Justice for the MST and the Legacy of Paulo Freire

The Paulo Freire Democratic Project (PFDP) unequivocally and in the highest order denounces the latest attack by the Bolsonaro administration on the MST (Landless Workers Movement) of Brazil, on the legacy of Paulo Freire, and on social justice.

Since 1998 the MST has been operating a Paulo Freire Training Center in the state of Pernambuco. The Training Center, established on 14 hectares of land given by the Normandia settlement, has been a source of training in agroecology, environmental health and safety, education, and much more. They have established needed support services including classrooms, daycare facilities, a public kitchen, and cafeteria. Yet, in step with the current Bolsonaro’s repressive national agenda, the courts have ordered the eviction of the Paulo Freire Training Center by September 30, 2019.

The humanizing pedagogy that Paulo Freire professed has profound implications to social justice, human dignity, and freedom. He entrusted his faith and the fate of the world on the oppressed arguing that it is their historical task to liberate the world. These ideals have been manifested among the MST and they have created conditions that empower their communities, placing them as prime targets of a fascist political agenda that attempts to negate their human agency and rights to freedom.

We must follow Freire’s teaching and resist the current politics of fascists, slave masters, land grabbers, and other conservative reactionaries who seek to recreate the false “greatness” of the time of lynching and genocide. They cannot be allowed to win.

We urge all supporters of social justice and human rights everywhere to join us in denouncing this atrocious action and in demanding the immediate recission of this eviction order. For more information and to support the MST and the Paulo Freire Teaching Center, please visit the Friends of the MST website.

The views expressed here are those of the PFDP members and do not represent those of Chapman University.