



Notes on the Revolution / Column 24



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Evo wins elections in Bolivia; U.S. plans coup

By Charles McKelvey

The Bolivian Revolution emerged in the 1990s, with mass mobilizations in opposition to the government's neoliberal policies. The Movement toward Socialism (MAS) was established in 1995 as a federation of social movement organizations and unions. Evo Morales, an indigenous coca farmer and leader in the coca farmers' union, emerged as the leader of MAS, which put forth proposals for a new constitution that would give emphasis to Bolivian control of natural resources. Elected president on December 18, 2005 with 53.72% of the vote in the second round, Morales demanded and obtained the renegotiation of contracts with foreign companies, which had terms more favorable to Bolivia, including the development of Bolivian capacities for the processing of natural gas and petroleum. The Bolivian government directed funds obtained through the new contracts with foreign companies toward social programs in benefit of the people, especially the poorest. By 2007, a Bolivian counterrevolution had taken shape, led by owners of large estates, large-scale business persons, and leaders of the traditional political parties, all of whom had benefitted from the previous political-economic order. A new constitution was approved in popular referendum on January 25, 2009, with 61.4% of the vote. Morales won elections under the new constitution in 2009 with 64.22%, and he was reelected in



2014 with 63.36%.

At the October 25 closing plenary session of the Fifth Conference of Strategic Studies in Havana, Dr. José Hugo Mordiz Mercado, a well-known Bolivian intellectual, spoke of the October 21, 2019 elections in Bolivia, won by Evo Morales, and the U.S.-directed plan for a coup d'état. Mordiz is a member of the Political Observatory of the School of Plurinational Public Management in Bolivia. The Conference was sponsored by the Cuban Center for Research on International Policy.

Moldiz noted that the revolution in Bolivia is in its most difficult moment since 2000, inasmuch as the United States and the Bolivian Right are dedicated to the overthrow of the government of Evo Morales, precisely because of the capacity of the social movements that form the Movement Toward Socialism, which is not a political party but a network of social movements that utilize the MAS structure to present candidates for elections. The coup d'état is in place at a time in which the U.S.-directed Organization of American States is attempting destabilizing measures against progressive governments, and in which there are contradictions in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. At the same time, the Right in Bolivia has been able to extend beyond areas that have been centers of opposition since 2007 to have a presence in the entire country, occupying what previously had been empty political space.

Moldiz reported that Bolivia's electoral law requires 50% or more of the votes for a candidate to be declared a winner in the first round, or 40% combined with a margin of 10% over the nearest rival. The Supreme Electoral Court reported that with 99.99% of the votes counted, Evo Morales had 47.07% of the votes, and Carlos Mesa had 36.51%. With an advantage of 10.56 percentage points over his nearest rival, Evo Morales was declared the winner in the first round.

Moldiz asserted that prior to the elections, the opposition and the United States had formulated a plan to not recognize a Morales electoral victory, whether it be through more than 50% of the first-round votes or through the 40% plus ten-point margin formula. As the election approached, with polls indicating a possibility of a 40% plus ten victory by Morales, the opposition decided on a campaign to demand a second-round election between Morales and Mesa.

Mordiz asserted that the demand for a second round is the first strategy in an attempted coup d'état. The Right has mobilized popular sectors to mass demonstrations and violence in opposition to the declaration of Morales as the winner. International organizations are being pressured by the U.S. government, and the Organization of American States and the European Union have called for a run-off second round between Morales and Mesa. The Bolivian opposition and the United States are seeking to influence the armed forces of Bolivia to not recognize the electoral victory of Morales, which so far has not had results. Moldiz maintains that the United States and the Bolivian Right are going to put into effect something similar to the Guaidó plan in Venezuela, in which an alternative government is recognized and financially supported by the United States. Bolivia will likely be put on the U.S. infamous lists of enemies, in order to make possible economic actions against the nation.

Moldiz maintains that it is highly unlikely that the Supreme Electoral Court or the government of Morales is going to convoke a second round, inasmuch as Morales won the elections in the first round in accordance with the Constitution of 2009 and the rules established by the electoral law. He believes that Bolivia has become one of the countries in dispute in the foreign policy of the hegemonic power, and that Bolivia is going to enter the permanent war of the United States against countries that seek a sovereign road.



Following the closing plenary session of the Conference, I asked Dr. Moldiz to say a few words to the listeners of Radio Havana Cuba. He declared the following.

“What is happening in Bolivia is the result of a plan of destabilization that had been formulated before the elections, so they have been directing events in accordance with this plan. And this plan involves claiming electoral fraud as the foundation for a later civil disorientation; the Right claims that there is fraud, and this is followed by efforts to confuse the people. So counting the votes that Evo won was not important, inasmuch there was in place a previously conceived plan to destabilize the Bolivian Revolution and President Evo Morales. This plan, obviously conceived in the laboratories of the United States, was made public in Cabildos, in the cities of Santa Cruz, La Paz, and Cochabamba, where the leaders of civic groups use their collaborators to launch the plan. The most important are Luis Fernando Comacho of the Pro-Santa Cruz Committee, because of his close relation with the Embassy of the United States; and ex-president Jorge Quiroga, who is one of the actors in the foreign policy of the United States toward Latin America. Therefore, what is happening now is not surprising. It is evident that this is the moment to overthrow Evo Morales, it is the moment to put obstacles in front of the Bolivian Revolution or to bring down the Revolution. The Right is committing all its resources, as it is said popularly, they are putting all their eggs in one basket, so that its strategy would have success.

“They are carrying out the same plan against Bolivia that they have been carrying out against Venezuela. The idea is to construct before the country and before the world, on the basis of a supposed electoral fraud, the figure of a legitimate president, and on the basis of this supposedly legitimate president to activate all the international mechanisms, such as the Democratic Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Court on Human Rights. They are planning to use the mechanisms that are in the hands of the forces of the Right in these international organisms, such as sanctions against the Bolivian government, against the authorities of the Bolivian government. Everything that they are doing against Venezuela, they are beginning to develop these mechanisms against the government of Evo Morales.”

As Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canal declared in his address to the Eighteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, we are in the Third World War. It is a war between, on the one hand, the forces that engage in ideological manipulations, economic sanctions, and military aggressions in defense of a world order that gives an inordinate proportion of the products of nature and of human labor to a privileged few; and on the other hand, those governments that seek to defend their sovereignty, calling upon their peoples to make all necessary sacrifice in defense of the nation. Although the ideologues of the privileged have since 2016 been declaring the end of the “Pink Tide cycle” in Latin America, those that are committed to the development of a more just, sustainable, and democratic world have experienced recent victories in this permanent war, including: the capacity of the Bolivarian government of Venezuela to resist and defeat the Guaidó plan for Venezuela; the capacity of Cuba to resist the intensification of the U.S. blockade; the capacity of Nicaragua to resist destabilization efforts; the election of López Obrador in Mexico; the electoral victory of Evo Morales in Bolivia; the return to power of a progressive government in yesterday’s elections in Argentina; the likely continuation of a progressive government in Uruguay, with a substantial lead for the leftist coalition in the first round of yesterday’s elections; and the eruption of popular rebellions against neoliberal governments in Ecuador and Chile.

This is Charles McKelvey, reflecting on the unfolding global popular socialist revolution forged by our peoples in defense of humanity.



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