th of July lifted the secrecy of the investigation into Bolsonaro's possible involvement in a scheme to illegally acquire precious jewellery gifted by foreign delegations and then resell it for profit. He is charged with three crimes: criminal association, money laundering and embezzlement. Eleven other people are also charged in the case.

Fábio Wajngarten, former communications secretary of the presidency and currently the ex-president's lawyer, said in a post on the social media site X:

"The PF (Federal Police) knows that I did nothing regarding what they investigate, yet they still want to punish me because I am a permanent and uncompromising defence of the former president Bolsonaro"[1].

According to the investigation, Bolsonaro and his organisation were able to embezzle R\$ 6.8 million (US\$ 1.2 million). The money was likely used to finance Bolsonaro's trip to the US from 30 December 2022 to 30 March 2023 [1]. During this time, Brazil went through a period of chaos, and shortly after Lula's inauguration, Bolsonaro's supporters stormed the Brazilian Capitol on 8 January 2023 in what many called a deliberate coup attempt.

The then-newly elected president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, vowed to find and punish those responsible for the attack [2]. Since then, the STF has convicted more than two hundred people for instigating the uprising. It has also launched an investigation into the organisers of the movement, with Colonel Mauro Cid revealing in a plea bargain that members of the armed forces met to discuss keeping Bolsonaro in power if Lula won the elections.

The plan was to arrest members of the STF and other members of the government, to then declare new elections. The text with the coup plans was given to Bolsonaro, who asked for changes to be made [3].

Bolsonaro's government was also responsible for spreading misinformation about treatments for COVID-19. Bolsonaro himself repeatedly stated that chloroquine is an appropriate treatment for the virus [4] and frequently underplayed the dangers of the pandemic, comparing it to a 'simple flu' [5].

By mismanaging and downplaying the pandemic, Bolsonaro's government is responsible for the deaths of over 700 thousand Brazilians [6].

His government has also been characterised by rampant austerity and privatisation. A member of the STF, Alexandre de Moraes, has consistently positioned himself as an enemy of "Bolsonarism" and its policies. With so many crimes and anti-popular measures, it may seem surprising that Bolsonaro is only being accused of a jewellery scandal.

This is not to underplay the seriousness of corruption or to present it as something separate from the other problems of Bolsonaro's government. The laws and inner workings of a capitalist government are designed to serve the interests of powerful private companies and wealthy individuals.

This means that the state is organised in such a way that it doesn't treat the actions of ordinary workers and capitalists as equal. Money laundering and embezzlement

are not exceptions to the system, but a feature, as long as they are perpetrated by the very rich.

But Bolsonaro became very unpopular and troublesome. Popular movements demanded Bolsonaro's arrest. And so, with Lula's electoral victory, figureheads are being persecuted to give people the impression that something is being done, without exposing the underlying system that enables exploitation and anti-democratic behaviour.

This is exemplified by his government's relentless pursuit of austerity and privatisation when the country desperately needs more investment and an expansion of public services. We talked more about this in a [previous article](#).

A capitalist government, whether far-right or social-democratic, will first and foremost serve the interests of capital and try to maximise profits for private interests. Lula may have promised to fight "Bolsonarism", but his presidency was limited in what it could really fight, because Bolsonaro wasn't acting alone, but was merely the figurehead of an entire state apparatus designed to further the exploitation of workers and increased the profits of the capitalists [7].

This system creates fertile ground for reaction and fascist elements, and so whether a social-democratic party is well-intentioned or not, by not abolishing the capitalist system it preserves the very basis for corruption, reaction and fascism.

A genuinely communist party, following Marxist-Leninist principles, is the only organisation capable of exposing the limits and failures of capitalism and, through socialism, bringing an end to the cycle of crisis, exploitation and misery, by organising society in a way that human lives and well-being are the main concern, not profit. [Join Politsturm](#) and help build this organisation.

Sources: [1](#),[2](#),[3](#),[4](#),[5](#),[6](#),[7](#),[8](#)

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