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Roberto Vérias de Oliveira

Crisis and Social Regression in Brazil

A New Moment of the Social Question

 Springer

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Introduction

Currently, Brazil is experiencing a deep economic, political, and institutional crisis. The economic growth carried out under Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT*) Government was interrupted with Dilma Rousseff's impeachment process, which was completed in 2016. Through most of the 2000s, PT's governments, by means of three full presidential terms and an incomplete fourth one, led Brazil toward relatively worker – and union – friendly policies. Now these policies have been submitted to a strong political attack, following its fourth consecutive victory, in 2014, leading to the impeachment of President Rousseff and to the present situation. These circumstances make it an apt time to evaluate the challenges currently faced by workers and their organizations in Brazil, as well as its consequences for the future of the life and work conditions for the most part of the population. This paper undertakes such evaluation by placing the current situation within a longer historical context.

Observing important socioeconomic and political advancements that led the country to a virtuous time of social development, here we aim to argue that the end of the PT's government cycle, precipitated by a severe economic, political, and institutional crisis and by the impeachment of President Rousseff, will certainly lead to an unprecedented step backward. We also intend to demonstrate that a new boost in social development – once it depends mostly on the organizational capacity of workers, as well as on historical reasons and on the current trends – increasingly depends on the organizational capacity of workers submitted to informal and precarious conditions.

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