**Strike ends**

**Chicago teachers win gains**

By Sue Davis

“Did we accomplish every single little thing?” said Jesse Sharkey, president of the Chicago Teachers Union, during an Oct. 31 victory press conference. “No. But I can say that we moved the needle on educational justice in the city.”

And that was the point of the 11-day strike (beginning Oct. 17 and ending Oct. 31) at the country’s third-largest public school system with nearly 400,000 students, the majority in poor Black and Brown families.

The 25,000 teachers represented by the Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1 of the American Federation of Teachers, and 7,500 education support staff in Service Employees Union (SEIU) Local 73, nearly summed up their vision of “social justice unionism” by fighting for “smaller class sizes, fair pay and benefits, fully staffed supports, and justice for families.” (ctulocal1.org)

The hard-fought, five-year $1.5 billion contract includes a 16 percent pay raise for teachers and a long-overdue 40 percent raise for teaching assistants, clerks and other lower-paid workers.

Over $35 million will be devoted to shrinking oversized classrooms, prioritizing schools with the most at-risk students (read “segregated”), and hiring a full-time social worker and nurse in every school.

The city agreed to pay education workers for five of the days they were out during the strike. However, the contract does not include a clause for “affordable housing,” which the teachers raised because about 17,000 Chicago Public School students are homeless—an problem linked to the city’s persistent poverty and racial segregation.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot promised to take on the issue, though not in the CTU contract.

One very important community win was sanctuary protection for undocumented immigrants on school property.

“Bargaining for the common good”

To be able to win such a progressive contract, the highly organized union put the slogan “bargaining for the common good” into practice. The CTU is led by the left-leaning Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators, which grew out of CTU’s groundbreaking 2012 strike.

Sharkey proudly told the Nov. 1 Chicago Sun Times that the teachers “showed the city what it means to care, to put yourself forward, sacrifice and achieve something.”

A vital part of the union’s winning strategy was putting participatory democracy into practice. The House of Delegates, with elected representatives from nearly 700 schools, met repeatedly to prepare before the strike. Delegates were given work plans to help them organize daily pickets at every school, which totally depended on rank-and-file participation.

And delegates met often during the strike.

**NYC: Subway protest vs. cop brutality**

Over 1,000 militant activists streamed into main streets in downtown Brooklyn on Nov. 1 to protest recent police attacks on people of color and young people.

A few days before, a video went viral that exposed New York Police Department cops attacking a group of teenagers at a Brooklyn subway stop. The Metropolitan Transit Authority, which oversees the city’s subway system, and the NYPD have increasingly targeted young working people of color for minor offenses, arresting them as they attempt to get to school and work.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has announced he’ll increase cops patrolling the MTA by 20 percent, allegedly to deal with “homelessness” and “fare evasion.”

The four-hour march, called by Black Lives Matter, the Peoples Power Assemblies/NYC and others, was an outpouring of anger at police violence. Marchers chanted, “NYPD, how do you spell racism?” and “No justice, no peace!”

Protesters flooded one subway station, some jumping the fare turnstiles to assert that free public transportation should be the people’s right.

In an on-the-scene interview with New York Pix 11, Nate Peters of the PPA said: “We are here to protest NYPD violence, both in the subways and on the streets. The NYPD are modern-day slave catchers. They go around the city beating and killing people. We came out here to say, ‘We’ve had enough of that!’ Many of the demonstrators posted ‘Evaide’ stickers from Chile in solidarity with youth there, who helped spark the current uprising by protesting fare hikes.

— Report by WW staff

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Atlanta

Killer cop gets 12 years in Anthony Hill case

By Dianne Mathiowetz

Nov. 2 — The family and supporters of Anthony Hill filed a wrongful death suit and an overflow room to hear the sentence for ex-cop Robert Olsen.

Hill, a 26-year-old African-American veteran, was shot and killed by Olsen in the parking lot of his apartment complex March 9, 2015. Housing staff had called 911 seeking help for Hill, who was observed naked and wandering in an erratic manner.

An Air Force veteran of the U.S. war on Afghanistan, Hill had been diagnosed with PTSD but had stopped taking his meds because of damaging side effects.

Cop Olsen had been told the call was possibly for a mentally disabled person in crisis. He knew that backup was on the way. But immediately upon stopping his patrol car, he drew his gun, and within seconds he had shot and killed Anthony Hill. Olsen claimed he was in fear for his life.

After six days of jury deliberation, Olsen was convicted of four of the six counts lodged against him by a grand jury. While a divided jury failed to convict Olsen of two counts of felony murder, Black jurors successfully made the case for guilt on aggravated assault, making a false statement and two counts of violation of oath. The potential maximum length of prison time for these four felony convictions was 35 years.

Prior to Judge LaTisha Dear Jackson issuing the sentence, four hours of additional testimony concerning Olsen’s record were heard. This included citizen complaints against Olsen, impact statements by Hill’s mother, father and sister, and character statements by Olsen’s family and friends. The 57-year-old Olsen was expected to make a statement, but he opted not to.

Hill’s family described the trauma of learning the details of Anthony’s death and the agony of years of delayed trials, as well as the spurious claim of self-defense by a policeman who had more lethal force than his gun.

Both parents, Carolina Bolyo Giummo and Anthony Hill Sr., addressed the pain of not hearing Olsen express any remorse for killing their son.

Judge Dear Jackson then sentenced Olsen to 20 years, to serve in prison and 8 on probation. Olsen was also given five years each on violations of oath and making a false statement, to be served concurrently. He is barred from ever having another job in law enforcement, must relinquish his 15 guns, including an AR-15, and cannot profit in any way from his case.

While Hill’s family had urged the maximum sentence of 35 years, his parents agreed that “some time was better than no time.” (aej.com, Nov. 2)

At a press conference following the sentencing, Baylor Giummo thanked the team of DeKalb prosecutors, who pursued the felony murder charges despite knowing Hill is almost never a win on that charge if a cop is the defendant. She also expressed the family’s appreciation for those who had rallied and protested demanding justice for her son.

Besides the many who filled the courtrooms, there was a continuous presence outside the county building throughout the trial. Actions included a walkout of students from nearby High School on Friday, Nov. 2, who gathered on the court steps calling “Justice for Anthony Hill” signs.

One of the many protests for justice for Anthony Hill.

Workers World Party is a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party inside the belly of the imperialist beast. We are a multinational, multigender and multigenerational organization that not only aims to abolish capitalism, but to build a socialist society because it’s the only way forward! Capitalism and imperialism threaten the peoples of the world and the planet itself in the never-ending quest for ever-greater profits.

Capitalism means war and austerity, racism and repression. Under a regime of immigrants, minority, LGBTQ oppression and mistreatment of people with disabilities. It means joblessness, increasing homelessness and impoverishment and lack of hope for the future. No social problems can be solved under capitalism.

The U.S. is the richest country in the world, yet no one has a guaranteed right to shelter, food, water, health care, education or anything else — unless they can pay for it. Wages are lower than ever, and youth are saddled with seemingly insurmountable student debt, if they even make it to college. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth and trans people are gunned down by cops and Bigots with a regular basis.

The ruthless ruling class today seeks to wipe out decades of gains and benefits won by hard-fought struggles by people’s movements. The super-rich and their political representatives have intensified their attacks on the multinational, multigender and multigenerational working class. It is time to point the blame at — and challenge — the capitalist system.

The WWP fights for socialism because the working class produces all wealth in society, and this wealth should remain in their hands, not be stolen in the form of capitalist profits. The wealth workers create should be socially owned and its distribution planned to satisfy and guarantee basic human needs.

Since 1959, Workers World Party has been out in the streets defending the working and oppressed here and worldwide. If you’re interested in Marxism, socialism and fighting for a socialist future, please contact a WWP branch near you.

If you are interested in joining Workers World Party contact: 212.627.2994

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New York City forum

Chile uprising, ‘Thanksgiving’ myth, U.S. strike surge

By Monica Moorehead

New York

The New York chapter of Workers World Party held a forum on Nov. 2 featuring three dynamic women speakers on important struggles at home and abroad. Stephanie Trombly, Huron/Metis non-status and of mixed Southeastern Indigenous heritage, officially opened the meeting by reminding everyone: “We meet on stolen Lenni-Lenape homelands — the Lenapehoking. Workers World Party is based on restoring the stolen lands of all Indigenous nations’ land claims are paid in full, from the Wampanoag lands at the Cape [Massachusetts] to the Ojibwe lands in the San Francisco Bay Area, from the Appalachians to the Rockies.”

She went on to speak about the significance of the 50th National Day of Mourning and the racist myth of “Thanksgiving,” explaining the origins of NDOM, Trombly said, “In 1970, an Aqinnaw Wampanoag man, Wamsutta Frank James, who had been asked to speak at a fancy Commonwealth of Massachusetts banquet celebrating the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims, was told by a representative of the Department of Commerce and Pilgrims, was told by a representative, ‘Only Indigenous people spoke at Day of Mourning, and that is true to this day.’” The demand for the freedom of Indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier is also raised at NDOM, along with a solidarity statement written by him.” (Hear the entire talk at youtube.be/qyqfJrU2Xw/)

Nieves Ayress Moreno, from the La Peña del Bronx movement and former political prisoner of the civil-military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, read the following statement in Spanish on the current uprising in Chile at a Nov. 2 Workers World Party forum in New York City.

The neoliberal economic model is crumbling under the noise of the Chilean elite. The struggle is against the privatization of the Poinchet dictatorship. Chile is in a state of emergency, where Piñera declared that he is at war with the protesters. The military has gone out in droves, and tanks can be heard rolling down the streets of Santiago once again as it becomes the focus of the military dictatorship.

On Friday, Oct. 18, high school students decided that enough was enough: “They took away so much, they even took away our fear.” (Hear Ayress Moreno’s comments, go to youtu.be/ot2MDgRE6-o/)

‘They took away so much, they even took away our fear’

By Judy Greenspan

Oakland, Calif.

Oct. 28 – At a vigil called by the Oakland Education Association, parents, teachers and community members denounced police brutality against dem- onstrators protesting school closures and consolidations.

During a loud but peaceful protest Oct. 23 at an Oakland School Board meet- ing, Oakland city police and some of the school district’s own police force charged into a group of parents, children and teachers, and several people were hurt.

Teachers and parents who were beaten by the combined police force spoke frankly and forcefully about the injuries they received in the confrontation of members of the OEA and the Oakland Not for Sale Coalition. That coalition has been actively opposing the Oakland Unified School District’s “blueprint for quality schools,” which will lead to the closure of no more abuse from the privatization of Chile. Piñera increased the subway fare by one dollar during peak hours. High school students had enough and skipped the subway fare in massive numbers. In the days that followed, Piñera responded violently against students thinking that Chilean society was going to ignore the abuses.

The violent reaction by Piñera toward the youth angered Chilenos civil society. The young people reminded Chilean society that it is not merely about the increase of the fare but 30 years of economic policy to privatize the whole country. Chileans are sending a warning to the world about waking up to the night- mare of the neoliberal market.

Neoliberal policy privatizes education, it privatizes water, it privatizes health, it privatizes social security, it privatizes transportation, it lowers the wages of the workers to subsidize the rich. The Chilean people say, “They took away so much that they even took away our fear.”

The discontent in the country has taken to the false claims of the Chilean economic miracle. People had to face the ugly reality of vast inequality caused by the privatization and the weakening of trade unions, ecological pollution due to deregulation — a financial mira- cle for the 1 percent but mortal conse- quences for the vast majority of society and mother earth.

And instead Piñera sends the military back to their barracks.

In a democracy, people have the right to protest without being shot.

For more information, contact chileresistenty@gmail.com.

Oakland teachers and parents condemn police brutality

By Judy Greenspan

Oakland, Calif.

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Teachers and parents who were beaten by the combined police force spoke frankly and forcefully about the injuries they received in the confrontation of members of the OEA and the Oakland Not for Sale Coalition. That coalition has been actively opposing the Oakland Unified School District’s “blueprint for quality schools,” which will lead to the closure of 24 high-need, high-priority schools.

The Not for Sale coalition calls for stop- ping all school closures, dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, fighting back against the charter school takeover of pub- lic schools and involving the community in reforming OUSD’s financial management. The coalition has protested at every board meeting since the beginning of the school year, sometimes taking over the meeting.

The Oct. 28 rally was opened by OEA President Keith Brown, who stood behind the banner, “Oakland for the people, not the billionaires.” He stated that school Closures only hurt teachers, parents and the community, and reiterated the union demand that all community schools be kept.

Sarn Jayaraman, a mother of two children at Kaiser Elementary school, described how she was tackled by four cops and suffered serious injuries to her knee and shoulder. Her two young daugh- ters witnessed the violent police attack and were severely traumatized.

A large contingent from the Black Organizing Project showed up at the rally to support the Oakland community. BOP has an ongoing campaign to push cops out of the schools and fund counselors instead. Jessica Brown, BOP organizing director, called for an end to the school- to-prison pipeline.

The OEA and other groups announced future actions to stop the closures and pri- vatization of Oakland schools. For more information, check out the Facebook pages of OEA and Oakland Not for Sale.

Siddika Degia (left); Nieves Ayress Moreno (right).

‘Workers can fight back and win through people power’

Siddika Degia, a Peoples Power Assemblies/NYC organizer and student at CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies, spoke on the upsurge of U.S. strikes in 2019 — the highest since 1986. An estimated 83,000 workers participated in 11 different strikes the week of Oct. 21, Degia said. She explained about the nature of the strikes:

“All these 13 strikes across the coun- try have not been about unions or about wages and health insurance. Strikes are never about the wages or health insur- ance no matter how much the ruling class would like you to believe. ‘Strikes are about the rank and file fighting for all the working class. Workers demanding change because they are feeling the burden of capitalism and want better lives.’

Degia stated, ‘These are workers fighting for things like unionizing or better work conditions or even things like getting ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] out of their schools or the school-to-prison sub- way. Often undocumented workers and Black and Brown workers are the most vul- nerable in the works in the U.S. because they are criminalized in this country.”

“When unionizing, or fighting for their rights, workers often call out ICE on its treatment of undocumented workers. Yet, demos like ICE off Greyhound — a migrant-led movement — or Peoples Power Assemblies/NYC organizing around the subway fare-revision campaign lets work- ers know that they can fight back and winning through people power.” (Hear Degia’s entire talk at youtube.be/ainim479yRkJy)
The war in Vietnam, the longest the U.S. has ever waged, at first seems also to be the most illogical and inexplicable. Its supporters will not explain it. And its opponents—even some of its most serious opponents—often cannot.

The latter usually attribute the war to President Lyndon Johnson’s dictatorial nature, to the jingoism of the generals, or to Lyndon’s own nature, as he stalked around the world like a large cat. All of these are powerful factors, of course. But the basic cause of the U.S. invasion of Vietnam lies deep within the social and economic system of the United States. The aggression was built up in and the Asian war was predetermined before Lyndon Johnson was born.

The politics that produced the war in Vietnam was the politics of advancing the interests of the “United States” on the world arena. The economics was—and still is—the interests of big business.

The reason for the quotation marks on the “United States” is that a tiny clique of men rule the United States and identify their own interests with the “national interest” in their newspapers or on TV, radio, etc. They virtually own the United States and certainly own the government of the United States. They are—big business.

Big business has been continually expanding within the United States—with many “contracting” panics and depressions, of course—eating up its competitors, getting bigger and bigger, some branches of it now making profits abroad. It was the underdeveloped countries’ resources, than it is to invest at home.

And it is also expanding outside the United States. Since approximately 1898, the giant North American continent has become so small an arena for the fullest expansion of big business. Its auto plants, billion-dollar banks, glorified hot dog stands and hotels now dot the globe.

Considering the tremendous open spaces still in the United States to this day, not to mention the under-population of Canada—where U.S.-owned industry predominates—and the underdevelopment of Mexico—where the U.S., like 16th century Spain, is the real overlord—and all the underdeveloped— and the underdevelopment of Mexico—where the U.S., like 16th century Spain, is the real overlord—and the underdeveloped nations, than it is to invest at home.

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But it is not strange to the U.S. businessperson. And a public outcry went up against the plunder of the native people and the native peasants and the profits of the destruction of the interior of the Philippines. It was something new—especially for the United States. And it couldn’t be done without foreign wars.

The reason for this isn’t so very complicated. The export of capital goods—that is, machinery, mining equipment, railroad engines, earth-moving tools, etc.—is intended not to make just a “small profit”, but a constantly repeating profit that can go on forever, if the exploiter can hold onto the “investment.”

What a foreign investment really is

The investment of capital in a foreign country should be regarded somewhat like sending a huge suction pump there, which pulls out the metals from the ground, the products from the soil and the fruits from the trees—with the help, of course, of the labor of the “native” people working on this suction pump.

It is as if the pump were connected to pipes that run back to the “home” country, via the banks and big corporations. All the rich products are showered from the pipes into the treasuries of these institutions, in the form of profits.

50th NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING
Thursday, November 28, 2019
12 Noon - Cole’s Hill (above Plymouth Rock)
Plymouth, Massachussetts

Unite with us in our struggle to create a true awareness of Native peoples and the injustices against them. Help shatter the untrue glass image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven destruction of the Earth.

Solidarity with Indigenous struggles throughout the world. We welcome all our Indigenous relations who have been crossed by the US border and ICE. Rocolsethecamps

*Special message from Leonard Peterson* “Respectful allies welcome”
Lessons of the victorious Harvard dining hall strike: Marxism-Leninism and unionism

By Ed Childs

The 750 striking Harvard University Dining Service workers—cooks, dishwashers, servers and cashiers—brought multimillion-dollar Harvard University to its knees on Oct. 25, 2016. After a three-week strike, the university bosses caved, giving the members of Unite HERE Local 26 an offer they couldn’t refuse.

The strike victory holds valuable lessons for workers and oppressed in the age of global capitalism—particularly under the Trump administration and the rise of fascist, racist elements. Workers World’s Martha Grevatt interviewed Chief Steward Ed Childs, a cook and leader of Unite HERE Local 26 for more than 40 years. This is Part 2, outposted by Workers World on March 1, 2017, in which Childs explains how the workers won.

The entire four-part series is available at workers.org.

We had no illusions that we could beat this country’s oldest corporation—Harvard Corporation, which follows the dictates of Wall Street—by just going through the motions of picketing each workplace. Our tactics were all militant, class-struggle tactics: constant pickets, marches and rallies with raucous chanting and constant drumming on plastic buckets. You could hear us all over campus and in classrooms.

But the opposition did not just consist of the Harvard Corporation. Occupations are a left tactic communists perfected in the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. It contributed to this series of articles.

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Strike ends: Chicago teachers win gains

Continued from page 1

to learn about the day’s negotiations and to reinforce the fighting will and spirit of the bargaining team. No wonder there was a massive turnout, despite drenching rain and snow, for the union’s march and rally on Oct. 25. As they marched tens of thousands strong, teachers, staff and union allies joined in chanting, “If we don’t get it, shut it down.”

“I solemnly swear that I will never stop fighting for my students” read a handmade picket sign carried that day. “[That] sums up what makes the teachers’ strike so important,” wrote Sarah Lazare in an Oct. 29 article from In These Times, “Chicago Teachers Are Carrying the Torch of Decades of Willing Struggles.”

CTU’s winning strategy was firmly rooted in traditional “working-class organizing.” Contrast that with how the United Auto Workers conducted its concurrent 40-day strike. While UAW convened its House of Delegates for discussion of the tentative agreement, the union leadership did not involve the delegates on a day-to-day basis. In a WW article about the UAW struggle in Michigan, Martha Grewatt points out how the UAW forgot its working-class roots, based in the strong Flint sit-down strike in 1936-37, after the 1930s’ anti-communist Red Scare that pushed progressives out of unions. (See page 6, “We want a contract with dignity,” October WW article by Grewatt.)

SF union says
Don’t mess with ‘little yellow school bus’

By Dave Welsh

School bus drivers turned out in force Oct. 29 in front of the San Francisco Labor Council to participate in a district-wide meeting where they demand that funds be allocated for more busses and that drivers be allowed to drive a regular Class C license. This contrasts with the stringent testing and background checks now required for certified union drivers who transport children. Many union bus drivers have 30 or 40 years experience and spotless safety records.

A bus driver told the board: “It’s all about sacrificing the children’s safety just to save a little money and hire ride-share drivers.” Long-time driver Shane Hoff said, “I’d hate to see a student hurt because you’re trying to save money—short-term and cut corners on driver training.”

The San Francisco Labor Council recently approved a resolution making detailed requirements to ensure “safety for SF school children as they are transported home-to-school in safe vehicles by specially trained, experienced, unionized school bus drivers.”

The board is set to vote on details of the school bus contract with First Student, a private company, before the end of the year.
UAW in crisis

Contracts, corruption and the capitalist state

By Martha Grevatt

Between now and Nov. 15, Ford workers will vote on a tentative agreement reached by the United Auto Workers and the company. It basically mirrors the contract approved by a majority of General Motors workers on Oct. 25 after a 40-day strike. If Ford workers accept this contract, the union will seek a similar deal from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.

The agreement includes plans to close an engine plant in Romeo, Mich., and leaves other plants without long-term product commitments. The basic flaw in the GM contract is embedded in the agreement with Ford — that union members doing the same jobs are paid wildly varying wages, with some classified as “temporary employees” for years. Pensions are frozen for another four years. Past concessions have not been reversed.

Rank-and-file autoworkers had high expectations for this year’s negotiations as the auto companies are raking in billions of dollars in record profits and CEOs are collecting hundreds of times the pay of a union auto worker. Thousands of Ford workers will probably cast a “no” ballot. Others will be satisfied with the contract’s provisions for pay increases and a sizable up-front bonus. The vote could go either way.

If the contract is rejected, the UAW leadership might go back to Ford to get a slightly better deal or have a second vote on the exact same agreement, but making a stronger sales pitch. Or there could be a strike at Ford. The workers’ uncertainty could tip the vote toward rejection.

Meanwhile, negotiations with FCA have a new, unexpected complication: the announced merger of FCA, an Italian company, with French auto company PSA, formerly Peugeot. The new entity will be the world’s fourth-largest auto company. Workers in both companies have agitated for temporary workers to become permanent employees. Rank-and-file autoworkers are collecting hundreds of times the pay of a union auto worker. Thousands of Ford workers will probably cast a “no” ballot. Others will be satisfied with the contract’s provisions for pay increases and a sizable up-front bonus. The vote could go either way.

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Ecuadorians review lessons of mass uprising

By Michael Otto & Zoila Ramírez
Ibarra, Imbabura Province, Ecuador

Nov. 2 – The 12-day national strike in Ecuador forced the Lenin Moreno government to retreat on the one issue of Decree #883, the paquetazo (austerity package) and was a direct attack on the Indigenous community, more than doubling the fuel costs of farming. Despite Moreno’s retreat, this was from a clean victory despite the strength of the mass movement.

The huge street movement that carried out the strike, the Paro Nacional, has no unified leadership at this time, and the government is carrying out severe repression, especially against those that is, the people who worked with the Citizens’ Revolution party led by former President Rafael Correa.

President Moreno vilified the uprising as an insurgency infiltrated by “violent sectors, criminals and the Correista destabilizers of democracy,” who were allegedly “part of a well-planned left-wing strategy directed from Venezuela and Cuba.” His rhetoric rationalized the persecution of the protesters and the charges against social leaders and the “criminalization of protest.”

Rightist Guayasamín Mayor Cynthia Viteri, who is serving as Moreno’s advisor, denigrated the home-grown protesters as “condemn anti-Indigenous racism, these home-grown terrorists tried to prevent the ‘Indios’ they despise from invading the cities and destroying their own,” or their gated enclaves.

The prolonged strike in Ecuador and its outcome left all participants in the country and Marxist sympathizers around Latin America analyzing what happened, why, and if it would be possible to form the necessary united front to win.

Another strike inevitable

Many who had participated in the upheavals of 20 years ago were hoping to see Moreno get on a helicopter and flee the country as then President Lucio Gutiérrez fled Ecuador after his dramatic overthrow by the military. However, Moreno, buoyed by the neoliberal restoration and to blame everything on the Correistas.

The fierce opposition of the leaders of the Citizens’ Revolution to the economic misery and the jailing of Vice President Jorge Glas two years ago. Now it threatens anyone who dares to challenge the government. Workers World also spoke with “Fidel,” who lives in Quito and is active in supporting Jorge Glas, currently a political prisoner.

Another lesson is clear: National majorities must unite

The venerable Galarza Zavala, Ecuadorian poet, journalist and parti- san in numerous battles for justice, held the first cabinet post as Minister of the Environment under Rafael Correa. The following are excerpts from his most recent blog in “La Cometa”:

“Of course, it was a revolution without a head, since neither the Indigenous leadership nor the brave collectives, neither political nor any party acted in accordance with the historic demand, which cost numerous lives, countless wounded and disappeared, and nearly 2,000 detainees.

The lesson of the glom that our country is living in and is unfolding politically, a conclusion shines brighter than ever: that the “new governments will descend from the mountains to settle in Carondelet [presidential palace], of course passing through Guayaquil collecting the embrace of the new generations of Guayaquil, in no matter how much [ex-mayor] Jaime Nebot Saadis wants to send them back.

“Now, to descend from the mountains to Carondelet passing through Guayaquil, the will of the Indigenous movement and the social organizations that support it won’t be enough. Neither will the collectives, parties or leaders of civil society be able to access Carondelet by themselves and on their own.

“The lesson of these days is very clear: Either the great national majorities, the citizens unite in a great front of the homeland, in a broad democratic stream, or the IMF, the chambers and the oligarchy will continue to prevail.”

Zoila Ramírez, left, and Juan José Simbaña.

WWW PHOTO MIKE OTTO
Bolivia tense as right wing aims for coup

By Marco Teruggi
La Paz, Bolivia

Published by mundo.sputniknews.com
Nov. 2, Translation by John Catalinotto.

The town hall meeting held by the Bolivian opposition in La Paz on Oct. 31 was well attended. It was the expression of a new surge of forces where, for the first time, opposition leaders gathered to discuss ways to defend Evo Morales' government.

The phenomenon is characterized as a "moment of emerging struggles" by Álvaro Zárate, an anthropologist and mouthpiece of the Civic Committee of 2008.

The meeting in the La Paz town hall, as well as the mobilizations that the opposition has been carrying out day after day, are heterogeneous spaces with different demands and speeches that range from a rejection of Cuba and Venezuela to the need to protect the environment.

The complexity of the [right-wing] mobilization has, however, agreed on an objective that has been heightened from the day after the Oct. 20 elections until now: no longer asking for a second round but for the annulment of the elections and the resignation of Evo Morales.

But who decided there should no longer be a second round, but [rather] elections without Morales and Carlos Mesa (the former Bolivian president who was runner-up in the Oct. 20 presidential election)?

The opposition's leadership

Who leads the mobilized opposition to Morales? Zárate names several people who lead from the shadows, such as "Carlos Sánchez Berzain, the former government minister of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, who is leading from Washington NGOs, and Branko Marinkovic, the president of the first Santa Cruz Civic Committee of 2008."

Other figures have emerged, the main one being Fernando Camacho, who "with a group of businessmen lead the Civic Committee of Santa Cruz and lead this attempt on coup d'état."

That two people have been killed and several wounded increases the tension in this postelection conflict in Bolivia.

The [current] scenario leaves traditional political parties aside, a phenomenon that has been going on for several years. Zárate situated the decline of the parties after the referendum vote of Feb. 21, 2016, held to find out if Evo Morales could run again for president [which Morales won].

Zárate explained: "The parties lost legitimacy; the only formula for defeating them is to accept leadership from the east, not from the west."

The figure of Mesa, or the mayor of La Paz, as well as the October election, has already passed to second place in importance," Zárate continued. "The real enemies are the [right-wing] radicals who do not come representing a political party and instead seek to carry out a coup d'état. Mesa did not attend the town hall meeting; he was booted several times, and he announced that on Sunday [Nov. 3] he will hold an 'extraordinary assembly of the Citizen Community.'"

Miners and peasants march to defend Evo Morales' victory

By Marco Teruggi
La Paz, Bolivia

Published by mundo.sputniknews.com
Oct. 31, Translation by John Catalinotto.

The city of La Paz has turned into a street game board where two opposing political blocs occupy squares. This confrontation has been repeated daily since opposition candidate [and former President] Carlos Mesa refused to recognize Evo Morales' presidential victory last week. Protests began to take place, some of them violent, setting afire the headquarters of Morales' governing Movement to Socialism (MAS) party and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal.

Miners and peasants march to defend Evo Morales' victory

Morales' supporters gather to defend his government, while his rightist enemies maneuver against him.

The behavior of Evo Morales has been nonconfrontational, that is what he has told us, and we will always bet on peace and democracy," emphasized Zárate. This has meant MAS mobilizes to maintain a presence in the street without confrontation, in a scenario where, as the Bolivian government has condemned, the right seeks to generate violence, wound and kill.

Along with that, the [right-wing] gamble is on a binding audit in which 90 specialists from the Organization of American States participate. "If at any time the OAS recommends that we go for a second round, President Morales is willing; he is going to give everything possible to defuse this violence that comes from only one side, from a sector that wants to ignore the election," explained Zárate.

What will the mobilized opposition say if the audit validates the results of Oct. 20 and indicates that Morales won in the first round? And if, on the other hand, the audit indicates that a second round is necessary, will they then not participate? Have they reached the point of no return?

It is a complex scenario, where, within the diversity of those who are mobilized [on the right], there is a leadership that has made the decision to carry out a coup d'état. ☐
There are so many reasons to get Donald Trump out of the White House that it is not surprising at all that a movement has begun in the House of Representatives to impeach him. At this point, it is a wholly partisan effort, with almost all the Democrats for impeachment and almost all the Republicans against it.

So many people have been deeply injured by this administration that they are cheered by the possibility that Trump might be forced out of office, even before the next presidential election. Most of them want to see the Democratic Party in power in the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Of course, impeachment would leave Mike Pence, not the Democrats, in charge of the government.

Impeachment of public officials in the U.S. has occurred rarely. It is generally succeeded only in such cases as getting rid of judges who were visibly drunk while presiding over trials. While anyone who is halfway progressive would rejoice at getting Trump out of office one way or another, it is important to take note of how and why he might be toppled. Is it because of all his super-reactionary moves that have done terrible damage to millions of people in this country, especially the most oppressed?

Trump has green-lighted racism and attacks on immigrants, emboldening the most virulent far-right elements. This has led to the most painful and even lethal conditions on the U.S. border with Mexico — and in the hell-houses for migrants called “detention centers,” where children, even babies, have been separated from their parents.

Trump has upended social programs aimed at alleviating poverty. He has ignored — and even ridiculed environmental pollution — while siding with multibillionaire energy companies responsible for the climate crisis.

But is this why Trump faces possible impeachment? Or is it because he has been deemed a real ruler of the country and the government to be ineffective in protecting their interests — to the point of buffoonery? The issue they have chosen to attack him on is his attempt to get help from politicians in Ukraine to discredit a possible political rival, Joe Biden. Surely, that is the least of Donald Trump’s crimes.

Can Trump’s erratic and grandiose personality that would be on trial? That would leave Pence, who low-keys it while presiding over trials. Even if Trump were forced out before the 2020 elections — which is not too likely — right-wing politicians and the multibillionaire class they represent would still be running the show.

In other countries, more revolutionarily, the people have come up with procedures to immediately oust officials who betrayed them. A prime example is the Paris Commune, which decreed that elected representatives were subject to recall at any time.

In 1871, a war was raging between France and Prussia (Germany). While Prussia was under siege by Prussian troops, and the French army was both preoccupied and rebellious, the people of Paris rose up and established their own government — a people’s republican government that became known as the Paris Commune. For a brief time the workers of Paris took charge of their own destiny.

Among the many steps taken by the Communist party to shift the working class was the direct election of those who would represent them in the Commune, and the ability to immediately recall from office anyone who didn’t carry out the will of the people.

There was no waiting for six years (a U.S. senator’s term) or even two years (a U.S. representative’s term) to get rid of elected figures who betrayed their promises. Once the people of the Commune decided these “representatives” didn’t represent them, they were out.

The Paris Commune was one of the most democratic political bodies the world had yet seen. Now, 148 years later, in a country where both capitalist parties claim to be democrats, are we in fact serving the interests of the multibillionaire plutocrats — we need to fight for nothing less than the rule of the majority: worker’s power.

Impeachment is not enough

By G. Dunkel

Ever since Feb. 22, Hirak — the protest coalition in Algeria — has held a nationwide protest on Fridays, the day the weekend starts there. Students and youth generally hold their nationwide demonstrations on Tuesdays.

This Nov. 1, Algeria marked the 65th anniversary of the start of its War of Independence against France. It was also the 37th consecutive Friday that the Hirak coalition has held protests this year.

On Nov. 4, the demonstration in Algiers was peaceful — so big that it started Thursday night, Oct. 31. The spurt that provoked such a turnout was the current government’s plan to hold new elections for president Dec. 12.

Many protesters from outside the capital city of Algiers arrived in the city before Friday because they expected the cops and army to block transportation. They stayed overnight with family or friends. Numbers are hard to estimate. Wide avenues and big squares were filled with chanting, flag-waving protesters carrying both Algeria’s national flag and the Amazigh (Berber) cultural flag. Amazigh are a distinct national minority in Algeria making up roughly 30 percent of its population. Since June, over 20 protesters carrying the Amazigh flag have been arrested.

“Dump the generals in the garbage!” shouted some demonstrators. Other popular slogans included: “Civilian government, not a military,” “Power to the people, a constituent assembly, sovereign and revocable;” “Elections under a corrupt system are a wily trap” and “I am a member of Hirak, I am not voting.” (el Watan, Nov. 4)

Massive demonstrations also took place in Oran, Constantine, Annaba, Ghardaia, Mostagangam, Blida, Tipaza, Delys, Béjaïa, Tizi-Ouzou and Sidi Bel Abbès.

Timeline of Algeria’s protests

The Hirak protests began in February when the people of Algeria decided that then President Abdelaziz Bouteflika should not run for a fifth term. When he agreed in early April to retire, the protests shifted focus. The demands put forward by Hirak were that all elements of Bouteflika’s “gang” had to leave and that a fair, equitable system of governing Algeria had to be created.

This includes any under General Ahmed Gaid Salah, who has effectively run the government since Bouteflika’s departure, tried to hold elections in April, but couldn’t find candidates. A court canceled the elections the government scheduled for July.

The Algerian election authorities have now accepted five candidates for the scheduled Dec. 12 elections. Four were cabinet ministers under Bouteflika, and the fifth is the leader of a small party closely allied to Bouteflika’s Hirak coalition.

The Hirak coalition’s massive Nov. 1 opposition was in protest of these new presidential election plans.

When one of the candidates was discovered eating at a restaurant in west Algiers on Nov. 3, a demonstration quickly gathered and forced him out of the building and into his car, according to a report carried on French TV national news.

There are two major currents in Hirak. One will accept holding elections, if they are not obviously rigged. The other, which is supported by the left-wing parties, wants to hold a constituent assembly, which would make major changes in how Algeria is governed.

Roles of the U.S. and France

According to the U.S. State Department: “The United States is one of Algeria’s top trading partners, and Algeria is one of the top U.S. trading partners in the Middle East/North African region.” To uncomplicate this diplomatic jargon, the truth is that Algeria’s trade with the U.S. is far more important to Algeria than U.S. trade with Algeria is to the U.S.

After Algeria gained independence from France in 1962, the U.S. trade missions to Algeria began in the early 20th century, ebbed and flowed since then, with a major influx as late as the 1980s. The Algerian community in France is now over a million people, including significant numbers who are first and second generation.

During Algeria’s War of Independence (1954-62), French police under the direction of Maurice Papon massacred pro-independence Algerian protesters in Paris in 1961 and threw over 200 bodies into the Seine River. Papon was later convicted for sending French Jews to German extermination camps during World War II.

After the massive Nov. 1 demonstration, French President Emmanuel Macron issued a tweet saluting the Algerian people’s “spirit of responsibility, in this period so crucial for its future.”

Though Macron extended “best wishes,” what his message actually conveyed was reluctance toward any direct, open involvement of France in the current struggles in Algeria. Given the history of the French colonization of Algeria, and the large number of people in the Algerian community in France, any neocolonial intervention would likely produce an immediate, significant backlash.

Erdogan quiere armas nucleares

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 algumas fuentes, Turquía ya podría haber adquirido, en el “mercado nuclear ilegal” — o sea, para el enriquecimiento de uranio. El anuncio de Erdogan de que Turquía quiere convertirse en una potencia nuclear, interpretado por algunos como un faro para darle más peso a su régimen en la OTAN, no debe subestimarse.

El anuncio de Erdogan revela lo que generalmente está oculto en el debate de los medios: es decir, que en la situación turbulenta causada por políticas de guerra agresivas, la posesión de armas nucleares juega un papel cada vez más importante. Impulsa a quienes aún no poseen armas nucleares a obtenerlas.

Erdogan quiere armas nucleares

Massive people’s protests continue in Algeria

Algiers, Nov. 1. “Here the people rule” reads one sign.

Algerians, Oct. 31, nighttime demonstration.
What the Berlin Wall’s collapse meant for workers worldwide

By John Catalinotto


This Nov. 9, the world’s imperialists and big capitalists will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. They will fill the media, all too available to them, with lies claiming this event was a victory for democracy and freedom. They will be slandering the German Democratic Republic and all the good and progressive acts of the once-socialist part of Germany. A partial antidote to these lies can be found in Victor Grossman’s book, “A Socialist Defender: From Harvard to Karl-Marx-Allee,” told by someone who lived in the GDR from the early 1950s, a student who lived in the eastern part of Berlin. The book has only one author; Stephen Wechsler was Grossman’s name before he left the U.S. military when he was stationed in Austria. He swam across a river to escape what he feared would be a possible prison sentence—in reality a sentence for his pro-communist activities—common punishment in the McCarthyite 1950s.

Grossman’s book tells the story of the GDR’s 31-year survival and the daily struggle through the eyes of someone committed to socialism, who was also an honest and careful observer of the everyday ups and downs of the fledgling socialist republic. He also describes with excruciating detail the annexation of eastern Germany by the victorious imperialist power in the West.

Even to focus on a little of what Grossman covers in his 352 pages may help explain why the fall of the GDR was a loss, both to the oppressed nations of what is today called the “global south” and to the East German working class and workers worldwide.

GDR aided liberation struggles

He writes, discussing so-called dissenters, “In contrast with the rulers in Bonn [capital of West Germany], the GDR generously aided the African National Congress in South Africa, SWAPO [South West African People’s Organization] in Namibia, Ho Chi Minh’s Vietnam, the Sandinistas [in Nicaragua] and the anti-Finochet forces [in Chile].”

“What would success of those dissenters, whose motivation was implacable anti-GDR hostility, mean to those struggles? ‘Human rights’ were demanded by people totally uninterested in [Nelson] Mandela, Leonard Peltier or even the ‘Beruhigetoten’ [extrusion from jobs like teaching] in West Germany, where some were jailed, many were fired and 1.4 million were investigated by the equivalent of the FBI because of their unacceptable views.”

This reviewer was in East Berlin in October 1989 interviewing Angolan students, educated at the GDR’s expense at Humboldt University in how to set up and run beer breweries in their recently liberated country. It seemed an intelligent division of labor that socialist Cuba would help win the big military battle with South African troops at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 and that the socialist GDR would provide technical and industrial education to the Angolan people.

Imperialist Germany had conquered Namibia in the 19th century, but the socialist GDR gave medical treatment to its wealth to lure whatever deflectors it could from the East. This was part of its war against socialism. In the opposite way, the Berlin Wall discouraged defections. In principle, it was not much different from union workers setting up a picket line to prevent discouraged workers from breaking a strike. The same was true of the GDR.

In the years after the Berlin Wall fell, those who lived in the East quickly discovered there was a lot that the GDR had accomplished. Unfortunately, they discovered it by losing their guaranteed jobs, universal child care—which especially harmed women—two-thirds of their public libraries, their low-rent apartments and almost-free public transportation.

West German industries and banks moved into the East, bought up for next to nothing the industries that had employed 4 million workers—with a market mainly in the former socialist countries—and in no time created an army of unemployed and precarious workers. Many workers had to migrate to the West. Grossman details how this happens and draws a clear picture not of a “reunification,” but of an annexation, much like an imperialist country seizing a colony.

While there was a GDR, the West German military stayed within its country’s borders. After seizing the GDR in 1990 and dissolving the GDR’s army, German imperialism intervened in Yugoslavia to tear apart the social-guaranteed and workers’ state into the two states, whose motivation was implacable anti-Pinochet forces [in Chile].

Grossman’s book provides a contrast to the lying propaganda of those imperialists still resisting the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Today, the over-90-year-old Grossman continues his writing by describing, in his Berlin Bulletin, developments in German politics with an explanation understandable for U.S. readers, who might not be following the day-by-day developments there. (For more about the bulletin, see tinyurl.com/yy8mcyva.)
El líder marxista y libertador africano de Guinea-Bisáu, Amílcar Cabral, dijo una vez: "No hay victorias fáciles". Aún así, todas estas son solo las batallas de la lucha; aún hay mucho camino por recorrer. Pero no hay victorias fáciles.

En un foro del Workers World Party el 2 de noviembre en la ciudad de Nueva York, Nieves Avery Lorenzo del movimiento La Peña del Bronx y ex prisionera política de la dictadura cívico-militar de Augusto Pinochet leyó la siguiente declaración sobre el actual levantimiento en Chile.

El modelo económico neoliberal se está derrumbando bajo la nariz de la élite chilena. Piñera en la continuación de la Dictadura Pinochetista, Chile se encuentra en estado de emergencia, donde Piñera declaró que está en guerra con los manifestantes. Los militares han salido en masa, y se puede escuchar milicos a sus cuarteles, en una democracia donde Piñera declaró que está en guerra con los manifestantes. Los militares han salido en masa, y se puede escuchar milicos a sus cuarteles.

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