Mass strike rocks Colombia

By Martha Grevatt

A historic general strike took place in Colombia on Nov. 21, paralyzing the entire country. Half of Colombia’s population of over 50 million people is estimated to have participated, with millions staying home from work and hundreds of thousands demonstrating in the streets. At least 300 separate actions took place, from the capital, Bogotá, to remote rural areas.

Strikers blocked major streets, ports and airport entrances. The Central Union of Workers (CUT) called the strike to protest the U.S.-backed right-wing Cali declared a 7 p.m. curfew. Fights with police broke out in other parts of the country. The mayor of Bogotá, to remote rural areas.

The CUT called the strike to protest the U.S.-backed right-wing government’s plans to impose labor reforms that threaten pensions or wages, minimum wage. While President Iván Duque has denied any intention to cut pensions or wages, the leader of his party, former President Álvaro Uribe Vélez, has advocated exactly that.

The message and scope of the strike became much larger as Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, student and peasant organizations joined forces with striking workers. The government has committed numerous massacres against Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, including the killing of five Indigenous activists on Oct. 29.

Students understand that undermining the minimum wage will particularly hurt young workers. There is also widespread anger against President Duque for his failure to implement the terms of the 2016 peace agreement negotiated between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the government. A section of the FARC made the difficult decision to resume the armed struggle earlier this year. The National Liberation Army (ELN) is also engaged in armed guerrilla warfare against the brutal government.

Strike part of a continental uprising

This unprecedented outpouring of the masses broadens the upsurge engulfing Latin America. Other countries’ influence could be seen. The flag of Andean Indigenous peoples, frequently held in Bolivian marches opposing the recent U.S.-orchestrated coup there, was carried boldly during the strike. A theme of the mass protests in Chile—that the oppressors have taken everything from the people, including their fear—was expressed all over Colombia on Nov. 21.

The courage of the masses has emerged in a country deemed the most dangerous in the world for union leaders—with an assassination rate the highest anywhere. Community and human rights activists are also frequent targets of right-wing paramilitary death squads with ties to the military and police. Since the signing of the 2016 peace accords, more than 777 activists, including 137 former FARC combatants, have reportedly been murdered in just the past year. (teleSUR, Nov. 22)

Strike Solidarity demonstrations took place in a number of cities worldwide, including London. The AFL-CIO issued a statement backing the national strike.

“Colombia won on this historic day of citizen mobilization,” reads the Declaration of the National Strike Committee issued Nov. 21. Signed by over 40 unions and other organizations, the declaration says the strike “has been the expression of a new Colombia, of another possible Colombia.” (cut.org/co)
Burgerville union fights for first contract

By Johnnie Lewis
Portland, Ore.

During Oct. 29-27, Burgerville Workers Union, based in Vancouver, Wash., and an affiliate of the Industrial Workers of the World, struck four Burgerville stores for four days, forcing the company to return to the bargaining table. BVWU was the first-ever food workers union in the U.S.

This was the second BVWU strike since 2017 when the union forced the company, through a three-day strike, to recognize it.

During recent contract talks, Burgerville refused to negotiate an across-the-board wage increase for all workers after saying it would. The company had claimed it had allocated $3 million for the wage increase, but in reality, this claim was only made to comply with Oregon’s state minimum wage law.

Because of the company’s bad faith in negotiations, on Nov. 12 BVWU called for a boycott of all 41 company stores in the Pacific Northwest. The union’s main demand is an across-the-board increase of $8.50-an-hour for all workers.

The average take-home pay of a Burgerville worker is $9.00 a month, regardless of the size of the family, while the poverty level is $1,200 for a family of one.

Other issues that the BVWU wants changed are the company’s racist and anti-immigrant policies, unfair labor practices, health and safety violations, and scheduling. The all-white management at the Portland Convention Center store, in a move considered by BVWU as not only racist, but union busting, hired workers who are all pro-union.

The company also refuses to opt out of E-Verify, a federal spy program to check workers’ immigant status. In the last year alone, the union has filed 36 labor violations against the company, and there are many Occupational Safety and Health Administration and other U.S. Department of Labor violations. Meanwhile, the average worker’s hours are pre-carriage—only 30 hours a week with erratic scheduling.

BVWU states on its website that, though the boycott has wide support, it aims to build worker solidarity among the 4 million low-wage workers in the fast food industry, and also among all workers in the U.S. and globally. (tinyurl.com/yrx2q37sj)

The boycott is supported by the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, Portland Association of Teachers, and dozens of local affili- ations of international unions, including the American Federation of Government Employees, Amalgamated Transit Workers, Amalgamated Transit Union Postal Workers, National Association of Letter Carriers, Amalgamated Transit Union representing Greyhound driv- ers and Portland transit workers, and more.

Members of the Laboratories, Iron Workers and Carpenters unions came to a recent BVWU strike picket line with a charcoal grill, offering to make “Burgers for Boycotters.” Union supporters also include the Service Employees local whose 10,000 members recently threatened a strike and forced significant concessions from health company giant Kaiser-Permanente, and the Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) local that represents 25,000 grocery workers, who recently won significant contract gains by threatening to strike.

In fact, inspired by the BVWU, organizing among fast food workers has increased in the Portland/Vancouver metro area, including workers at Little Big Burger, a fast food chain with stores in Oregon and North Carolina. In the Portland/Vancouver area, March those workers announced the formation of the Little Big Union, and their first demand was a $5-an-hour raise.

At Grand Central Bakery, a Northwest Pacific restaurant chain, 400 workers joined the Bakery and Confectionery Workers (IATSE) and have petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for recognition. Restaurant workers at the Oregon Zoo have joined the Laborers union. In September, with help from the IWU, 13 workers at Scotties Pizza petitioned the NLRB to have their union, Scotties Pizza Workers Union, recognized.

Lewis is a retired member of Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 400.

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The Pilgrims didn’t want the truth? What? The descendants of the Pilgrims have buried it twice. And those first white settlers in Jamestown would have turned to cannibalism to survive. The truth about the Pilgrims’ invasion and 400+ years of genocide that followed is the U.S. has a national holiday for Plymouth and not for the Pilgrims, was told by a representative of the Massachusetts Department of the Commonwealth. As the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims is celebrated, a hot struggle like Standing Rock is under way to prevent Native people at Standing Rock, Fort Berthold, Spirit Lake, Turtle Mountain and Lake Traverse reservations from voting by requiring IDs with a street address. Most members of these Native nations have post office box addresses, which is not uncommon in many rural areas. The U.S. military even uses leftover depleted uranium. The U.S. military left parts of Iraq poisoned with DU to the enemy. There are many files that have been warned not to get pregnant because their babies are born without limbs. That war crime was uncovered and publicized in the 1990s organized by the International Action Center and our WWP comrades. States ban anti-pipeline protests as a consequence of the mighty struggles at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline, which is now carrying nuclear oil—that threatening spills into the nation’s largest supply of clean water—and the on-again struggle against the Keystone XL pipeline. Trump stripped control from these nations united and won monetary compensation. These five nations united and won monument status for 1.3 million acres in Utah with unprecedented Indigenous oversight. Trump stripped control from these Native nations over uranium, oil and gas deposits and their own cultural heritage on their ancient ruins. Pueblan ancestral ruins in that area are thousands of years old. There are also ancient and unique dinosaur remains of scientific interest. This fight is not over yet! Zinke and the right-wing descendants of settlers in Utah rode [all-terrain vehicles] round and through those fragile environments during a political rally to demon- strate their disregard for the lands and waters, the people and the fragile life in the area. They were a surprising response from European tourists who threatened to boycott. The town of Plymouth then dropped all charges against researchers who UAINE has the right to every Day of Mourning without a permit and paid some small reparations.

Stop attacks on Indian Child Welfare Act! You all saw the attacks at Standing Rock and then again at Standing Rock. This is not a turning tumb-dardly. This administration is attacking the Indian Child Welfare Act, an important law meant to keep Nation- al. Americans will be watching the fate of their Native nations, as many are removed from their Native families and adopted out punishable, even for private orphanages at auctions. Plymouth sold Native women and children into slavery. Since the end of the Indian Wars—those wars Great Plains to the Rockies to steal the vastness of the continent, leaving the sur- vivors on reservations, some far from their homes—thousands of Native children have been stolen from the Lakota and Dakota Nations alone. This is an incredibly import- ant struggle throughout Native nations and communities. It’s a struggle over the truth about the Puritans. UAINE has returned to Plymouth every year since 1970 to demonstrate the need for a truth tell- 0logy, which is still taught in schools. It is even on the goddamn citizenship test. But the first actual “Thanksgiving” din- ner was proclaimed in 1627 by Gov. John Winthrop to celebrate the safe return of men from Massachusetts colony who had gone to Mystic [Conn.], to massa- ckers over 700,000 men, women and children. They celebrated with the foods that Indigenous peoples grew and ate for thousands of years, foods familiar to you today as the traditional Native harvest feast dishes that they commodified for profits. The Pilgrim’s never stopped taking.

In the struggle in Plymouth in 1697, cops assaulted the Day of Mourning marchers when the march crossed the path of the annual Pilgrims’ procession. By the way, when the Pilgrim descen- dants recreate their land, the rich men walk first, followed by their wives, then themselves and the men. They have been working for something for school children to celebrate. And those first white settlers in Jamestown actually turned to cannibalism to survive. Myths about the Pilgrims exposed Let’s go over the general myths: The Pilgrims did not find empty lands here. Every square inch of this land is Indigenous. The Puritans did not come here seeking religious freedom. They had that in England. They came in a com- mercial venture to make themselves rich. One of the very first things the Pilgrims did when they arrived on Cape Cod was to rob Wampanoag graves at Cape Hill and steal as much of the Native villag- ers’ winter provisions of corn and beans as they were able to carry. And what did the Pilgrims bring to these shores with them? Pilgrim settlers introduced rac- ism, jails, class society, capitalism, patri- archy, and all the excesses and repression of two-spirits to this conti- nent. They carried out deportation and over-hunted the wildlife here, not for food, but for profit. It was also a destruc- tion criminalizing First Amendment rights and what we have been called the “Red Power” movement. Massachusetts is the oldest state in the nation to have a state holiday—paid holiday—for the Pilgrims. What? The descendants of the Puritans who threatened to boycott. The town of Plymouth then dropped all charges against researchers who UAINE has the right to every Day of Mourning without a permit and paid some small reparations.

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By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Syracuse, N.Y.

Nov. 22 — After three weeks of organized sit-ins and protests, students at Syracuse University have succeeded in gaining some of their demands. When it was announced that it must take measures to end a recent flood of white supremacist graffiti, vandalism and threats on campus.

Students at SU have been actively organizing since 2014 against both structural discrimination and individual acts of bigotry. Most recently, they formed a coalition, with African-American leadership, under the slogan #NotAgainSU, to protest white supremacist attacks. The movement began in early November.

A flood of racism — and protest

From Nov. 7 through Nov. 21, multiple instances of racist graffiti aimed at Black, Asian and Indigenous people appeared in dormitories and classroom buildings, along with violent vandalism linked to the slurs. Nazi swastikas were placed at on- and off-campus student housing, while an SU professor received a semi-automatic weapon threat referencing Holocaust death camps. At a campus bus stop, a large group of students yelled the N-word at a Black female student waiting there. Eighteen separate incidents were reported during those three weeks, with others possibly unreported.

Coalition leader señaló que la administración no permitió que los estudiantes ingresaran al campus durante los primeros días, sino que continuaron y continuaron hasta decir que, en efecto, fueran a la administración a exigir su entrada. Algunos estudiantes y facul- tarios, con el fin de que sus materias y sus colegas fueran a visitar los campus, interrumpieron la administración.

Other incidents, accused at administration foot-drop- ping, appeared at these clear indications of danger, began to take action. In addition, to two protest efforts, #NotAgainSU began at the Syracuse Center — The Arch. 14 students posted 18 short- and long-term demands for public discussion.

The demands included expulsion of students responsible for the graffiti; requiring faculty and staff to undergo diversity training; establishing a housing portal where Black students can pick roommates based on mutual interest and identities; allocating $1 million for a curriculum to educate about diversity issues, specifically anti-rac- ism; and the resignation of Chancellor Syverud if the demands were not met. One demand — that racist lan- guage and action be made punishable under the Student Code — had been refused by Syverud in 2014, along with other similar student demands. The demands posted at the Barnes Center ended with a blank line and an arrow pointing to where Syverud’s signature was expected.

Strong support for student mobilization

Across the campus, statements of support for the students were issued by a range of academic depart- ments and organizations, from a letter by the Sociology Graduate Student Association, published in the local Syracuse newspaper, to a campuswide call issued by the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies. Students from SU’s College of Law and SUNY-Upstate Medical School marched on campus in support.

Every member of the men’s basketball team wore a black #NotAgainSU warm-up shirt before their Nov. 22 game, keeping the shirts on until after the national anthem. Star Elijah Hughes said: “[As a team] we want to let [our fellow students] know we recognize them, and we’re supporting them. Being a man of color in this country, in this world, whether it’s on a campus or in a big city, it’s hard. It’s just hard. There’s no other way to say it.” (syracuse.com)

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Colin Kaepernick refuses again to bow down to NFL

Colin Kaepernick, a Black quarterback, has not played in the National Football League for almost three years since he started a protest during the playing of the national anthem to protest racial police brutality and racial inequality.

He sued the NFL’s 32 minority-white majority-influenced coaches and players in a class action lawsuit for collusion by essentially “blackballing” him from re-signing with another team after he was waived by the San Francisco 49ers at the end of the 2017 season. Kaepernick and the owners came to an undisclosed agree- ment.

No NFL team has sought out Kaepernick to become either a starting or back-up quarterback for two-and-a-half years. So why did the NFL set up an unexpected workout for Kaepernick on Nov. 16 to per- form before 32 teams to see if he could still play? Kaepernick has continually let it be known that he wants to play again.

The “workout” proved to be shabby from the very start. First, the NFL gave Kaepernick just 90 minutes to accede to the workout scheduled for a Saturday when most teams are either traveling or hosting a Sunday game. Most trial workouts are reserved for a Tuesday.

The NFL also wanted Kaepernick to sign an unusual waiver heavily loaded against him. According to his lawyers, to recomm- ended that he sign would have been “mal- npractise” on their part.

In a provision in the waiver stated that “In consideration for the opportunity to participate in the workout, the player [releasees the NFL from all liability] arise- out of, occurring during, or related to the workout.” (Newsweek, Nov. 19).

In other words, signing the waiver would be equivalent to calling all the shots, including choosing Kaepernick’s receivers. When you go into a negotiation you are willing to give up everything, and I think that’s exactly what the NFL was asking Colin Kaepernick to do by including these terms in the waiver.

Kaepernick turns the tables

Two hours before the workout, a letter was released which detailed the terms of the workout.

Kaepernick and his team decided to switch locations to Charles Drew High School, an hour away from Atlanta to call the official from the NFL that they were not going to show up for the workout. (Drew was the Black surgeon who discovered different methods of storing blood plasma especially during the World War II.)

Over 100 supporters of Kaepernick gathered near the foot- ball field to watch the workout and cheer him on.

Kaepernick wore a Kangra Kinte shirt with a red, black and green emblem, sign- ifying the Black Liberation colors. Kinte was a main character in Alex Haley’s groundbreaking novel, “Roots,” that followed the journey of kidnapped and enslaved African people until they won their freedom after the U.S. Civil War. Kinte was a rebellious enslaved person whom Kaepernick identifies with.

Out of an estimated 35 NFL team rep- resentatives supposedly committed to view Kaepernick’s work- out, only eight showed up while the others were no-shows.

Colin Kaepernick at his workout on Nov. 17.

Colin Kaepernick refused to be a starting or back-up quarterback for the NFL. The #NotAgainSU demands repeat many of those made in these previous struggles.

Student organizers are passing strategy and goals along to each other as a way to stay connected. The resis- tance continues at Syracuse University.
Death, destitution and activism in SCI Frackville

By Ted Kelly
Frackville, Pa.

More than 60 men at Frackville State Correctional Institution here joined together to say goodbye to Cleveland Butler, a civil rights activist, who was denied entry when trying to visit Frackville, Nov. 21-22.

Inmate activist Bryant Arroyo, who worked alongside Butler in the prison library, no one from the Frackville administration showed up at Butler’s memorial. Frackville issued no statement to the men who had gathered to memorialize their friend and fellow inmate. They made no public announcement of his death.

Frackville inmate and activist behind bars Bryant Arroyo, who spoke at Butler’s memorial, thought of his father’s own battle with cancer: Serving a life sentence for a crime he did not commit, Arroyo last saw his father in the prison visiting room: “I recall my Dad saying how painful it was. He had his barf bag. He was maxed out on morphine, still in pain. I’ve been through those things. Those are my scars. I live in honor of him.”

Arroyo expressed a common feeling among the inmates that the prison administration’s lack of respect by not even sending a staff member to attend the memorial was “an affront.” He added: “Some 60 men left in Frackville can be seen as reflecting the respect in which Butler was held.”

But apart from Arroyo and staff members Goodson S. Gomonda and Lisa Valinski who worked alongside Butler in the prison library, no one from the Frackville administration showed up at Butler’s memorial. Frackville issued no statement to the men who had gathered to memorialize their friend and fellow inmate. They made no public announcement of his death.

Arroyo echoed the words of recently released MOVE 9 member Eddie Africa, speaking at a Nov. 12 event hosted by the Philadelphia Workers’ Solidarity Network, who said: “Prisons are companies. It’s as simple as that.”

For months now Frackville has been engaged in what appears to be an active campaign to discourage visits to prisoners. On Oct. 30, the prison held a graduation ceremony for prisoners who had completed the Certified Peer Specialist training, GEO, and PEB Grant programs. Inmate Pete Span’s daughter, Bianca Livingston, and friend, Ann Cohen, were turned away because their bra hooks and belt buckles set off the metal detector. Linda James, mother of Tyrone James, was also denied entry when trying to visit her son.

Arroyo has spoken before on how this pretext is not only a direct violation of the state Department of Corrections’ own visitation policies (13B1 in the code of conduct), which states that metal fitting fixtures are not grounds to deny a visit once they are identified, but it constitutes sexual harassment, especially when it police officers’ unprofessional behavior.

Arroyo pointed out: “Under the guise of security, they are turning visits into punishments. All we have to do is have an enjoyable visit like [DOC] says we’re supposed to have in their little book.”

The crackdown on visitations is also about profit, like the new prison phone system that funnels all letters and postcard through a third-party corporation in Florida, Smart Communications, in exchange for a multimillion-dollar contract. Now prisons across the state have been contracting for two-way video conferencing stations so prisoners can have “virtual visits.” By putting family members and friends through hell in the visiting room, the DOC aims to discourage outsiders from coming to the facility. (“One of the reasons is to replace visits with its totally noncontact, virtual visits,” says Arroyo. “The video calls last less than one hour, 92 minutes. Then [the DOC] doesn’t have to deal with any visitors to the actual facility. And [companies] get another huge contract for the tech.”

Targeting prisoner activism

Arroyo is an outspoken critic of the prison industry and his activism has made him a target for retaliation. When Arroyo tried to send out legal mail, a sergeant Purcell, “in an officious and punitive manner,” refused to prove his cash slips so he could put stamps on the letter. This directly blocked Arroyo’s communication with his lawyers.

Likewise, Arroyo’s J-Pay account has been locked for months without explanation. J-Pay is another mass incarceration profiteer and the way that family and friends send funds to inmates so they can buy food and clothing, send letters and make phone calls. Frackville administrators claim they have not locked the account and it’s a “technical issue,” while J-Pay claims that their system is working fine and that Arroyo’s account should be active.

Between the crackdown on in-person visits and the freezing of Arroyo’s account, it seems clear that an attempt is being made to silence this outspoken critic of the prison system, and keep him from contact with the outside world.

But Bryant Arroyo is undeterred, just like the many prisoners he stands alongside and struggles with: “If you don’t hold on to truth and you let it go to curry favor with the ones who have captured you, your mental state is enslaved. The truth, no matter how difficult it may be, may be the only thing you have.”

Workers World is proud to continue to elevate the voices of these freedom fighters in the belly of the beast for whom the enemy— white-supremacist, capitalist domination—is ever-present.

“These corporate raiders are like vampires,” Arroyo says. “You can try mirrors; you can try the stake. But the best weapon is to put the sun on their ass. Expose them.”

On fifth anniversary of his killing
Tamir Rice remembered

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

Hundreds gathered here on Nov. 20 to remember Tamir Rice, Cleveland cops had brutally shot and killed a 12-year-old boy in a Nov. 22 five years ago. It happened just seconds after officers Timothy Loehmann and Frank Garmback pulled up to see the youngster playing with a BB gun. When Tamir’s siblings arrived on the scene, they were handcuffed and put in the back of a police vehicle. His mother, Samaria Rice, was not allowed near her son. She was told he had died of a heart attack.

Neither of the cops was charged or even fired for killing Tamir. Loehmann was fired much later— not for his actions, but for lying on his job application about his past employment record.

Samaria Rice is a tower of strength in the ongoing fight for justice—not only for her son but for every parent’s child who has been the victim of police brutality. She has kept Tamir’s memory alive over the past five years.

This week, Rice worked with local and national artists and activists to present a powerful event, “Art, Activism and the Legacy of Tamir Rice,” at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Many artists, moved by the tragic death of Tamir, have created works of art in response. Artists who spoke about and shared their work included filmmakers Kordaian Vandiver and Danielle Lee; visual artists Theaster Gates, Shelia Bright, Michael Rakowitz and Amanda K. King; installation and performance artist Björk; poet Kisha Nicole Foster; dancer Levy Lattimore; and spoken word artist Jaari X.

Black Lives Matter co-founder Opal Tométi emceed the program. Other speakers included the Rev. Dr. Jawanza K. Colvin, Fred Hampton Jr., and national artists and activists to present a powerful event, “Art, Activism and the Legacy of Tamir Rice,” at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Many artists, moved by the tragic death of Tamir, have created works of art in response. Artists who spoke about and shared their work included filmmakers Kordaian Vandiver and Danielle Lee; visual artists Theaster Gates, Shelia Bright, Michael Rakowitz and Amanda K. King; installation and performance artist Björk; poet Kisha Nicole Foster; dancer Levy Lattimore; and spoken word artist Jaari X.

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Behind the impeachment hearings

Workers World Party honors Indigenous peoples

Workers World Party honors Indigenous peoples

Continued from page 1

50th National Day of Mourning

Workers World Party honors Indigenous peoples

New York workers demand wage theft protection

New York City: 1,000 march to stop police brutality

Things are seldom what they seem, skin milk masquerades as cream,” goes the old Gilbert and Sullivan song.

The current impeachment hearings conducted by Congress may seem like an effort to get rid of Trump and his reactionary policies. In fact, they have no progressive content and conceal more than they reveal.

Yes, Trump is a crook — and not a very artful one. But he tried to get the Ukrainian government to investigate the son of his political rival, Joe Biden, and thereby get them to give him military funding for “security” if they didn’t.

What has given his political opponents in both capitalist parties a lot of ammunition against him? But this does nothing to combat all the horrible things Trump has done in his domestic policy — his deadly attacks on immigrants, especially from Latin America, the Middle East and Africa; his instigation and promotion of racism and patriarchal bigotry; his absurdist foreign policy in order to curry favor with energy corporations; his right-wing and anti-worker cabinet appointments, etc.

As President, the force of the state apparatus moving against him reveals a rogues’ gallery of war hawks.

What’s being concealed

Fiona Hill, the former National Security Council senior director for Europe and Russia, was an effective witness against Trump in the hearings. Hill has been a deputy to John Bolton and was assigned to Ukraine. Until he resigned in September, it was Trump’s National Security Adviser.

Bolton is a notorious foreign policy hawk. Prior to his resignation, Bolton was calling for a “tougher line” against Iran, Venezuela and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (north Korea). He is credited with having torpedoed the talks between Trump and DPRK leader Kim Jong Un held in Vietnam last February.

In August, before resigning, Bolton got Trump to freeze Venezuela’s assets. “This is the first time in 30 years that we are imposing an asset freeze against a government in this hemisphere,” said Bolton. “It worked in Panama, it worked once in Nicaragua, and it’s going to work there again, and it’s going to work in Venezuela and Cuba.”

What’s being concealed is the inexperience of the man in charge of the state apparatus and the anxiety that his misstep would reveal a paper tiger. US military aid has provided arms for Ukraine’s war against people in eastern Ukraine — the US has even opted to secede from Ukraine and be part of Russia. They speak Russian and were historically part of Russian territory. The U.S. government calls this history “Russian aggression.”

And U.S. aid is also used to prosecute a war against progressive elements inside Ukraine who have opposed to actual fascists in the government. On May 2, 2014, fascist gangs in Ukraine killed 48 people when they burned down the House of Trade Unions in Odessa. (For more on this, see workers.org.)

The U.S. government had no problem with this massacre of workers and kept the weapons coming. The hearings against Trump are glorifying the war criminals like Bolton who are behind these policies.

The impeachment hearings are concealing the real crime: that both the Democratic and Republican parties serve the interests of the super-rich and have extracted trillions of dollars from the workers in the U.S. to pay for a war that benefits the horizon corporate interests above all else.

Indigenous peoples in Hawai‘i have been occupying Mauna Kea, the world’s tallest mountain when measured from sea bed to top, to prevent installation of the multimillion-dollar Thirty Meter Telescope. It is a sacred place, a conservation site and the watershed for the Big Island.

A successful struggle is winning commemoration of Indigenous Peoples’ Day in cities and states around the country, as more people reject the Columbus myth and want to honor Native people, not a colonizer.

On the 50th National Day of Mourning, Workers World extends our utmost solidarity to Indigenous peoples worldwide — and gives our wholehearted support to all the struggles against environmental racism and imperialist oppression and for the preservation of the planet and all forms of life on it.

Workers held a powerful rally in front of New York’s City Hall to protest the NYPD’s action against three workers who were trying to recover stolen wages, including the ability to put a lien on an employer’s business or property until the conclusion of a court case or investigation.

Many workers do not receive minimum wage or overtime pay; some are not paid at all. One speaker noted that he was paid $3 a day, $15 an hour working at a supermarket.

Another worker said he was paid $1 an hour. When workers take action to recover their stolen wages, employers often close up shop and then report the employer’s name. The NYDLW estimates that up to $1 billion is stolen from workers in New York state every year.

Around two dozen worker and community organizations sponsored the action, including the Laundry Workers Center.

— Report and photos by Brenda Ryan

More than 1,000 people marched through Harlem on Nov. 22 in the second emergency action against the escalation of violence against Black and Brown people by the New York Police Department and the Metropolitan Transit Authority Police. On Nov. 8, police arrested a woman selling churros, a Mexican sweet, in a Brooklyn subway station.

In response to this mili- tant protest of police brutality, NYPD cops brutally arrested 58 people, targeting them as the demonstration began. Chanting, “No jus- tice, no peace, f— k these racist police” and “Whose streets, our streets,” protesters took over the streets. Decolonize This Place, NYC Shut It Down and the People’s Power Assemblies/NYC were among the many groups there.

— Report and photos by Brenda Ryan

The greedy companies that profit from these pipelines have successfully pressured Indigenous land rights or mass demonstrations.

No surprise: Polluter in chief Donald Trump issued an executive order allowing KXL’s construction, regardless of environmental and health dangers, violation of Indigenous land rights or mass opposition.

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**Israel’s colonization, Palestinian resistance**

By G. Dunkel

In the midst of a political stalemate in Israel, the government is continuing with its strategy to isolate Palestinian cities, towns and villages, sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, and take control of vital natural resources, including water.

Israel’s campaign against Gaza

Israel claimed Nov. 12 that it had assassinated Bahaa Abu Al-Ata, the top commander of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and his spouse Aminah Abu Al-Ata, at their home in Gaza. Israel boasted that this assassination was “surgical,” but one of its final strikes also destroyed the home of another family, killing eight, including five children. Palestinian medical officials reported 34 casualties. (Washington Post, Nov. 16)

In response, beginning Nov. 13, Islamic Jihad sent a barrage of hundreds of rockets into southern Israel. After a couple of days, Israel attacked some Hamas facilities, claiming rockets were coming from there. Israel has imposed a state of siege on Gaza for the past 12 years. Israel has limited or completely cut off food, water, electricity and medical supplies, leaving the Palestinian people there in hunger, thirst and danger.

This statement reverses 40 years of U.S. policy, but didn’t come out of the blue. David M. Friedman, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, made it clear that he supported Israel’s so-called right to annex the occupied West Bank at his nomination hearing in 2016. (New York Times, Dec. 15, 2016)

The latest gift by U.S. President Donald Trump to his ally Netanyahu has no obvious rationale, but certainly bolstered Netanyahu’s political position within Israel.

In response, Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization’s Executive Committee and an elected member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said: “Pompeo’s reckless announcement threatens to normalize and encourage Israeli war crimes and expansionism.” (Washington Post, Nov. 20)

She went on to say: “The issue of settlements is not some abstract or theoretical legal argument. Israeli’s illegal settlement regime has had dire consequences on the lives and livelihoods of millions of Palestinians.”

She added: “Today, roughly 700,000 Israeli settlers live illegally on occupied Palestinian land in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in more than 200 settlements. Israeli settlements are strategically located to isolate Palestinian cities, towns and villages, sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, and take control of vital natural resources, including water.”

Netanyahu’s indictment

On Nov. 21, Avichai Mandelblit, Israel’s attorney general, released a 63-page indictment of Netanyahu, who had appointed him 4 years ago. Netanyahu was charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust. These charges are similar to charges now being developed in the impeachment investigation against his ally Trump.

Netanyahu’s response to the indictment was aggressive. He charged it was a “witch hunt,” “an attempted coup,” and is refusing to step down. He is not legally obliged to do so, but significantly he had called for a previous prime minister, Ehud Olmert, to step down after a similar indictment.

It is not clear how this latest development will affect the situation in Israel and Palestine. The Blue and White head, Benny Gantz, implied he could no longer negotiate with Likud while it was headed by Netanyahu. Political splits in the Israeli public are growing sharper. European media called for Netanyahu to step down.

The head of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, said the developments were a sign “of more stubbornness” for the Palestinians and that this meant more “resistance, both popular and armed.” (AP, Nov. 23)

--- Report by Otis Grotewohl

**U.S. hands off Bolivia!**

A dozen people demonstrated Nov. 19 against the U.S.-backed coup in Bolivia on the campus of West Liberty University near Wheeling, W. Va. Members of Students for Democracy and Socialism, Ohio Valley Peace, Industrial Workers of the World, Serve the People and Workers World Party participated in the events.

According to various organizations shared a literature table, distributing material regarding the recent coup in Bolivia against President Evo Morales to WLU students inside the College Union building. Afterward, people marched around campus, carrying pro-Morales signs, and concluded with a silent vigil. Outside the student center a member of Serve the People gave a passionate speech denouncing the crimes of U.S. imperialism.

Resistence continues as Coup regime murders 30 in Bolivia

By John Catalinotto

Nov. 25 —Since U.S.-backed military coups have overturned the elected government of Evo Morales in Bolivia on Nov. 10, police and military forces backing the coup have killed at least 30 people protests against the new coup regime. These criminal acts have been directed at the large indigenous population that supports the Morales government. State forces backing the coup fired on marches, mainly in the cities of Cochabamba and La Paz and on Nov. 19 by helicopter gun-fire in El Alto.

Some deaths may be unreported as the coup regime has censored news, expelling foreign journalists and threatening to kill Bolivian journalists if they report the truth. On Nov. 21, the coup regime closed down the Telcel UR network’s news coverage in Bolivia, one of the few media that would give fair coverage to Morales supporters.

To guarantee that the military commanders would fire on Indigenous demonstrators, the coup regime transferred $8.8 billion to the armed forces and issued a decree on Nov. 15 that the armed forces and police personnel have impunity. This means they cannot be prosecuted for crimes against humanity for firing on unarmed people.

Despite the risks, many of Bolivia’s 11.6 million mostly Indigenous people have continued to mobilize across this country, which is larger than Texas and New Mexico combined. They have blocked the streets of the capital, La Paz, and prevented deliveries of gasoline and food.

The marches were a response to the nomination of self-appointed president Jeanine Áñez and the expulsion of ultra-conservative head of security Armando Murillo. The coup leader Luis Fernando Camacho, reactionary politician Carlos Mesa and other coup figures.

Other prominent enemies of the people include the Armed Forces generals who were trained at the U.S.-run School of the Americas in Georgia and have led the military’s actions during the coup. (grayzone, Nov. 13)

Both Washington and its puppet group for colonial action in Latin America — the Organization of American States — have to figure out how to back up their false claim that the new regime is democratic and admit that they are aiding a coup.

The coup leaders have a problem because two-thirds of the parliament were elected from the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, and MAS has refused to recognize Áñez. To eliminate MAS electoral leaders, Murillo talks of “hunting,” the leaders and MAS’s leading members of parliament of “sedition” and “subversion.”

The coup regime continues to bring military and police pressure against the remaining MAS leaders. Without the agreement of the MAS legislative majority, constitutional elections with a new Supreme Electoral Tribunal cannot be held. Donald Trump, OAS head Luis Almagro and the European Union have said they back the new regime “because it is democratic.”

Elections during state of siege

Though it might seem ridiculous to promise to hold “free and democratic elections” when the entire country is in a virtual state of siege, that’s the coup leaders’ scenario. And they are continuing to do this without allowing Evo Morales or his vice president to reenter the country, let alone participate in the election. Morales and Vice President Álvaro García Linera are currently in Mexico, where they have been granted asylum. Morales has said that the coup leaders have tried to kill him.

According to Marco Teruggi’s Nov. 23 article in pagina12.org.ar, “while the per- secution is deepening, [and] police and military repression has killed more than 30 people, the pain and anger is growing. Faced with this repression, the people on the streets advanced together with those in the legislature, although not necessarily in a coordinated manner. MAS has already announced that it is working to achieve an electoral way forward under the least unfavorable conditions possible. But can it?”

Even as they fight it out in the impeachment hearings, the Trump administration and the leading Democrats are giving bipartisan backing to the coup-makers and vilifying and slandering the Morales government. The same is true for the corporate media: Both pro- and anti-Trump media attack Morales and refuse to call the coup a coup.

Only a few Democratic Party politicians — Congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ilhan Omar and Senator Bernie Sanders, for example — have criticized the coup and called it a coup. Anti-imperialist forces in the U.S. can expose the lies of the imperialists and their media, defend Bolivia’s democratically elected MAS government, and continue to call a coup a coup. That is a minimum. To the extent possible, they can also support and encourage the continued growth of the resistance in Bolivia, whatever form it takes, in the face of criminal repression by imperialism and its local lackeys. 

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People march with the Wiphala, the Indigenous flag, in Cochabamba, Bolivia.
¡La juventud obrera quiere el socialismo!

Por Deirdre Griswold

La República Democrática Popular de Corea ha rechazado la última propuesta de la administración Trump para una reunión cumbre. El 18 de noviembre, el Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de la República Democrática Popular de Corea (RDPC) rechazó una propuesta para una cumbre. Trump, durante una reunión en Singapur, buscó un acuerdo sobre el desarme nuclear, una cuestión que el gobierno de Corea del Norte considera importante.

La RDPC no tiene bases en el extranjero. Sin embargo, la pregunta principal sigue siendo: ¿qué clase controlará los Estados Unidos y toda la vida en el planeta? Desde nuestra fundación hace 60 años, el Partido Mundial de los Trabajadores ha defendido firmemente el campo socialista, sus esfuerzos por transformar el mundo. Eso será decisivo para la supervivencia de la humanidad y toda la vida en el planeta.

La revolución socialista es, de hecho, la única alternativa real al capitalismo. Desde nuestra fundación hace 60 años, el Partido Mundial de los Trabajadores ha defendido firmemente el campo socialista, sus esfuerzos por transformar el mundo. Eso será decisivo para la supervivencia de la humanidad y toda la vida en el planeta.

Mundo obrero. Para nacional Nov. 21 en Colombia: aquí, departamento de Boyacá.

Los coreanos dicen no a Trump

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