

New York Times employees protest return to office; Venezuelan workers protest imprisonments

Workers Struggles: The Americas

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The *World Socialist Web Site* invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature.

Latin America

Caracas, Venezuela protest demands a Christmas with no jailed workers

On November 1 workers rallied in downtown Caracas, in Carabobo Park, demanding that imprisoned workers be freed. Dozens of workers have been in prison for defending their rights and for fighting against the widespread hunger wages in Venezuela. Demonstrators carried signs that said, “Stop criminalizing those that fight, liberty for all workers jailed for fighting for their rights.”

The rally was organized by the Committee of Family and Friends of the imprisoned workers and other workers’ groups.

The protesters also demanded salaries above the poverty line, decent pensions and the restoration of labor rights cancelled some time ago.

The Maduro administration has imprisoned hundreds of workers on behalf of big business. These attacks have accelerated with the imposition of very low wage scales and the elimination of workers’ benefits, imposing conditions of near slavery.

Brazilians protest Israel’s attack against Palestinians

A mass protest took place on Sunday, October 29, in central São Paulo, Brazil, condemning the genocide taking place against Palestinians. The march and rally were organized by the Movement of Rural Landless Workers (Movimiento de Trabajadores Rurales sin Tierra—MST).

The protesters carried signs in solidarity of the Palestinians in Gaza who have suffered incessant bombing, with over 8,000 victims (including 3,000 children).

Throughout the day, protests also took place across the world, including in countries allied to Israel.

El Salvador teachers threaten suspending classes in 2024

On November 2, Salvadorian teachers threatened to suspend classes in 2024, protesting that a contract agreement that would have raised wages on January 2023 never took place. The last time Salvadorian teachers got a raise was in 2019.

In El Salvador teachers and other public workers are prohibited from striking. Instead the teachers are calling for a suspension of classes.

In response the administration of President Nayib Bukele is claiming that there is no money.

Argentinian teachers protest in Jujuy Province

On October 31, teachers in Argentina’s northwestern Jujuy Province picketed schools across that region, condemning a government-imposed wage freeze, plus a broken promise for monthly wage renegotiations (monthly inflation in Argentina is approximately 12 percent).

The teachers’ signs demanded decent wages that keep up with accelerating inflation.

Other signs that the teachers carried demanded that the trade union bureaucracy take up the fight for a general strike for wages and against government austerity measures.

Healthcare workers strike in Santa Fé Province, Argentina

Healthcare workers launched a 48-hour strike on October 31 in Santa Fé Province.

Health workers, members of the University Professionals Union (SIPRUS), carried out a 48-hour strike on October 31. A protest rally was held by the strikers in the city of Rosario. At issue are wages and working conditions.

United States

Santa Clarita transit workers conclude one month on strike

The strike by 200 transit workers in Santa Clarita, California, is entering its second month as the city continues to implement reductions in transit service. After 12 months of negotiations with MV Transportation, the company that contracts with the city, members of Teamsters Local 572 walked out on strike October 9 and remain on the picket line.

MV Transportation says it recognizes “the challenges posed to all of us by recent high inflation” but has stubbornly sat on what it claims are “record wage increases” amounting to a mere 18 percent wage offer over a four-year contract. The company says there is no more money in the city’s budget for any additional increases.

The Teamsters union has appealed to the city administration to get involved in the negotiations despite the fact the city has rejected multiple times any intervention in the contract struggle—a clear indication that it backs MV Transportation’s hard line against the workers.

MV Transportation, based out of Dallas, Texas, is the largest privately owned passenger transportation contracting services firm in the United States.

New York Times tech workers carry out half-day strike against unilateral return to office order by company

Technology workers for the *New York Times* conducted a half-day strike October 30 to protest the company’s policy of attempting to force them back into the office without negotiating the issue. Some 700 Times tech workers supported the protest.

NewsGuild, which represents the workers, has been in contract talks for over 15 months with the union calling management’s policy “a tactic to intimidate us.” The *Times* initiated the policy shortly before software engineers, product managers and other tech workers voted in 2022 by a 404 to 88 margin to unionize.

The National Labor Relations Board ruled that the *Times* had violated federal law through its unilateral implementation. *Times* management is denying the accusation and claimed it had followed government guidance on COVID-19 protocols, indicating that behind the struggle lies a significant section of workers seeking to take preventive measures against the deadly virus.

Brooklyn Museum workers ready to strike if stalled negotiations continue

Workers at the Brooklyn Museum are slated to go on strike November 8 after some 10 months of fruitless bargaining. The workers, members of United Auto Workers Local 2110, are demanding a 19.5 percent wage increase over a four-and-a-half-

year contract. The workers want part-time staff to share in the same percentage wage increase as full-time staff.

Associate Conservator Lauren Bradley told Hyperallergic.com, “Low salaries and lack of real career development are making long tenure at the Brooklyn Museum unsustainable. I’ve seen several extremely qualified professionals leave my department for better offers elsewhere.”

Local 2110 has filed a number of unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board accusing management of altering employment terms without notifying the union. The museum is also seeking to bring in temp workers to perform union work.

Workers first joined Local 2110 back in August of 2021.

Canada

Outside municipal workers in Oakville and Whitby, Ontario strike

About 285 outside workers employed by the city of Oakville, just west of Toronto, began a strike last week in pursuit of a significant wage increase and against attempts by management to force 12-hour shifts and increase the use of temporary workers at the expense of full-time positions. The workers maintain parks and other public recreational facilities, roads, the local harbor and city cemeteries.

The strikers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), are seeking a 4.2 percent annual wage increase in each year of a three-year contract. Management has offered only 12.75 percent spread out over the four-year term. The workers have been without a contract since February.

The strike of the outside workers began on November 2 just as the municipality’s inside workers, also members of CUPE, were voting on their own tentative contract. Results and details of that proposal will not be released until later this week.

Labour unrest amongst CUPE workers in municipalities around the Toronto area continue. In Whitby, Ontario, just east of Toronto, 300 garbage collection, arena and community center workers have been on strike since October 14.

Management there has offered a paltry 9.5 percent wage increase spread over a three-year contract and also seeks to impose more onerous work schedules. The municipality is now in the process of hiring scab workers to perform arena duties at two upcoming hockey tournaments.



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