

Corruption Scandals Could See Bolsonaro Removed from Power Quicker than One Could Expect

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The Brazilian government was shaken by a new controversy on Friday after the General Director of the Federal Police, Maurício Valeixo, was sacked by Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Following threats made on Thursday, the Minister of Justice and Public Security, Sergio Moro, responsible for the appointment of Valeixo, decided to leave the administration of Bolsonaro, giving a controversial farewell speech with serious accusations against the president.

According to Moro, Bolsonaro's desire to change the command of the Federal Police was motivated by a desire to interfere politically in the institution, and to gain access to confidential content of investigations about the president's allies and family members, including his own sons. The accusations made by Bolsonaro had a great impact on the local media, but none-the-less the Brazilian president denied the allegations later that day.

Speaking a little longer than usual, Bolsonaro tried to defend himself against Moro's accusations by talking about several different issues, but, when he spoke about his former minister, he concentrated on damaging his image before the electorate, placing him as the new enemy of his government. This is a usual tactic by the Brazilian president who always seeks an enemy to legitimize his policies and popularity.

Bolsonaro who modelled himself as the "Tropical Trump" continuously took aim against local Leftists, Venezuela, Cuba, China and anybody else that U.S. President Donald Trump also did not like. By casting an enemy, he could galvanize the Brazilian people behind him. As expected, the president's main strategy in his speech in response to Moro was to find a new enemy.

Bolsonaro's statements to the press were divided into three parts: focused attacks on the reputation of his former minister, describing him as an egocentric person with electoral interests; highlighting the presidential prerogative of appointing the commander of the Federal Police; and, trying to focus on valuing his own profile, talking about the assassination attempt he suffered, resources he failed to spend and the importance of his position. So, what we perceive from the speech, essentially, is what was already expected - the attempted polarization to put public opinion against Moro, while at the same time minimizing his decision to interfere with the Federal Police.

A dichotomy between Moro and Bolsonaro is emerging on social media, and it appears that Moro is winning this battle on the internet. Even before Moro's resignations, tens of thousands went to Bolsonaro's Twitter and Facebook accounts to tell the president that they voted for him but will not support him anymore if Moro resigns.

Earlier this month, the popularity of Bolsonaro had [dropped to 33%](#) because of his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, which he described as a “fantasy” and a “minor flu.” Earlier this month it was also revealed that the military, in which Bolsonaro is a former Captain of and strongly advocated for during his election campaign, has now shifted their support and backing for Vice President Hamilton Mourao, a former general.

Everything indicates that Bolsonaro may fall in a matter of months, and it appears this scenario can come to fruition sooner with the resignation of the highly popular Moro who was a key player in prosecuting Brazil’s Leftist former President, Lula. It certainly means that the 33% approval rating has dropped significantly after the fall out with Moro.

In an investigation by the Supreme Court, the Federal police identified councillor Carlos Bolsonaro, son of Jair Bolsonaro, as one of the articulators of a criminal fake news scheme. According to [Folha](#), Bolsonaro wanted Valeixo removed because he knew of the criminal acts Carlos was involved in. It is not reduced to just Carlos though, and rather [all three of Bolsonaro’s politically active sons](#), along with his wife Michelle, have been implicated in corruption scandals.

One of the main appeals of Bolsonaro was his strong rhetoric of being against corruption, which is why he brought Moro into his administration because of his popularity after putting some Brazilian politicians behind bars because of their corruption. However, this has been proven to be a scam as not only are their major questions whether those prosecuted had engaged in corruption, but there are endless scandals and accusations of corruption levelled against the Bolsonaro family.

Bolsonaro modelled himself on Trump and followed him in nearly every major foreign policy agenda regarding not only Latin America, but also China and Israel. Despite Bolsonaro being the greatest advocate for American and Israeli relations the continent has seen in decades, it is highly unlikely that either Trump or Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will come out in support of Bolsonaro as he faces a very real impeachment. It now appears that all this time of pandering to the U.S. and its interests is beginning to crash down on Bolsonaro. Rather than serve the interests of his country in this new multipolar world, he wanted to maintain the hegemonic status of the U.S. and get away with corruption - now where is Trump?

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