

Month of Fury: Latin America Rises up Against Neoliberalism

By [Michael Welch](#), [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), [Pepe Escobar](#), and [John Schertow](#)

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"Neoliberalism was born in Chile and will die in Chile."

- rallying cry from Chilean protest movement. (October, 2019) [1]

During the first two weeks of October, Ecuadorians took to the streets by the thousands, with Indigenous communities reportedly blocking major roads and protesters occupying oil fields and government offices as well as reportedly looting businesses. This all in response to IMF-brokered austerity measures announced by Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno at the beginning of the month. In spite of the president's initially defiant stance and violent State reprisals, the government eventually backed away from its package of reforms and has resolved to working within a UN-mediated joint commission alongside Indigenous representatives to create a new economic development package. [2][3][4]

Just as the Ecuadoran protests were winding down, Chile started to flare up with anger over a 30 peso increase in Santiago subway fares escalating into generalized protests against 3 decades of neoliberal policies instigated under fascist dictator Augusto Pinochet and built on by his successors. By October 25th, more than one million Chileans took to the streets in opposition to President Sebastian Piñera's economic medicine and the brutal measures he was taking against demonstrators. According to [an October 31st statement](#) from the Chilean prosecutor's office, 23 people died in the week following the October 19th declared state of emergency. [Amnesty International has raised concerns](#) about human rights abuses carried out under the military crackdowns. By October 30th, the president [announced the cancellation of two major international summits](#) in November and December which were to have been hosted by the South American country - a necessary measure given the instability in the country. [5]

[As pointed out by Bloomberg](#), Chile has been experiencing during the month of October "the worst civil unrest since the end of the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in 1990, and

hundreds have been detained.”

Elections held in Uruguay, Argentina and Bolivia all revealed [the advancement or maintenance of left-leaning leaders critical](#) of IMF-backed austerity measures. Argentina’s President-elect Alberto Fernández, in particular just [publicly thanked Venezuela’s Nicolás Maduro](#) for congratulating him on his election victory, while proposing Latin Americans “work together to overcome the poverty and inequality it suffers. “ It would seem Argentina’s days as a member of the [Lima Group of countries](#) calling on the ouster of Maduro are likely numbered.

Western capitals are convincing themselves that the Venezuelan, Cuban and possibly Kremlin agents are playing a role in fostering these popular revolts, since, apparently, the neoliberal policies pushing the bulk of the population into increased hardship and destitution presumably has nothing to do with it. [6]

If we can, however take these developments at face value as a wide-spread resistance to the a status quo putting the interests of the ruling classes ahead of those of the general population, then it stands to reason that true democracy on the South American continent is expressing itself and putting predatory capitalist interests on the defensive.

On a week following a month of protest and resistance, the Global Research News Hour attempts to analyze some of the currents shaking up the continent with three former guests.

Professor Michel Chossudovsky was a visiting Professor of Economics in the 1970s and lived through the coups both in Chile and in Argentina. In our first half hour he shares his personal perspective and places the events of this past October in a historical context, including the the development of neoliberalism since the days of Pinochet in Chile.

Following this discussion, Pepe Escobar addresses some of the geopolitical dimensions of these uprisings, including the recent cancellation of two international conferences which had formerly been planned for Chile, and the prospect of Argentina under Fernandez functioning as a ‘game-changer’ for other Latin American countries.

Finally, John Schertow, of [Intercontinental Cry](#) focuses on the role specifically of Indigenous peoples, both in Ecuador and beyond, in confronting the exploitative neoliberal policies that are putting lives and communities at risk.

Professor Michel Chossudovsky is professor emeritus of economics at the University of Ottawa and the award-winning author of 11 books including his most recent [The Globalization of War: America’s Long War Against Humanity](#). He is also the founder and director of the Centre for Research on Globalization and editor of Global Research.

Pepe Escobar is a veteran Brazilian Journalist, geopolitical analyst and Correspondent at large for Asia Times based out of Hong Kong. He has written for Tom Dispatch, Sputnik News, and Press TV, and RT. He is frequent contributor to Global Research

John Ahniwanika Schertow is an award-winning journalist and multimedia artist of Mohawk and European descent. He is the founder and lead editor of [Intercontinental Cry](#), an on-line media source of news of world-wide Indigenous struggle and resistance. As a poet and freelance journalist, John’s work has been featured in the Guardian, Toward Freedom, the Dominion, Madre, Swerve Magazine and many other publications. To support his work,

including an upcoming 'Indigenous Report' podcast and television broadcast, please leave a donation at the site <https://donorbox.org/ic-magazine>.

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Notes:

1. [mintpressnews.com/chile-protests-revolt-against-neoliberalism-media-refuses-acknowledge/262565/](https://www.mintpressnews.com/chile-protests-revolt-against-neoliberalism-media-refuses-acknowledge/262565/)
2. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/10/ecuador-unrest-led-mass-protests-191010193825529.html>
3. <https://sputniknews.com/latam/201910151077050428-ecuadors-president-calls-back-contraversial-decree-says-people-will-get-needed-subsidies/>
4. <https://intercontinentalcry.org/victory-ecuadors-president-repeals-austerity-decree-and-ends-violence/>
5. <https://www.mintpressnews.com/chile-protests-revolt-against-neoliberalism-media-refuses-acknowledge/262565/>
6. <https://www.mintpressnews.com/chile-protests-revolt-against-neoliberalism-media-refuses-acknowledge/262565/>

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