

Workers Struggles: The Americas

Month-long protest continues in Bolivia

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

Month-long protest continues in Bolivia

On Friday, the Bolivian Trade Union Federation (COB) abandoned negotiations with the government and declared that the month-long wave of protest strikes and popular mobilizations have taken on the form of a “national revolution” against President’s Rodrigo Paz’s Supreme Decree 5503 that eliminated fuel subsidies, provoking a 162 percent increase in gasoline prices.

The COB bureaucracy abandoned the negotiations when the government rejected a compromise proposal, which would rescue supposed ‘positive aspects’ of the decree.

On Friday, Truckers and peasants blocked 52 crossings in La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Potosi, and Beni. In La Paz and El Alto, teachers, merchants, neighborhood groups, and peasants, blocked the main highway between both cities.

Puerto Rico Hundreds protest in support for Venezuela

Hundreds of workers, students and musicians marched on January 4 through downtown San Juan denouncing the US military attacks on Venezuela and the abduction of Venezuelan president Maduro.

The demonstrators surrounded one of the main court

buildings playing music and chanting “Pa fuera, pa fuera, que se vayan los gringos de Venezuela” (Get out!, Get out! Yankees out of Venezuela) and “Imperialismo es saqueo” (Imperialism is theft!).

The march and rally contrasted with recent declarations by Governor Jennifer Gonzalez, bragging about Puerto Rico’s role in the attacks on Venezuela.

Buenos Aires area electrical workers strike

On January 5, electrical construction and maintenance workers employed by Elecsur in Buenos Aires province went on strike. At issue is unpaid working wages and deteriorating working conditions.

Workers described six months of deteriorating working conditions, with surprise cuts in wages, that are only partially paid and the absence of the traditional Xmas bonus. Company provided lunches have been reduced in quality and amount. The company has also eliminated travel allowances. “It is not possible to work 10 hours this way,” declared one of the strikers; “they cut our wages with no explanation. We cannot live this way. That is why we decided to walk-out. We demand what we are entitled to.”

Under conditions of record summer heat, workers are not even receiving bottled water.

The workers are determined to strike until all these issues are resolved.

Argentine pensioners’ protests continue

On January 7, Argentine pensioners carried out their first protest march and rally of 2026. The demonstrators are demanding an end to cuts in their pensions and medical and food allowances, and the restoration of those payments, adjusted for inflation to what they were previous to the Milei administration. In response to Argentina's extreme debt crisis, the government is planning even more cuts.

Workers for Solano County, California, set to strike January 13

Workers in Solano County, California, are slated to launch a two-day strike beginning December 13 as negotiations have failed to resolve contract issues involving a number of county units. The strike will encompass SEIU Local 1021, IFTPE Local 21 Units 6 and 16, Stationary Engineers Local 39, and UAPD Unit 11 Physicians and Dentists.

The unions have been negotiating since August 2025 and are unable to reach agreements acceptable to workers over staffing shortages, wage levels, and healthcare benefits. Strike authorization votes were passed in December.

Workers packed a January 6 supervisors' meeting to register their complaints to little avail. Supervisor Monica Brown closed the public comment part of the meeting by shutting down microphones while workers chanted, "Strike, strike!"

Elizabeth Harrison of the SEIU revealed at the meeting there are hundreds of empty positions in the county. Others pointed out that the counties wage offer fails to keep up with inflation. The county is also pushing for significant cuts in healthcare benefits.

Windsor Titan Tool and Die lockout hits 150 days

Twenty-seven locked out Titan tool and die workers in Windsor, Ontario passed the 150th day on the picket line last week with no end to the dispute in sight. The workers are members of Unifor. Their dispute is the

longest the union has been involved in against an employer in the Windsor automotive industry since the landmark 99-day Ford strike of 1945.

Since the lockout began in late July 2025 workers have fought against the company's removal of materials from the Titan plant and have sustained injuries from trucks running their picket line. In late April, even prior to the beginning of the dispute, after the union blocked a truck from carrying materials out of the premises, the company quickly secured a court injunction allowing them to move material from the plant. In late August, management removed much of the remaining raw materials, product and essential equipment from the plant, transferring the materials to the company's facility in Michigan.

The auto parts workers voted unanimously last October to reject massive concessions demanded by Titan Tool and Die management. Prior to the July 31 lockout, management had already laid off 40 of its 67 workers. After the lockout was announced, Unifor officials responded by pleading for a negotiated plant closure agreement.

Instead, company negotiators presented a new contract proposal that sought to obliterate virtually every significant clause in the previous agreement. The concession demands include a three-year wage freeze, a new permanent lower wage grid for new hires, complete elimination of cost-of-living and lump sum wage supplements, the massive slashing of the pension scheme that would cost workers \$13,500 over the life of the contract, mandatory overtime, removal of seniority rights and elimination of retirement health benefits for many workers.



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