

Leadership of Argentina's Partido Obrero maintains silence on ties to right-wing Russian nationalism

By Bill Van Auken
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It is now more than three weeks since the World Socialist Web Site published *Workers Party in Argentina seeks to "refound" Fourth International in alliance with Stalinism*, an exposure of the right-wing and sinister political connections made in the organization of a conference held last April in Buenos Aires in the name of the "Committee to Refound the Fourth International," or CRFI.

New information continues to surface about the political history of one of the participants in that conference, Darya Mitina, who was introduced by the Workers Party's (Partido Obrero—PO) longtime leader Jorge Altamira as a "comrade" in the "refounding" of the Fourth International and invited onto the platform to deliver one of the principal speeches to an assembly of PO members held at the conference's closing.

Mitina, brought to the conference by the leader of the Greek EEK, Savas Michael-Matsas, with whom she has long maintained relations, is the secretary of international affairs of the United Communist Party of Russia (OKP), a right-wing Stalinist organization. As the WSWS has established, in that capacity, she has traveled the world forging connections not only with fellow Stalinists and self-proclaimed leftists, but also with the most reactionary layers of the European far-right, including outright neo-fascist movements, all on the basis of the promotion of Russian national chauvinism.

The PO leadership has issued no reply to these damning exposures. Instead, it has zealously purged its website and Facebook page of any questions raised about the information uncovered by the WSWS. Nor has there been any article posted by the PO since the CRFI conference assessing its significance, much less

dealing with the political issues raised by the party's alliance with Russian Stalinism.

Rather than explaining the strategy underlying such an alliance, the PO leaders are continuing to lie to their own members.

In introducing Mitina to the PO membership at the conference in Buenos Aires last April, Jorge Altamira described her as a "comrade who speaks in the name of communism in Russia, which for her would be Stalinism," as if this were some minor cultural difference.

He didn't reveal to the PO what Mitina bragged about openly on her blog: that she placed flowers twice a year at the foot of Stalin's tomb and venerated the former dictator and gravedigger of the revolution as a man without equal in history.

Nor has the PO cared to delve too deeply into how present-day Russian Stalinism represents "communism in Russia." The legacy of Stalinism is global counterrevolution and what amounted to a political genocide against all those with any connection to the October 1917 revolution and the perspective that guided it—foremost among them Leon Trotsky.

In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the remnants of the Stalinist ruling party have turned ever more sharply to the right, basing themselves on Russian nationalism and, in large measure, ideologies that have their roots in fascism.

It should be noted that in the immediate aftermath of the April conference in Buenos Aires, Mitina's OKP united with Trudovaya Rossiia, or Working Russia, one of the most right-wing variants of Stalinism in Russia.

The founder and long-time leader of Working Russia was the recently deceased Viktor Anpilov, who had

close ties to and provided political support for presidential campaigns of the notorious anti-Semite and racist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, head of the fascistic Liberal-Democratic Party.

Anpilov himself had run for office as part of the “Stalin bloc,” in alliance with Stalin’s grandson. A rabid anti-Semite, he described the Yeltsin government as a “Jewish conspiracy” and called for Jews to be banned from television. His speeches regularly featured the word “zhid,” used repeatedly as an adjective. In the late 1990s, he established an alliance with the openly fascist National Bolshevik Party.

Darya Mitina, Altamira’s “comrade,” delivered one of the main eulogies at Anpilov’s funeral earlier this year.

Once again, the members of the Partido Obrero deserve answers as to why such an individual was brought before them as an ally in “refounding the Fourth International.” What was the role of the politically dubious figure Michael-Matsas in forging an alliance with the Russian Stalinists?

And, most importantly, what does the orientation to such right-wing nationalist tendencies on an international scale reflect in terms of the political trajectory upon which the PO leadership has now embarked within Argentina itself?

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