Solidarity with Postal Workers!

Vote YES for PR!

This month, British Columbians will vote on electoral reform.

Don’t miss this historic opportunity to switch to proportional representation – a system that will help make every vote count!

See page 5 for more

Vancouver election
The party that dominated Vancouver politics for ten years was wiped out on Oct. 20. But will the mix of left and Green forces on Council be able to tackle the city’s housing crisis?

Page 3

Site C boondoggle
Bulldozers are moving millions of cubic meters of soil to create the Site C Dam, but the eventual costs will be far higher than expected, argues a new book on the controversial project.

Page 5

Saving the Revolution
Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution is under intense attack as US imperialism and economic elites sow economic turmoil and chaos. Is it possible to save the revolution from defeat?

Page 6

Cuba at the U.N.
Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez speaks at the United Nations General Assembly, calling for urgent action to save the planet from war and environmental catastrophe.

Page 12
CUPW starts rotating strikes for just Collective Agreements

By Stuart Ryan, Ottawa
At midnight on Monday, October 22, the 55,000 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers began a series of rotating strikes to pressure Canada Post Corporation to agree to just collective agreements that serve the best interests of both the urban operations unit members, and the rural and suburban mail carrier workers.

The strike comes after 10 months of bargaining, and after the union received resounding strike mandates for both bargaining unit members.

CUPW National President Mike Palecek told People’s Voice on October 22 that the key issues for the Union are pay equity for rural and suburban mail carriers, and health and safety issues and longer hours for letter carriers, because of the “exponential increase in parcel delivery over the last decade.”

The parties had agreed to implement a review of the pay for rural and suburban mail carriers, who consist of a majority of women workers, but who have been paid 28% less than urban letter carriers, the majority of whom are male.

After a year of negotiations, it took an arbitration decision by Arbitrator Maureen Flynn this September to recognize the right of pay equity for the RSMC unit members. Pay equity still needs to be settled at the negotiating table for the new collective agreement and the Canada Post offer of 1.5% a year does not make pay equality a reality.

Palecek said, “Letter carriers are getting so much more work that means they often have to work into the evening to complete their deliveries.”

He said, “Injuries in the workplace have increased 43% in the last two years. The injury rate is five times the average of other workers in the federal sector.”

The Union wants more job security by creating more full-time jobs, but Canada Post wants to increase the use of precarious workers with less pay and benefits to cover peak periods.

The union and management held non-bargaining meetings with the national leaders of both organizations over the Thanksgiving weekend to clear the air, but this failed to overcome a lack of trust between the parties.

At these meetings the Union declared that the Corporation was not interested in the proposals CUPW made in its Delivering a Fair Deal program, such as Postal Banking, a fleet of electronic postal vans and extending broadband services to rural areas.

After this Oct. 6-8 weekend set of talks both parties tabled global offers but the final offer from Liepelt Post did not meet the issues of importance to the Union and its membership.

CUPW has succeeded in preventing any concessions in this set of negotiations. Palecek said, “There are no proposals to weaken the pension plan, which was the key issue in the last round of bargaining in 2016.”

The Union is determined to win back the rights its members lost in the development of the wage legislation imposed in 2014 by the Harper Conservative government, including the stripping of their sick leave and wage increases below the cost of living.

Palecek reported to a recent solidarity meeting in Ottawa that the government has said that it will not introduce back-to-work legislation, but the union is prepared for that eventuality.

He said, “The government will keep saying that until the day it introduces such legislation.”

Palecek said CUPW has received letters of support from all union leaders. “We would also like to hear that the Campaign for Public Services has renewed its support for Postal Banking. He said, “We are receiving support from many groups, environmental and community organizations because of our campaign for Delivering Community Services.”

PV Vancouver Bureau

Announcing its plans for rotating strikes, CUPW said the locations and intensity will depend on Canada Post’s actions at the around the Korean Peninsula and pointing out to its members that “after over 10 months of negotiations and despite our efforts to resolve key issues, the parties are still far apart on many of your demands.”

CUPW lists a series of key demands that have not been resolved, including: wage increases above the rate of inflation; improvements to Group 1 Staffing; job security; reduce overburdening for letter carriers; one-hand delivery; protection of existing unit work; and improvements to the company’s short-term disability plan (STD).

The union is also seeking important improvements for RSMCs (rural and suburban mail carriers), such as post-retirement benefits, pay for all hours worked, minimum guaranteed hours, ending the obligation of RSMCs to find a replacement for their own absences, and to be paid directly by Canada Post when on work-related accidents.

Health and safety remains a vital bargaining issue for CUPW, which points out that the injury rate at Canada Post is the highest of all federal industries, and 5.4 times higher than the average of federal workplaces. During the last four years there have been 30,774 injuries to CUPW members. Of these 14,751 were disabling injuries. One out of every 12 workers at Canada Post experienced a disabling injury in 2017.

While management agrees that “more work must be done” to improve this record, CUPW says, “when it comes to action, management wants to do nothing” and that “when it comes to choosing between profits and the health of employees, management chooses profits.”

PV file photo by Ed Bil.

Ontario Bureau

The results from Ontario’s municipal elections were still coming in late on Oct. 22 as People’s Voice went to press, but the new council for the City of Toronto came under clear – Toronto’s reduced city council reflects a reduced democracy.

When Doug Ford cut Toronto council in half, well into the election campaign, one of his objectives was to squeeze out candidates who might challenge the corporate-driven, pro-developer policies that tend to dominate City Hall. Working class candidates would be hard-pressed to secure the massive financial resources necessary to mount a serious campaign. Women, queer and marginalized candidates would be elbowed aside in favour of “more electable” white men. Mission accomplished.

The new city council includes less than one-third women, and less than 10% racialized people. Politically, it leans strongly to the right and re-elected mayor John Tory will face little opposition. Tory will face little opposition.

There were, of course, exceptions to this. One of the bright spots was Helen Kennedy’s campaign for public school trustee. Running for her first time, Kennedy won nearly 20% of the vote and placed a strong third in a race that had seven candidates.

Kennedy’s campaign was the only one in the ward, and one of the few in the entire city, that was explicitly focused on a set of working class and progressive demands for public education. While many centrist candidates spoke in general terms about resources for schools and inclusivity for students, Kennedy openly campaigned for improvements to the provincial funding formula, specific anti-oppression programs, and a clear-cut rejection of privatization and austerity.

The enduring gain of her campaign is that it united labour and community groups, and founded a concrete platform, building a solid basis for a badly-needied civic movement in Toronto. It demonstrates the strength of politics that reject opportunism, by engaging people in an alternative vision that puts the needs of students, workers and communities ahead of corporate power and profit.

At a moment of escalating opposition to the growing class and weak leadership from most of the labour movement, Kennedy’s campaign is an example of precisely the kind of concrete grassroots organizing necessary for a thriving, province-wide backlight movement.

PV file photo by Ed Bil.

Kennedy campaign a bright spot in frustrating Toronto election

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PV file photo by Ed Bil.

Helen Kennedy campaigned on progressive working class demands for stronger and more inclusive public education.

“Dishonest political provocation” against DPRK

“Dishonest political provocation” against DPRK

“Dishonest forces including Japan” are cooking up another “resolution on human rights in North Korea” in the United Nations. The statement was made by the 22 statement from the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). Such a resolution is presented every year, which the KCNA calls “a typical example of politicization of human rights, selectivity and double standards, full of fallacy, fraud and mud-slinging.”

“It is an outcome of the conspiratorial and criminal scenario of hostile forces to defame the dignity of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and stifle its socialist system,” says the KCNA, criticizing what it calls a “deep-rooted confrontational campaign.”

The statement says: “It is self-evident that the ‘civilization’ and ‘standards’ of Western countries cannot be the human rights yardstick of the world, as these countries have turned into a barren land of human rights, embodying the imperialistic way of thinking to look down upon, suppress and dominate others.”

“It is a mockery and insult to justice and human rights that Japan, which committed crimes against the Korean nation and other Asian countries but has made no apology to them, is taking the lead” in the human rights campaign, says the KCNA, noting that this continues even when the situation in and around the Korean Peninsula has turned to dialogue and peace, thanks to the efforts of the DPRK.

PV file photo by Ed Bil.
First take on Vancouver election: a missed opportunity?

By Kimball Curious

October 20 was municipal election day across British Columbia, earlier than in the past, when campaigning went into the mid-November rainy season. The highlight for many observers was in Vancouver, where Vision’s ten years of majority control of City Hall was ending. After a crushing by-election defeat a year ago, new finance rules cut off the flow of donor contributions, and Mayor Gregor Robertson’s political survival hung in the balance. He had previously decided not to stand for re-election.

The field was wide open for a record number of parties (11) and candidates (158) to get to the ballot. Almost 180,000 voters went to the polls, electing candidates from five parties. Taking 28% of the vote in a crowded race, labour- and backbench independent Kennedy Stewart is the new mayor. The people’s voice commentary by Christine Boyle to city council, Jean Swanson and OneCity’s Christine Boyle on key issues - or else with the mayor, Swanson and Boyle on key issues - or else with the NPA before them. The incoming Vancouver Green councillors do take progressive stands on some issues, but they are too cool to the trade union movement (despite the Labour Council’s endorsement), and their school trustees are not consistent defenders of public education.

The Vancouver civic election was the latest electoral high water mark for the Green Party, which has been reaching out to former council in 1993.)

In other BC election results of interest to People’s Voice readers, the best news of the night results point to a missed opportunity. Working class housing crisis is just beginning, and of the NPA before them.

What’s next for the civic left in Vancouver? OneCity was born out of the disaster of sectarian politics which nearly destroyed COPE in 2011, and of the disastrous sectarian politics which try to block interference from the failed policies of Vision, and of the NPA before them. For its part, Vision council had relied mainly on high-end homes. For its part, Vision council had relied mainly on high-end homes. But some progress was achieved, both parties are here to stay. The incoming Vancouver Green councillors do take progressive stands on some issues, but they are too cool to the trade union movement (despite the Labour Council’s endorsement), and their school trustees are not consistent defenders of public education.

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Canada’s shameful hypocrisy on Saudi Arabia

PM Justin Trudeau and Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland are trying to appear “shocked and appalled” at the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi by top-level Saudi operatives. But despite their image as bringers of peace and light to the world stage, the real track record of the federal Liberals is shameful. This government maintains close ties with the pro-fascist leaders who seized power four years ago in Kiev, and with the Israeli Zionist apartheid regime which brutally crushes the Palestinian people on a daily basis. Freeland is one of the most vocal cheerleaders for Washington’s efforts to topple democratically elected governments in Latin America which refuse to toe the US imperialist line.

When the Liberals were elected, they refused to block the sale of $15 billion worth of tanks built by London, Ontario-based General Dynamics Land Systems Canada to the monarchy of Saudi Arabia, which was providing repressive Arab states to intervene in Yemen’s internal conflict. So we are not surprised to see PM Trudeau wring his hands in mock despair over the Khashoggi murder. “It’s very difficult to suspend or leave that contract,” Trudeau says, calling the situation “incredibly frustrating.” Meanwhile, Canada’s business partners are destroying Yemen, with catastrophic consequences. The UN has declared a “level-three” emergency, and human rights groups repeatedly blame the Saudi-led military coalition for air strikes which kill civilians, and destroy health centers and other infrastructure. The Saudi blockade has left 20 million Yemenis (three-quarters of the population) in urgent need of food, water and medical aid. Over 2,500,000 people have been internally displaced, and famine and disease threaten to kill millions. This is one of the most humanitarian disasters of our times. The federal Liberals must be told to stop following Donald Trump’s lead, and cancel the production and sale of tanks to the murderous Saudi regime.

Solidarity with Postal Workers

The start of rotating strikes across the country by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is a signal that solidarity is needed more than ever, by other trade unions, and by the public. That begins with picket line support, the most immediate way to show that the embattled workers of CUPW are not alone in their struggle with a bitterly anti-working class crown corporation management and a big business federal government.

But this confrontation is more than a dispute between a militant trade union and an employer determined to press for concessions. The bargaining demands put forward by CUPW (see page 2 for details) have wide-ranging implications for all workers in Canada, and for the thousands of communities which rely heavily on a publicly-owned mail delivery service. CUPW is fighting for real workplace equity, not just the empty rhetoric about equality served up by Justin Trudeau and his cabinet ministers. That means giving the largely female large of rural and urban carriers the same wages and working conditions as other postal workers. It means paying these employees for the actual overtime they work - a demand which should be self-evident in the year 2018.

CUPW is also determined to refocus the entire discussion about the role of the public sector of the economy, pushing back against neoliberal politicians and the corporate media who claim that everything in the economy should be privatized. The CUPW “Delivering Community Power” campaign is a brilliant strategy to win working people for the understanding that banking and services can and should be provided by the public sector, not by profit-hungry corporations.

Yes, get out to the CUPW picket lines! But don’t forget to help promote a wider agenda, through resolutions, letters to the editor, petitions, social media postings and other tactics.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter from a Postie: Building a better Canada Post for all

One hundred years ago, in 1919, William Lyon Mackenzie King proclaimed that 1921 would be the last election held under FPtP. Once elected, he lost his appetite for change, declaring that the Liberal Party was in favour of proportionality, in principle only. A few years later, facing election, King again promised Pro Rep, only to break his promise a second time.

If this sounds eerily familiar, that’s because Justin Trudeau used almost identical words to promise that 2015 will be ‘the last election under FPP’. Remarkably, both PMs formed all-party committees to study the subject, only to shelf the findings.

And it’s not just the Liberal Party. Everyone’s NDP government in Alberta quietly pulled electoral reform from the party policy book when the polls were looking good. Stephen Harper famously said that “many of Canada’s problems stem from a winner take all style of politics”. Plus ca change.

We have a historic opportunity before us in BC right now. With a little ink mark on a piece of paper, we can change the political landscape.

Pro Rep systems produce more collaborative governments, they attract politicians who are willing to work together. Voter turnout increases, especially for youth. Pro Rep systems elect more women and minorities, they protect us from extremists and they offer stable policy that lasts. Pro Rep systems ensure that all our votes will count.

I will be voting for Proportional Representation and I hope you will too. Let’s wait another century.

Ann Renwan, Nelson, BC

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PLUS CA CHANGE.....

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VOLUNTEERS & CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS ISSUE:
Dana Assink, Jane Bouey, Kimball Cariou, Drew Garvie, Dave McKee, Harry Montague, Peter Marcus, Dan McAfee, Tim Feller, Liz Bowley, Stuart Ryan and our mailers in Vancouver and Toronto.

EDITOR: KIMBALL CARIOU editorial advisor: NASSER AZIMIKOR
EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD: Jamie Bowley, Kimball Cariou, Drew Garvie, Dave McAfee, Pierre Fontaine, Elizabeth Rovner, Adrian Walsh

LETTERS

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Plus Ca Change...
Vote Yes for Proportional Representation: help shift BC politics to the left

By Kimball Carison, editor of People's Voice

Starting on October 23, British Columbians are receiving ballot packages in the mail, for the upcoming provincial election. Ballots must be returned in time to count by late October, after which the progress of the political parties, including the labour movement, are urging a “yes” vote to switch from the current “first-past-the-post” (FPTP) system to proportional representation (PR). Like many other groups, the Communist Party of BC (a registered party) supports Mixed-Member PR, one of three options on the second part of this ballot.

But powerful right-wing forces are blocking the status quo, warning ominously that a PR system would create a “box of evils, such as minority governments which might put the braille on但是在大字体和大字体中，和文本中的人们一起，也许每个人都可以拥有投票权的！”

“All the work that we have been doing, on the ground and online, is happening twice in British Columbia: in 1972 when Dave Barrett was elected premier with 39.6% of the vote for the NDP, and again in 1996 when Glen Clark won a majority with 39.4% of the vote, but the NDP would win only three seats. If the NDP was a socialist party, this argument might mean building the dam first, or at least coming to terms with the project and its effects on the environment and the local population.

Andi Caza says in an interview with one of the book’s authors, “This may be our last chance in a generation to make a real democratic change in the electoral system.”

Despite this inconvenient truth, the government will spend $10 billion (and possibly more with cost overruns) to build the dam. If there is no future demand, the utility will have to sell the power at below the cost of production to avoid a loss, argues Eliesen, and the $10 billion to build the dam will be lost to the provincial and federal budgets. The researchers, specialists and academics who contribute essays to the book, believe that damming the Peace is BC’s last significant opportunity to develop renewable energy and storage facilities and to attract companies that will be more economical to invest in solar, wind and geothermal energy projects.

Energy consultant Guy Duncey says the $4 billion already spent on Site C should be offset in the future with lower energy bills from solar, wind, geothermal and energy conservation measures.

First Nations, who under the treaty Wiilx:temux: (the Columbia’s people) are the people who own the land, have a right to determine what the future of Site C might be. According to biologist Brian Schindler in his essay “Atoms for Energy,” dams are not benign environmental improvements but are potentially harmful, leading to species loss and habitat degradation.


Despite the inconvenient truth, the government will spend $10 billion (and possibly more with cost overruns) to build the dam. If there is no future demand, the utility will have to sell the power at below the cost of production to avoid a loss, argues Eliesen, and the $10 billion to build the dam will be lost to the provincial and federal budgets. But electoral “democracy,” in a capitalist country like Canada, often allows elected politicians to simply ignore the views and interests of the working class who make up the big majority of the population. Big business interests and their lobbying organizations are able to influence government decisions, while ordinary citizens are left to wonder what democracy means.

“The most significant argument for proportional representation in Canada today is that working people would have a much greater incentive to vote for left-wing parties and candidates, such as the Communists. Speaking from personal experience as a Communist candidate in many federal elections, I know that working class voters respond very favourably to our party’s policies. Public opinion surveys show that millions of people agree with the energy industry and the banking system should be under public ownership, which only the Communists advocate. We call for reduced military spending, dramatic increase in taxes on corporate profits and high incomes, and solidarity with the Palestinian people struggling against Israeli apartheid. All these ideas have wide popular support, but not widespread Parliaments or legislatures.

The main reason is that the FPTP system makes it incredibly difficult to elect candidates who present such radical policies. By and large, voters in Canada are aware that the game is set up to favour a few players. Even where Communists are on the ballot, the corporate media refuses to report on our campaigns. Voters are warned constantly that giving their support to a Communist might “split the vote” and let a right-wing candidate win.

Under a mixed-member PR system, voters would cast ballots for their preferred candidate at the riding level, but also for the party of their choice, without the fear of splitting the vote. The potential impact of this change can be seen in the Student Vote exercise carried out in high schools during federal and provincial elections. Whenever Communists are on the ballot, students receive the backing of anywhere from 3% up to 10% of students who have studied the platforms of the different parties. Clearly, there is sizable public support for a left-of-centre Party platform. Under a fair PR system, this would result in the election of many, perhaps not immediately, but sooner or later.

While PR alone does not guarantee the election of progressive governments, it would give working people a crucial opportunity to vote for the policies they really want, and to elect Communists. This is one reason why right-wing parties and corporate forces in B.C. are campaign to block electoral reform by spreading disinformation and scare tactics. It also helps to explain why some partisan NDP governments have failed to cancel a large number of working people would turn to parties further on the left.

When you get your electoral reform voting package in the mail, remember that your vote counts! Under a mixed-member system, you can vote for a real democratic change in the electoral system. Vote “yes” for Mixed-Member PR, the option that respects our right to the Legislature and shift politics in BC back to the left! 

Anti-Site C rally in Vancouver. VF photo by K. Carison

site C dam: expensive in many ways

Damming the Peace — the Hidden Costs of the Site C Dam, edited by Wendy Holm, published by New Society Publishers, 2018, Book review by Tim Pelzer

“Damming the Peace” delivers a devastating critique of the Site C dam building project in British Columbia’s Peace River Valley and tells us why the project should be cancelled. Originally started by former Liberal Premier Glen Clark, the NDP-Green coalition government chose to continue building Site C because it will sit in a biodiversity reserve.

They justified the continuation on grounds that economic losses that were simply told by provincial governments which might put the brakes on future extraction and export projects. “Quelle horreur,” as the French phrase it. “What a incomprehensible monster even women might have the vote!”

Oh wait, that already happened…

The construction of the Site C dam has created a majority in the Legislature under the assumption that with less than 40% of the population growth — due to a lack of housing, the electricity, which has not taken place, has not taken place. “There was no business case,” argues New Democrats MLA Marc Eliesen, which says you never build a dam without customers first signifying their agreement to the dam and the electricity, which has not taken place. “There was no business case, there was no business.”

According to biologist Brian Dauncey says the $4 billion already spent on Site C should be offset in the future with lower energy bills from solar, wind, geothermal and energy conservation measures.

First Nations, who under the treaty Wiilx:temux: (the Columbia’s people) are the people who own the land, have a right to determine what the future of Site C might be. According to biologist Brian Schindler in his essay “Atoms for Energy,” dams are not benign environmental improvements but are potentially harmful, leading to species loss and habitat degradation.


“Damming the Peace” delivers a devastating critique of the Site C dam building project in British Columbia’s Peace River Valley and tells us why the project should be cancelled. Originally started by former Liberal Premier Glen Clark, the NDP-Green coalition government chose to continue building Site C because it will sit in a biodiversity reserve.

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Turmoil reigns in Venezuela. A story serves to illustrate and to introduce the report presented here. The Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) on its website claims that the national police in Táchira were recently arrested and tortured PCV member José Luis Daza, who remains in prison in an unknown location. The sustainable conflict incident near the Colombia-Venezuela border points to the role of the United States and the anti-Venezuelan campaign under the government of President Nicolás Maduro.

According to the PCV statement, the police were intent upon securing “a false accusation” from Daza against Yhon Luna, for whom he is an assistant and who is a member of the PCV Central Committee and the Tachira Legislative Council.

The PCV, a long-time supporter of the leftist revolution now headed by Maduro, alleges that Luna is of interest to the police because he is a member of a regional justice and human rights commission, he was dealing with accusations of corruption, smuggling, and bribery by local police and the military. His release is demanded.

A new way

Now survival of the socialist movement founded by the late Hugo Chávez, president from 1999-2013, until his death in 2013, is very much in question. Over a year ago, Hugo Chávez, president from 1999-2013, was dealing with accusations of corruption, smuggling, and bribery by local police and the military. His release is demanded.

“Only socialism can solve global warming crisis”

“The real message from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is that almost all women have crossed the global warming crisis and is incapable of solving it”, John Foster told the Communist Party of Britain's political committee on October 13.

Pointing out that burning oil and gas accounts for 50 per cent of global carbon emissions, he said the big corporations showed no intention of helping reach the Paris Agreement targets to limit global warming to 2°C, let alone 1.5°C.

“Oil is a hugely profitable business for which the major imperialist states and their allies are prepared to go to war”, said Foster, who is Emeritus Professor of Social Sciences at Paisley University, and is the CPB’s International Secretary.

The latest IPCC report insists that failure to impose the 1.5°C limit by 2050 will greatly increase the economic damage, famine, disease and refugee crises caused by rising sea levels, droughts and storms. The thousand-plus scientists who composed or reviewed the report are calling for extraordinary transformations in industry, transportation, energy, land use and construction and the widespread adoption of renewable energy technologies.

“Such an urgent, radical transformation is not possible without large-scale public ownership, investment and planning - which means a revolutionary advance in the ownership structure of society”, Foster added. In particular, he insisted that neoliberal policies - including those enshrined in European Union treaties and directives - precluded the actions needed to counter global warming.

Foster also set the challenge of global warming in a wider context of growing international economic and military conflict and the threat of environmental catastrophic crisis. He pointed out that Britain can meet these challenges by stepping up local and national campaigning against austerity, racism, xenophobia and war, and by uniting the efforts of the whole of the CPB's business backshells of the EU Single Market and Customs Union.

The CPB has condemned the imprisonment of three anti-fracking protesters at Preston Crown Court as a ‘brutal example of how the state reacts when people dare to defend local communities and the environment against the exploiters and polluters’.

On counter-revolution in Venezuela

W.T. Whitney, People’s World

The political and police officers took things into their own hands: In 2017 government ministries in Caracas were assaulted (with a helicopter), military bases were attacked in Valencia and in Miranda state, and in January 2018 the Cuban embassy was hit. On August 4, 2018, plotters, soldiers among them backed by drones to attack Maduro and other officials attending a Caracas event an opposition has “shown itself to be incapable, inefficient, and without proposals.”

What with military intrusion of the usual sort looking to be uneffective, humanitarian intervention with military characteristics emerged as an option. After all, shortages and inflation have caused Venezuelans extreme hardship, even suffering. The US and its allies are there to test the resolve of the President of the United States or the American people in this regard.

Revolution at risk

In summary: survival of the government of President Maduro, custodian of the Bolivarian Revolution, is at extreme risk. It confronts economic turmoil, is said polarized to meet people’s needs, and is besieged by foreign enemies. There are two fronts of counter-revolution.

What causes human distress in Venezuela and what might be the immediate cause of violence billed as humanitarian? Lawyer and scholar Alfred-Maurice de Zayas draws up a report on economic and humanitarian aspects of the crisis to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It goes to the heart of the assault on Venezuela’s social gains.

Suffering and disruption in Venezuela, he asserts, stem from: 1) a”) oil price collapse on the sale of petroleum” and “devastating” effects of falling oil prices; b) “250,000 Colombians have joined the course of 30 years. There, Kuehnle notes that by 2016 over 2.6 million Colombians, not counting children, were living in other countries, mainly Venezuela. He cites the Colombian President Andrés Pastrana’s estimate that because of Colombia’s civil war almost five million Colombians migrated to Venezuela over the course of 30 years. There, they’ve received government-supplied social services. Kuehnle points out that so far in 2018, 2.6 million Colombians are understood to have crossed the border.

“Revolution at risk” is an untold story: Anti-Venezuela prejudice in fact pervades the US and European media. The document reporting emphasises the spread between what’s reported and what’s presented. It’s essential reading. 

For details of a speaking tour by Carlos Ron, Venezuela’s Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, contact People’s Voice in Vancouver (604-255-2041) or Toronto (416-469-2446).
The process of European capitalist integration now embarks on a new phase. The European Union (EU) — has had serious repercussions for our country. Over the last three decades, the EU’s policies, limitations and constraints have resulted in the loss of sovereignty, growing dependence, economic stagnation, weakening of the national productive apparatus, alienation of strategic sectors, growing attacks on social and labour rights, degradation of public services and the association of Portugal with the militaristic and interventionist strategy of the EU and NATO.

Contrary to what is proclaimed by the defenders of the European Union, the process of integration did not bring about a convergence of the levels of economic development and living conditions of the different peoples of the European continent. On the contrary, the direct effects of the process have been of divergence and accentuation of asymmetries.

Superimposed on the economic crisis is the progressive offset by funds coming from the EU to Portugal. False! Just look at the historical facts to realize that what this country has already lost due to its integration into the EU is far from being compensated by these funds. The solidarity of the European Union is not solid. Instead of solidarity, what characterizes the EU is the rule of the strongest. The economic and financial crisis of the last ten years broke out in Portugal, but the EU did nothing to offset the losses caused by the economic and financial crisis of the last ten years. The EU has resulted in the imposition to countries such as Portugal, Greece and Ireland of truly aggressive pacts that have left a trail of loss of sovereignty, economic destruction and brutal attacks on the rights of workers and peoples in these countries.

Indeed, and if we want to look at the present involvement of the EU in the geo-strategic siege of the Russian Federation to deny such claims. The truth is that what brought peace and stability to Europe was the victory over Nazi-fascism and not the process of capitalist integration. This process has been from the outset, associated with the colonial and imperialist domination of the major powers of the EU, and today it increasingly stands as the European pillar of NATO, having developed in concert with the US its militarist pillar and an interventionist and neocolonial policy.

Another argument of EU defenders is that EU is a kind of champion of human rights and democracy. Once again reality denies such thesis. In fact, the democracy as it stands today in most European countries is a result from processes of struggle and conquest of workers and peoples, whether in terms of economic and political — the fruit of the great victories of the labor movement in twentieth century and the achievements of processes of struggle and in revolutions, such as the Portuguese Revolution. Indeed, and if we want to be rigorous, as the EU has accentuated the concentration of wealth and power, the concentration of political power has also increased in the European Union. States have been progressively deprived of elements of sovereignty which are an integral part of political democracy. The EU has been concentrating its decision-making power on an increasing number of central issues, trying to “safeguard” its control of popular scrutiny. Examples of this are all the rules and limitations of the Economic and Monetary Union and of Economic Governance, which seek to take away from the national sphere the decision-making power of economic, fiscal and fiscal policies and, more recently, of fundamental questions of sovereignty, such as foreign policy and border control.

But there is more. As shown by the referendums in several European countries, the will of the peoples has been several times called into question when it did not “match” the interests of the EU. There were several processes of shameless interference in elections; of referendum repetition until the “right” result was obtained; or even the imposition of government solutions, as was the case in Italy. Democracy has also been attacked by sanctions, blackmail and impositions, associated with the troika’s aggression pacts or contrived to condition political decisions as was the case of Portugal after the legislative elections of 2015. In fact, the EU is no example of democracy or of freedom. Far from being this were the case, its policy towards serious humanitarian issues, such as migration, would be quite different, first of all by reversing the policies of economic colonization and wars that are social, of these migratory movements. What marks EU policy is hypocrisy and not the defense of human rights.

The Contradictions Get Stronger

The contradictions of European Union are today fully unveiled. Those already mentioned, and others. The exit of Britain is one of the most visible faces of the deep crisis of the EU. It could hardly be otherwise. The reason is the EU is not a process of capitalist integration. States is a process of imposition and domination which, from its inception, could not fit in with the needs of big European capitalist and of the main powers of Europe to extend its reach to new areas and the so-called “frontier” of the European Union. Therefore, the idea of enlargement is not abandoned, as is evident in the opening of doors in the Balkans area, or in the coup operation in Ukraine that brought fascist and neo-Nazi forces to government.

The far right, “nationalisms”, “populisms” and “radicalisms” are used as a sort of “fifth column” that has to be fought against and for that purpose everything goes. With the current are dragged all those who contest the developing process of capitalist integration. But in fact, and as reality has been demonstrating, the far right does not call into question the essential core of the EU, but it is increasingly used as a sort of “screen”, behind which the ruling circles of the EU policies are strengthened.

The situation is being used for the intensification of the EU policies and the nth repetition of the idea of “reform”. But this, of course, does not cease to please. No wonder. The European Union is not a process of capitalist integration. The EU development confirms Lenin’s thesis that “The United States of Europe under capitalist and other impossible or reactionary”.

Sovereignty and Co-operation

The question of the alternative is in the order of the day. And, contrary to the lies about the position of the PCP, the Communists do not advocate any isolationist solution, on the contrary.

The solution is to build paths of genuine co-operation in Europe. This is not about one big capital and big Powers to counterpose a Europe of the workers and peoples that seek to deepen the process of capitalist integration — the right wing and the social-democracy. The EU is a process inseparable from the growing contradictions between sectors of the EU. The EU is in a state of contradiction and therefore political — beyond the questions of sovereignty, such as those of supranational imposition. It is a product, as has always been, of the ruling classes of their policies and their processes of ruling.

EU ruling circles are making efforts to overcome the accumulation of contradictions. They are well aware that the economic situation is far from being stabilized and try to deal simultaneously with the complex process of reorganizing forces at the global level. The answer that is being attempted seeks to re-edit the three axes of “resolution” just described.

Militaryism is accentuated, justified by the “new” dictatorship of “terrorism” (fed precisely by the EU Powers); an even greater process concentration of capital in the hands of the few, controlled, in particular by means of the so-called “Completion of economic and monetary union”, the extension of the single market to new areas and the so-called “convergence” of the economies, finally, the idea of enlargement is not abandoned, as is evident in the opening of doors in the Balkans area, or in the coup operation in Ukraine that brought fascist and neo-Nazi forces to government.

For another Europe - a Europe of the workers and the peoples!
**Crackdown on Iran teacher strikes**

Iranian public authorities have responded to a nationwide strike by teachers in support of poor public schools and arresting education union leaders.

Mohammad Sadegh Shekari, Mohammad Abdolreza Ghanbari and Abdolreza Ghanbari are among activists arrested during the strike called on October 14 and 15 by the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers Trade Associations (CCITTA).

The protest action was aimed at raising several ongoing critical issues for education workers: low wages, the degradation of quality public education and the criminalisation of activists fighting for teachers’ rights.

The call for action of CCITTA was supported by teachers in more than 50 cities across the country, including Tehran, Isfahan, Mashhad, Hamadan, Gonbad, Isfahan, Hamadan, I Lam, Kermanshah, Ahvaz, Sanandaj, Saqqez and Zanjan. In dozens of schools and organisations sit-in actions in the administrative offices of schools. Many teachers use their peaceful actions on social media, where teachers held signs with slogans such as “Justice is the right of teachers” or “Free imprisoned teachers”.

In Iran, most teachers live far below the poverty line due to low wages. Cuts in education budgets, the growing economic crisis and skyrocketing inflation make their situation even worse. Iranian teachers are fighting for better working conditions.

**Thugs attack picket line in Philippines**

On October 10, thugs accompanied by members of the army and police again attacked striking house workers on picket lines at Sumifru’s Sumifru Philippines Corporation (Sumifru) operations in Compostela Valley in Mindanao. The union has been on strike since October 1 over the company’s refusal to engage in collective bargaining negotiations for more than a decade.

Despite a Supreme Court ruling last year confirming earlier legal decisions that Sumifru is the responsible employer for packing house workers employed through a labour contract, the company continues to assert that it has no legal obligation to enter into collective bargaining negotiations with the workers’ union NANASUMFA.

The latest violence against workers at Sumifru is accompanied by armed intrusions into workers’ homes, families, schools and hospitals and the arrests of military, police and personnel on Oct. 3.

**General strike plan for Argentina**

Argentine unions work plan to hold a fifth general strike next month to protest President Mauricio Macri’s economic policies, says the General Confederation of Labor of Argentina (CGT).

The government has to respond to workers, they also have to clarify the country’s current situation, particularly the talk of the government refusing to negotiate, said CGT official Carlos Acuña, who has confronted state officials in the past due to the rise of hunger, unemployment, and the loss of workers’ rights. Acuña says that all efforts to reach an agreement with the Macri administration has been “exhausted” and workers are determined to strike.

Though the date has yet to be determined, the demonstration will be extended to 36 hours. In September, protesters swarmed the streets of Buenos Aires a 24-hour strike to protest the government’s social and economic policies.

**Uber faces lawsuit**

Taxi drivers and hire car drivers in the city of Stela Valley in Mindinao. The union is set to sue ride-sharing giant Uber for “hundreds of millions” of dollars for violation of labor laws.

The decision to seek compensation is on behalf of almost 1000 people who held a licence while Uber was allegedly conspiring to “act unlawfully” between 2014 and 2017.

Drivers claim their livelihoods were impacted, losing income and the value of their licence, as a result. Uber denying allegations without legal approval in Victoria. The Commercial Passenger Commissioner said that this gave Uber a huge commercial advantage, to build a fleet and compete with other operators writing in the law, which lost huge amounts of money.

During those years, Uber did not have to fulfill the requirement to build a fleet of 300,000 passenger licence, a taxi licence or a Victorian hire car licence. The law states that the claim began investigating the complex and difficult case last year.

**Costa Rica court backs protests**

On Oct. 16, as Costa Rican workers entered the 37th day of a national strike against legislation titled “Strengthening Public Service”. The Constitutional Court halted the controversial fiscal measure with an argument that the implementation affects judicial autonomy.

The Costa Rican Congress can only go back to its legislative commission to be re-written, eliminating an increase that has put the Ministry (Mideplan) power over employment in the judicial branch, and to guarantee that judicial workers will not be affected. With these and other changes, the court would approve the bill.

If Congress refuses to modify the bill, a two-thirds majority (35 of 57 votes) would be needed in a second legislative debate and vote to approve the legislation without the court's go-ahead.

The bill was approved on Oct. 5 with 34 votes, seven votes less than the left-leaning Broad Front (FA), National Renewal (PRN) and the Liberal Integration (PIN) parties’ vote against 22 votes against the bill, arguing it disproportionately impacts the public sector’s poor and working class. Trade unions, students, Indigenous groups, arrays, and municipal councils have protested against the measure since it was proposed.

**Education strike spreads in Colombia**

Despite the withdrawal of Bill 057, which would have reduced Colombia’s budget for public education (primarily in rural areas), other grievances remain.

The Colombian Federation of Education Workers (Fecode) announced on October 17, in the context of nationwide protests led by public university students, professors, and directors who are demanding an increase in their salaries, that they will also go on strike.

“Do to our students, tomorrow we will define the start of the teachers’ strike. Tomorrow there will be class as usual. Once the students express their demands and state their grievances and we will inform you, “ Fecode tweeted.

The national federation announced, Fecode celebrated Congress’ withdrawal of the bill. “The national federation of the national strike achieved the withdrawal of Bill 057 in Congress, that the official Fecode account stated. This will not mean a suspension of the strike. Education still needs resources,” Fecode said.

Teachers are also demanding the cancellation of the agreements signed between the state and the union on Jun. 16, 2017. According to the Fecode, only eight of the commitments have been met.

The others, including an increase in the education budget, elimination of pay gaps, and improvements in their health and social security, are the state and the Fecode for social services have not been addressed. They have called for new legislation that targets teachers in rural areas who are facing threats and attacks by paramilitary forces.

This would be the fifth strike by public educators this year alone. Three took place during the government of Juan Manuel Santos and this would be the second during the government of Ivan Duque, who took office in early August.
White poppies to remember all victims of war

Peace activists in Britain have praised the St John Ambulance charity for allowing workers to wear white poppies in the run-up to Nov. 11, marked as Remembrance Sunday in the UK. The rules previously said a British Legion red poppy is the only symbol allowed to be worn.

On September 29, demonstrations in at least 65 cities in Brazil displayed the strength of female political mobilization and its role in the anti-fascist resistance. Women, racialized people and the LGBTQ+ community are the targets of violence propagated by Bolsonaro and his supporters.

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Peace activist Tereza Gagné has been distributing white poppies for many years. (Photo from Vancouver Observer.)

BIP shuts down Communist newspaper

India’s communists have vowed to fight "legally and politically to defend freedom of the press after a state’s BJP government shut down the newspaper"

The CPI-M politburo said the newspaper’s closure is “on flimsy grounds” and vowed to fight “legally and politically”.

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Robin Hood, Ireland and the communists

“Robin Hood, a new film directed by Otto Bathurst, starring Taron Egerton, Jamie Foxx, Ben Mendelsohn, Robin Wright, Tim Minchin, and Jamie Dornan, is scheduled for release in North America on Nov. 21. This historical drama, directed by David Taraghan, written for Irish Socialist Voice, presents a unique look at the Robin Hood story and its place in cinema history.

Robin Hood, the legendary outlaw known throughout the world, has an unusual connection with Ireland, and an even stranger connection with the communist movement. No-one knows for certain whether Robin Hood ever existed or was based on a real individual. There are records of people named Robin Hood or similar names in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Likewise, there are records of people named Little John and the other Merry Men. There is no definitive proof, however, that any of these were part of an outlaw band under the leadership of Robin Hood.

What is definite is that stories were being told about a Robin Hood and other outlaws in his band before they were written down. There were other outlaws in the period, but none achieved the lasting fame of Robin Hood and his band.

It is easy to imagine the entertainers and storytellers entertaining the serfs working in the countryside, on the roads, and who had a sense of decency as a free man outside the law. There were other outlaws in the Robin Hood series before they were written down, however, that any of these were part of an outlaw band under the leadership of Robin Hood.

The Adventures of Robin Hood, was aimed at adults. Historians were employed to ensure that costumes, weapons etc. were accurate for mediaeval England. The series with 143 half-hour episodes, ran from 1955 to 1956. It was hugely popular both in Britain and in America. It is the earliest Robin Hood series still in existence in its entirety.

Following the series Greene then made his only Robin Hood film, The Sword of Sherwood Forest (1960). This was shot on location in Ireland, on the Powerscourt estate in Co. Wicklow. The indoor scenes were shot at Ardmore Studios. Irish accents are prevalent throughout.

The series was made by Sapphire Films. This company was set up by Hannah Weinstein, who was a member of the Hollywood Branch of the Communist Party USA. Shortly after the House Un-American Activities Committee began its witch-hunt of communists in Hollywood, Hannah was sent to London with the finance to set up the company. She used blacklisted writers, such as Ring Lardner and Robert Arne, to write the episodes. They all used pseudonyms, and Hannah refused to give the HUAC any information or co-operation. By living in London she was outside the committee’s control.

The blacklisted writers used the series to comment on social themes. They ignored the origins of Robin Hood, treated him as a modern social bandit. In the general theme of robbing the rich and giving to the poor (redistribution of wealth), they also dealt with betrayal and treachery—all comments on Eisenhower’s America.

Robin Hood as an outlaw is portrayed by bourgeois writers as a member of the nobility seeking the restoration of his lands and feudal privileges. This can only be achieved by the return of King Richard, the rightful king, who can restore those rights and privileges and thereby maintain the established order.

It was only in the sixteenth century that writers began claiming that Robin was a lord or son of a lord. The original tales describe him as a yeoman, archer, and forester. He had no feudal obligations.

Robin Hood as a yeoman is completely different. The yeoman is independent. He does not owe any feudal obligations to a lord or master. It is quite clear from the tales that Robin Hood does not regard the nobility as his betters. His very existence turns the world on its head and is a direct challenge to the world of privilege and elitism. He does not need the approval of King Richard: he is already king of the forest and the right of his own right. He takes the king’s deer when he needs to. He is outside the law, i.e. the feudal law of serfdom, feudal rights, church and landlord courts. Robin Hood is a social bandit.

Richard Greene was a well-known stage and film actor. Although he was English he had Irish ancestry, and he bought a 154-acre estate at Garey in Co. Wexford after the Second World War. ITV decided to run a series of television programmes based on the legends of Robin Hood, and Greene agreed to play the part of Robin, which was a considerable coup for ITV.

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Cuba warns UN of imperialist danger....

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Agreement on Political Dialogue and Cooperation has provisionally entered into force, it is a good foundation to develop beneficial ties between the Parties. It is not surprising that the US keeps an aggressive rhetoric towards Cuba and maintains a blockade aimed at stifling the political, economic, social, economic and cultural system in Cuba. The blockade, the return of the territory illegally occupied by the Guantanamo Naval Base and the financial blockade, the return of the Guantanamo Naval Base and the property damages caused to Cuba over so many years of occupation. Cuba has been saying for so many years in this same place, due to its aggressive extraterritorial implementation, the blockade seriously damages the sovereignty and interests of all countries.

In spite of the blockade, the hostility and the actions carried out by the United States to impose it against Cuba, the Cuban Revolution is right here, alive and strong, faithful to her principles! Our government should not raise conditionalities.

We are the continuity, the hopes of the enemies of the Revolution. We are the continuity, not a rupture. Cuba has continued taking steps to improve its economic and social development in order to build a sovereign, independent, socialist, democratic, prosperous and sustainable nation. This is the path that our people has freely chosen...

Trudeau’s “Redo” could face new challenge

Speaking at an Oct. 23 news conference in Vancouver, former and current intercessors, First Nations, Members of Parliament and environmentalists, at a total of 30 of these have been referred by the NEB to DFO.

The Federal Court specifically asked the NEB to assess the impacts of increased tanker traffic on the BC Coast posed by the TMX. First Nations have the right to provide their free, prior and informed consent on projects that impact them, and a rushed NEB re-do is not likely to yield a different result.

The Federal Court specifically asked the NEB to assess the impacts of increased tanker traffic on the BC Coast. This includes assessing the impacts to endangered whales. However, the NEB decided to use the much smaller 12 nautical mile limit as requested by the Alberta government, despite the science and the Federal government itself showing whales inhabit well beyond that spatial area.

“The Board seems to have learned nothing from the Federal Court of Appeal’s decision to limit such a limited scope and hasty process, they are limiting the ability for concerned groups to be heard, and missing the opportunity for a scientifically sound assessment of the impacts of tankers to endangered whales,” said Eugene Kang, a staff lawyer with West Coast Environmental Law.

“As an intervenor before the first round of Kinder Morgan hearings before the NEB, and now as an intervener in this round, I have been deeply disturbed by the narrow focus and tight timeline,” stated Green Party leader Elizabeth May. “It does not appear to me that we will be engaged in a discussion of the right questions. For environmental groups, for First Nations people or a full review of the impacts of tanker traffic as required by Section 79 of the Species at Risk Act.

“Before rendering this opinion ‘to do the same thing over and over again but expecting different results is the definition of insanity’ is well used in Parliament. When it comes to Trans Mountain, the NEB process looks like a rerun of the rushed and failed process which when the current government is any different than the last one,” stated NDP MP Nathan Cullen.

The NEB has also refused to consider the threat of the pipeline to salmon spawning grounds. Of the 900 watercourses impacted in the Trans Mountain alignment construction, 250 are salmon habitat, but fewer than 30 of these have been referred by the NEB to DFO.

WHAT’S LEFT

Victoria BC
Overcoming the NDP’s anti-Palestinian History, with author-activist Yves Engler, Sat, Nov. 3, 1 pm, U of Victoria, Cornett B111, sponsored by Social Justice Studies UVic, and YCL Victoria.

Revolution 101: socialism and the youth & student struggles, Sunday, Nov. 11, 7:30 pm, at Victoria Event Centre, 1415 Broad St., hosted by VCL-Victoria.

Vancouver, BC
Vote YES on PR, Sat., Oct. 27, Noon-2 pm, Broadway Skytrain (Commercial & Broadway), display & leaflet action for proportional representation, organized by Vancouver East Club CPC.

Left Film Night, Sunday, Oct. 28, 7 pm, “The Coming War on China”, John Pilger documentary on US imperialism’s anti-China military strategy.

Revolution Banquet, Sat., Nov. 4, doors open 5:30 pm, at Russian Hall,600 Campbell Ave., with guest speaker Roger Annis, ph. 604-254-9836 for tickets ($20 or $12 students/unemployed), also available at the door.

Edmonton, AB
Celebrating 60 years of the Cuban Revolution! Saturday, Nov. 4, 6-11 pm, AUUC Hall, 11018 - 97 St. Hosted by Communist Party - Alberta

Toronto, ON
Rally in support of Cuban Resolution against US Blockade, Tuesday Oct. 30, 5-6 pm, across from US Consulate, 250 University Ave. For info: Communist Friendship Association, 647-501-1219 or 416 654 7105.


London, ON
Day of Action for Free Tuition, Friday, Nov. 2, Noon-3 pm, at 340 UCC Building, Western University.

Windsor, ON
Resisting the Ford Government, A Communist Perspective, Wed., Nov. 7, 6 - 7:30 pm, CAW Boardroom (Room 277 of CAW Centre), speaker Dave McKee, Organizer to the Communist Party, hosted by Young Communist League.

“An Evening with Red Moon”

Songs of struggle and vintage jazz with singer-songwriter/guitarist Tony Quarrington and saxophonist & People’s Voice music columnist Wally Brooker

Special guest: singer-songwriter Tim Maxwell

Emcee: Farah Malik

Saturday, Nov. 17, 7:30 pm
The Hirut Cafe, 2050 Danforth Ave., Toronto

(just west of Woodbine Subway; PWYC $10+ Suggested)

Sponsor: Davenport Club, Communist Party of Canada

Info: 647-377-2200
However, the United States, one of the major polluters of yesteryear and today, refuses to accompany the international community in the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change. It thus endangers the lives of future generations and the survival of all species, including humans.

In addition, and as if there were not enough threats to humanity and its dazzling creations, it is a fact that the military and nuclear hegemonism of imperialism is perpetuating itself and expanding to the detriment of the hopes of the majority of peoples for general and complete disarmament. Cuba shares this ideal and, as testament of its commitment with this goal, on last 31 January, it became the fifth State to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

In this organization that was born out of the human desire to overcome the destruction left by a terrible war with the dialogue between nations, it is not possible to keep quiet the danger looming over all of us, with the exacerbation of local conflicts, wars of aggression disguised as "humanitarian interventions", the forceful overthrow of sovereign governments, the so-called "soft coups" and interference in other states' internal affairs, recurrent forms of action by some powers, using the most diverse excuses.

The international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all is a must. However, its discriminatory and selective manipulation with countries has led to the domination of rights to peace, self-determination and development of the peoples.

Cuba rejects the militarization of outer space and cyberspace, as well as the covert and illegal use of the information and communication technologies to attack other states.

The exercise of multilateralism and full respect for the principles and rules of International Law to advance towards a multipolar, democratic and equitable world, are required in order to ensure peaceful coexistence, preserve international peace and security and find lasting solutions for systemic problems.

Against that logic, the threat or use of force, unilateralism, pressures, retaliations and sanctions which increasingly characterize the behavior and rhetoric of the US government and its abusive use of the veto power in the Security Council in an attempt to impose its agenda, pose huge challenges and threats within the United Nations in which Cuba participates.

... Our America is currently in the stage of persistent threats, inconsistent with the “Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace”, signed in Havana by the Heads of States of the Americas, on September 25, 2004, at the 5th Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, in 2014.

The current US administration has claimed the relevance of the Monroe Doctrine and, in a new deployment of its imperial policy in the region, is attacking Venezuela with special cruelty.

It is in this threatening context that we wish to reiterate our absolute support to the Bolivarian and Chavista Revolution, the civic-military union of the Venezuelan people and its legitimate and democratic government, led by the President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro Moros. We reject the intervention attempts and sanctions against Venezuela aimed at suffocating its economically and hurting the Venezuelan family.

We likewise reject the attempts at destabilizing the Nicaraguan government, a country of peace that has made a remarkable social, economic and public safety progress in favor of its people.

We denounce the politically-motivated imprisonment of former president Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, and the decision to prevent the people from voting and choosing Brazil’s most popular leader to the Presidency.

We stand in solidarity with the Caribbean nations who demand legitimate reparations for the horrible effects of slavery as well as the fair, special and differential treatment that they deserve.

We reaffirm our historic commitment with the self-determination and independence of our brother people of Puerto Rico.

We support Argentina’s legitimate sovereignty claim over the Malvinas Islands, South Sandwich and South Georgia Islands.

We reiterate our unrestricted support to a comprehensive, just and lasting solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, on the basis of the creation of two States, allowing the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to have an independent and sovereign State based upon the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

We reject the unilateral action of the United States to establish its diplomatic representation in the city of Jerusalem, which heightens even more the tensions in the region. We condemn the barbarities of the Israeli forces against civilian population in Gaza.

We reaffirm our steadfast solidarity with the people of Yemen, and support the search for a final solution to the question of Western Sahara, which will allow the exercise of self-determination and to live in peace in their territory.

We support the search for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the situation imposed in Syria, without foreign interference and with full respect to their sovereignty and territorial integrity. We reject any direct or indirect intervention, carried out with the legitimate authorities of the country.

The continued expansion of NATO towards Russian border is causing serious threats, worsened by the imposition of arbitrary sanctions, which we reject.

We demand compliance with the Islamic Republic of Iran’s nuclear deal.

We welcome the process of rapprochement and dialogue among the Koreas. This is the way to achieve a lasting peace, reconciliation and stability in the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, we strongly condemn the imposition of unilateral and unfair sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and foreign interference in Korean internal affairs.

The violations of the rules of the international trade and the sanctions against China, the European Union and other countries will bring about damage that will be particularly for developing States.

We favor dialogue and cooperation, thanks to which we can report today that the Cuba-EU