



CENTRAL OF MALE AND FEMALE WORKERS OF BRAZIL
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT



Criminalization of social movements and public system dismantlement

The Brazilian right-wing parties engendered a coup and impeached the elected President Dilma Rousseff, to implement a political project that was defeated at the polls in 2014. The first measures criminalize the social movements and undermine the public education and health system.

On November 4, 2016 the civil police of Sao Paulo invaded the National School of Florestan Fernandes (ENFF), an educational entity that belongs to the Landless Workers Movement (MST), in Guararema, São Paulo State. According to the Landless Workers Movement, the police raid left two wounded. One of them had a broken rib. Two members were arrested. "We are living in a State of exception," one of the LWM said. "Just like the violence they are using against the schools occupations".

A project approved in the Senate, withdrew the obligatory participation of Petrobras, Brazilian state owned company, in the exploration of the pre-salt oil deposit and therefore cancelled the 75% of the royalties for education and 25% for health, as it was previously expected.

The new Minister of education, Mendonça Filho wants the implementation of the project called "school without party".

This project seeks to censor the teachers in the classroom, forbidding them to comment the content taught, with the argument that teachers are promoting a "Marxist indoctrination" in schools. Moreover, the federal Government had sent to Congress the interim measure 746, that reforms high school programs, by putting an end to subjects such as Philosophy, Sociology, Arts and physical education.

And to make matters worse the members have already approved the bill and sent to the Senate a Proposal of amendment to the Constitution that freezes for 20 years the investments in education and public health. The response of the young people was immediate: There are currently more than 200 universities and about 600 secondary schools occupied all around the country and the movement keeps on growing.

The repression against the students occupying their schools has been particularly violent and unlawful: In Brasilia, judge Alex Costa de Oliveira authorized the use of torture against adolescents to vacate a school. He allowed military police to surround schools, cut the supply of water, electricity and gas, as well as to prevent the entry of food and visitors. He allowed in his court order the use of noise at night to prevent student from sleeping.

The high school student Ana Júlia Ribeiro, 16 in a historic speech in the Legislative Assembly of Parana state said that students know what they are fighting for.

"We're not fooling around. Our banner is education. We are movement that worries about future generations, about society and about the future of the country," she said, visibly emotionally moved.

"In addition, they want to prevent the discussion of gender issues in schools, preventing a healthy discussion about sex education and gender equality" claimed Camila Lanes, President of the high school trade unions.

With the slogan "occupy and Resist", students from all corners of Brazil reaffirmed the hope of better days in the country and even under the heel of institutionalized violence in post-coup Brazil, promise to defend public education until the end.

São Paulo, 21 November 2016.

