

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Workers in Venezuela face challenges in capitalist crisis
 — PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 82/NO. 5 FEBRUARY 5, 2018

Canada rail workers win fight against frame-up

BY JOHN STEELE

SHERBROOKE, Quebec — The rail bosses and federal government were handed a stinging defeat when the three-and-a-half-month frame-up trial of locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train traffic controller Richard Labrie, both members of United Steelworkers Local 1976, and low-level former Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway manager Jean Demaitre, ended here Jan. 19. The 12-member jury declared the three former employees “not guilty” on all counts from the July 2013 derailment and explosion of a 72-car runaway oil train in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec.

Harding, the main target of the frame-up, was also acquitted on two lesser charges. The jury announced the verdict to a packed courtroom on the ninth day of deliberations.

“I am very happy with the verdict,” retired worker and Lac-Mégantic resi-

Continued on page 3

US rulers’ long record of plunder in Haiti

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Weeks after revoking Temporary Protected Status for tens of thousands of Haitians living and working in the U.S., the Donald Trump administration barred Haitians from obtaining visas for temporary work in agriculture and other industries Jan. 17.

Do these moves indicate that Trump — as most liberals and middle-class radicals claim — has a qualitatively worse approach to the Haitian people than previous administrations, both Democrats and Republicans? No.

These decisions fit in with Washington’s long record of intervening in Haiti, reaping superprofits off the exploitation of workers and farmers there, while placing restrictions on those seeking to flee the oppressive conditions to the U.S.

Temporary Protected Status, which was granted to Haitians after a 2010 earthquake there killed about 300,000

Continued on page 7

Protest Turkish rulers war moves against Syria Kurds



PUK Media

Rally in the city of Afrin Jan. 18 protests against Turkish army attacks on the Kurdish region.

Washington, Moscow give green light to Ankara attack

BY TERRY EVANS

The government of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan launched a combined air and artillery bombardment and ground invasion of the Kurdish region of Afrin in northwest Syria Jan. 19. The attacks — cynically dubbed Operation Olive Branch — are being carried out with the agreement of Moscow, who pulled out its troops there, to open the door for Ankara’s forces.

Washington washed its hands of the Kurds. The U.S. rulers, in the words of White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, said Washington “understands” Ankara’s “legitimate security concerns,” asking only that Turkey’s rulers “ensure that its operations are limited in scope and duration.”

The Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) have resisted the attacks.

Continued on page 9

Turkish troops out now! Defend Kurds nat’l rights!

Working people everywhere have a stake in backing Kurds defending Afrin from the Turkish rulers’ invasion and bombardment. The capitalist rulers in the U.S., EU and Russia, and in countries across the region, have stood aside while Ankara has

EDITORIAL

unleashed its assault, whose goal is to crush the struggle for Kurdish national rights. Join or help organize protests to demand an immediate halt to the bombings and the withdrawal of all Turkish forces.

The propertied rulers in Ankara — like their counterparts throughout the region — fear the heroic struggle by Kurds in Syria for their national rights will infect their own people.

Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad abandoned Afrin in 2012. After crushing the 2011 popular uprising against his rule, Assad unleashed a seven-year-long war against those

Continued on page 9

Bosses say more ‘pain’ lies ahead for NY subway riders, workers



Cassie Dagostino

Subway commuters run to try and get train after service breaks down in Brooklyn, April 2017. Bondholders rake in billions, while bosses cut maintenance and crews, raise fares.

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Subway riders here don’t need to read thick reports to know the whole system is falling apart — we see it every day.

Delays are increasingly frequent because of signal failures, electrical problems, broken down train cars, broken rails, track fires, derailments, construction “upgrades” and a myriad of other disruptions.

It’s not just a question of arriving late to work, missing appointments or

getting stuck in a tunnel with no light or heat. It can also be derailments, fires and other threats to life and limb.

In the past two decades daily ridership has nearly doubled to 5.7 million, while the system’s infrastructure is in some places decades beyond its life expectancy. And there are still large swatches of Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx with no subway service.

It’s no mystery why signal problems and train equipment failures are

Continued on page 9

Protests answer article pushing Jew-hatred in Puerto Rico

BY SETH GALINSKY

After a barrage of criticism, *El Nuevo Día*, Puerto Rico’s largest circulation daily, removed from its website the Jan. 8 anti-Semitic article by columnist Wilda Rodríguez titled “What Does the ‘Jew’ Want With the Colony.” In the column Rodríguez repeated the timeworn canards that Jews run the United States, and that Wall Street and the U.S. Congress “will do whatever the ‘Jew’ wants.”

The self-described “paper of record” of Puerto Rico has since pub-

Continued on page 4

Inside

- Survivors of Grenfell Tower fire demand housing, safety 2
- Puerto Rico teachers union leaders tour New York 4
- SWP presents working-class course at ‘Women’s March’ 5
- May Day Brigade to Cuba builds in Appalachia 6
- On the picket line, p. 5—
- Ukraine gov’t sues workers for fighting to win back pay

Survivors of Grenfell Tower fire demand housing, safety

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON — Over 2,000 people marched here Jan. 14 to mark seven months since the Grenfell Tower fire, which killed 71 people and left hundreds homeless. The fire was fed by cladding on the building’s exterior that was a known fire hazard.

Led by survivors holding large paper mache green hearts with one-word slogans like “justice” and “dignity,” marchers circled the streets around the tower in silence for over an hour.

Residents of this working-class area, located in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea — the wealthiest, and also the most class-divided borough in the country — were joined by supporters from across the city. Similar actions are held on the 14th of each month.

The capitalist rulers have failed to rehouse the survivors and have done little to implement fire safety measures in housing blocks across the country.

“Almost 100 families spent Christmas in hotel rooms, sleeping side by side in shared rooms, what’s left of their belongings stacked in boxes by their beds,” Natasha Elcock, who escaped from Grenfell Tower with her partner and 6-year-old daughter, wrote in the Dec. 27 *Guardian*. She is a member of Grenfell United, a group representing fire survivors.

At the end of 2017, only 49 families had been permanently rehoused. Fifty-seven are in temporary housing, with the rest, 101 families, still in hotel rooms.

“Seventy-one of our loved ones

died in that fire,” Elcock wrote. “They died because we were ignored when we had raised questions about the refurbishment of the tower long before-hand.”

“We need homes and support for the trauma we are suffering. We need to know the truth of what happened, and we need justice,” she said. “Most of all, we need to be treated as humans, not numbers.”

Prime Minister Theresa May initially said she hoped to rehouse everyone within three weeks of the fire. The government later said the local council was aiming for a Christmas deadline. Council leader Elizabeth Campbell now says she is “absolutely” hoping to have everyone in homes within a year.

The local council has set a budget of £235 million (\$325 million) to buy 300 new properties for those displaced. But “given that Kensington and Chelsea is one of the most expensive places in Britain to buy property, this has been a massive undertaking,” the *Guardian* said. The idea that landlords should miss out on a penny when workers have lost everything is clearly off the radar.

This stands in sharp contrast to revolutionary Cuba, where workers and farmers took political power in 1959 and nationalized the land and housing stock. In *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, Gen. Moisés Sío Wong describes how the government organized workers to deal with the damage from Hurricane Michelle in 2001. They mobi-



Reuters/Clodagh Kilcoyne

Candlelight march in London Dec. 14 marks six-month anniversary since 71 people were killed and hundreds left homeless in Grenfell Tower fire. Capitalist rulers there have done little to implement fire safety measures in similar housing blocks across the country.

lized to rebuild 160,000 homes within a year, including 13,000 that had been totally destroyed.

Safe homes vs. profits

Tower blocks in 262 other locations failed safety tests on cladding on their buildings since Grenfell, and the government has ordered their removal. But the multimillionaire owners of the Citiscape building in Croydon, South London — like at other properties where residents have bought their apartments — are refusing to go ahead with the work until families living there agree to foot the £2 million bill, over \$43,000 for each apartment.

The majority of the housing blocks, however, are owned by local authorities. Cladding has been removed from only 17 of those.

Residents of Latham House in Tower Hamlets, East London, recently presented a petition to the local council demanding checks be done on the cladding. Residents of Anglia House, another building under the same authority, have demanded the immediate fitting of sprinklers.

Campbell has refused to commit Kensington and Chelsea Council to installing sprinklers in other buildings it owns. “I have friends living in the four towers that overlook Grenfell. They see the burnt building every morning, and every night they go

to bed knowing their tower also lacks sprinklers,” Elcock wrote.

When Communist League members knocked on doors to introduce the party and talk to workers in one of these blocks Jan. 20, many expressed outrage at the council’s inaction on safety measures.

The government has attempted to focus attention on a public inquiry — chaired by retired Judge Martin Moore-Bick — into the causes of the fire, in hopes of shifting attention away from the need for action on rehousing and fire safety measures. Opposition Labour Party politicians have played their part in bolstering illusions in the inquiry.

A proposal to include panelists “with relevant background, expertise, experience, and a real understanding of the issues facing those affected,” was backed by many survivors, who collected 22,000 signatures for it. Prime Minister Theresa May turned down the proposal Dec. 22.

Tiago Alves, a 20-year-old who lived on the 13th floor of Grenfell, put his finger on the rulers’ game in a recent heated exchange with council officials. “You are trying to eat away at us slowly, slowly, slowly, in an attempt to break us up,” he told the *Guardian*. But despite the best attempts of the government, both local and national, Grenfell remains a feature of their political crisis.

THE MILITANT

Amnesty for immigrants! No deportations!

The Donald Trump administration has tightened immigration regulations and vetting, and stepped up moves to increase deportations.

Amnesty for all immigrants is a life-and-death question for the unity of the working class and the building of strong, effective unions.



AP Photo/Mark Lennihan

Ravi Ragbir, center, who was arrested Jan. 11, protests deportations last March in N.Y.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

The Militant

Vol. 82/No. 5

Closing news date: January 24, 2018

Editor: John Studer

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Ellie García, Emma Johnson, Martín Koppel, Carole Lesnick, Jacob Perasso, Maggie Trowe, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in September, one week in December.

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4899
Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send

\$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston, London, E8 2PB, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643, New Zealand.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Rail workers defeat frame-up

Continued from front page

dent Jean Clusiaux, told the media at the courthouse. Clusiaux's 24-year-old daughter, Kathy, was one of those killed at the Musi-Café near the tracks when the train derailed and exploded. "They treated these people horribly, like killers," he said, referring to the three framed up men. "They broke their lives."

Many people from Lac-Mégantic attended the trial. Clusiaux was there every court day. When reporters asked him who he thought was guilty, he pulled a rumpled piece of paper from his pocket and started reading a list of high company officials, beginning with former CEO Edward Burkhardt.

"This is a victory for workers," Gilbert Carrette, a former Quebec highway maintenance department worker, told the *Militant*. "This tragedy, caused by company negligence and government deregulation of the rail industry, was placed on the shoulders of innocent workers."

Carrette is active in the Citizens and Groups Coalition for Rail Safety in Lac-Mégantic, which has been fighting for the federal and Quebec governments to build a railway bypass around the town.

"The Citizens Coalition," said spokesperson Robert Bellefleur in a post-verdict press release, "has always insisted that the three employees were ordinary actors in a business scheme planned at high management levels to ensure maximum benefits for top company officials and shareholders of the oil and railway companies involved."

Government frame-up unraveled

The rail bosses and the prosecution frame-up centered on the claim that Harding was criminally negligent and displayed "reckless disregard" for human life by not setting and properly testing a "sufficient" number of hand brakes when he parked the train that night. He was the only "crew" on the train. The bosses had gotten special dispensation from the government to operate with a one-person crew, to cut costs.

Labrie and Demaitre were charged with criminal negligence for supposedly not doing enough to prevent Harding from causing the disaster

In accord with company procedures, Harding had kept the lead engine running when he left the train for the night and also set hand brakes to keep the air brakes engaged to prevent the train from moving. During the night, firefighters unknowingly turned off the locomotive's air brakes when they shut down the engine to extinguish a fire that was caused by substandard maintenance practices. Without air brakes the train later rolled down a 7-mile grade into the center of Lac-Mégantic and derailed.

In his final arguments, Charles Shearson, one of Harding's lawyers, blew out of the water the prosecution's claim that Harding had failed to secure the train. He walked through how Harding had followed the company's general operating instructions and secured the train.

Shearson also emphasized the dangerous conditions Harding was forced to work under as a single-person "crew."

The jury ruled for the defendants even though Judge Gaétan Dumas refused to give them a key document that contradicted the frame-up charges — the official Transportation Safety Board report on the cause of the disaster. This report states that 18 different factors were in-

volved, many centering on the safety negligence of the railroad's bosses, and no one single person can be blamed. "Our strategy was to bring the report's conclusions in through the back door," Thomas Walsh, Harding's other lawyer, told the *Militant*.

Workers hail the verdict

Both the Teamsters union, which organizes the majority of freight rail workers in Canada, and the United Steelworkers, which organized workers on Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, issued statements backing the victory.

"This was the right verdict," said Chris Yeandel, a Canadian Pacific engineer and chairman of Teamsters Locomotive Engineers Local 689. "I know about this. I run a train. I don't make the policies of the company. I can't be responsible for everything that happens because of the decisions others make."

A court hearing will take place in Lac-Mégantic Feb. 5 to deal with regulatory charges still standing against Harding, Labrie and Demaitre, as well as some company officials. These charges were brought by Transport Canada under two federal laws, the Railway Safety Act and the Fisheries Act.



Militant/John Steele

"I'm happy with the verdict," Jean Clusiaux said in Sherbrooke Jan. 19 after rail workers were acquitted, adding that company bosses should be on trial for 2013 disaster in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, that killed his daughter Kathy and 46 others. Most workers there feel the same way.

Most workers think the jury made the right decision. "In Lac-Mégantic, few expected a guilty verdict, or wanted one," the *Montreal Gazette* headlined its story on the decision.

"Lac-Mégantic residents said it was the railway's chairman, Ed Burkhardt, they wanted to see in handcuffs," the *National Post* said. "He was never charged,

but the railway faces similar criminal negligence charges. A trial date has not been set, but even if convicted, the only penalty for a company is a fine — one that would likely never be paid because MMA went bankrupt."

Marie-Claire David contributed to this article.

Communist League: Celebrate victory over frame-up!

The following statement was released Jan. 21 by John Steele, spokesperson for the Communist League in Canada.

Working people across the country and beyond should celebrate the Jan. 19 "not guilty" verdicts in the frame-up trial of locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train traffic controller Richard Labrie, both members of United Steelworkers Local 1976. The 12-member jury in Sherbrooke, Quebec, exonerated them on all charges. It's a resounding victory for workers' rights, the fight for railroad safety, and the struggle against the bosses' productivity drive that underlies the current dramatic increase in workplace injuries and deaths.

The two rail workers, along with a low-level Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway manager, were each charged with 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death in the July 2013 derailment and explosion of a 72-car oil train

in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. Harding also faced two additional charges related to dangerous driving of railway equipment. After almost nine days of deliberations, the jury — reflecting support for Harding and Labrie in Lac-Mégantic, across Quebec and among many working people throughout Canada and elsewhere — saw through the prosecution's smoke and mirrors, the rail bosses' propaganda campaign, and the government cover-up of the company's deadly profits-before-safety practices.

Pending federal regulatory charges under the Railway Safety Act and the Fisheries Act, along with a class action lawsuit that includes Harding and Labrie, should be dropped!

The political impact of this victory was registered Jan. 23 when Ottawa announced it would fund the construction of a railway bypass around the town — a demand the people of Lac-Mégantic have been fighting for since the disaster.

The bosses, cops and prosecution targeted Harding, claiming that as driver of the train he alone bore responsibility for the runaway cars that blew up in Lac-Mégantic, killed 47 people and destroyed the downtown core. A safety-conscious rail worker with decades of experience, Harding set an example for other workers through his determined courage and dignity in standing up to the frame-up. He was used as a scapegoat along with Labrie by the MMA bosses and Transport Canada officials. For years they worked hand in glove to maximize MMA shareholder profits, undermining the safety of rail workers and of those living near the tracks.

Working people can identify with Harding's and Labrie's fight for justice because we all face the horrendous impact of the propertied rulers' productivity drive. The bosses force fewer workers to produce more in less time for less pay

Continued on page 7

MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION & BOOK SPECIALS

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes
\$15. With subscription: \$10



These books just \$5 each with a Militant subscription (trial offer for new readers: 12 weeks \$5)

Are They Rich Because They're Smart?

Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes

The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record

Why Washington Fears Working People
by Jack Barnes

Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?

A Necessary Debate Among Working People
by Mary-Alice Waters

"It's the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US 'Justice' System"

The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the US Working Class.

\$7 EACH WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION

To subscribe or purchase books at these prices, contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.



The Militant February 5, 2018 3

Protests answer Jew-hatred

Continued from front page
lished more than a dozen letters criticizing the column.

On Jan. 9 *El Nuevo Día* published an “apology” to anyone who felt offended, adding, “We don’t promote content that can be interpreted as anti-Semitic.” But the column, as Marcelo Wio pointed out in his letter published Jan. 13, is “classic anti-Semitism.”

“The premise that the Jews ‘control’ anything except the sovereign nation of Israel, which itself is a very turbulent democracy, is absurd,” said a letter signed by Rabbi Norman Patz and several other leaders of the Jewish community in Puerto Rico. The column comes in the midst of the social and economic crisis gripping the island, worsened by the recent hurricanes, they note, saying that “people are looking for an explanation.”

Jew-hatred comes to the fore whenever class tensions sharpen. The propertied rulers aim to turn workers away from fighting the capitalists’ dictatorship and scapegoat the Jews instead. Working people worldwide have learned bitter lessons in blood about this.

“The accusation is a crude distraction from the truth,” the community leaders wrote. “Blame the economic crisis. Blame Washington. But don’t believe the ignorant lies of the anti-Semites.”

A Jan. 18 editorial titled “Lesson Learned,” signed by Maria Luisa Ferré Rangel, *El Nuevo Día*’s editor and a member of the family that owns it, finally apologized for publishing the diatribe in the first place.

“The problem of Puerto Rico has nothing to do with the Jews,” Ferré said. But then she blames Puerto Rican workers for their problems. “We Puerto Ricans are responsible for being where we are, among other things, for accepting corrupt politicians, for allowing nepotism and for being indifferent to the inefficiency of the government. We are where we are for tolerating a government that spends more than it has and that has mortgaged the island for generations and a Congress that cares very little about what happens in Puerto Rico.”

But there is no “we” in Puerto Rico, any more than there is in the U.S. Puerto Rico is class-divided. On one side is the capitalist class, which collaborates with Washington to exploit the working class

and benefits from the colonial relation. On the other are the workers, ranchers and farmers, who produce the wealth, and are waking up to the nation’s status as a U.S. colony. Working people are increasingly looking for a way forward in the face of the callous disregard for their well-being, demonstrated by the U.S. and local governments.

Columnist Rodríguez is a well-known advocate of independence for Puerto Rico. But the Jew-hatred she spews is poison both for the working class and for the fight for independence. It is aimed at diverting workers and others from seeing the real enemy: the system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination. And there are others, claiming to speak in the name of “anti-imperialism,” who sympathize with Rodríguez’s poisonous views.

Rodríguez is unrepentant as is shown by a Jan. 17 article she posted online titled, “About ‘The Jew’ that I Spoke Of.”

She claims that she knows the Jews better than those who have attacked her “because I lived among them, I worked with some and I combated others.”

Puerto Rico teachers union leaders tour New York

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — “Puerto Rico has been in crisis since the 1970s, but it has gotten worse since 2006” when the worldwide capitalist economic crisis deepened, Edwin Morales Laboy, vice president of the Puerto Rico Teachers Federation, said at a citywide public meeting at the New York State Nurses Association center Jan. 20.

The anti-working-class measures adopted by the Puerto Rican government include a wage freeze and layoffs of public workers, tearing up of union contracts, school closings and slashing of pensions. Morales and Federation President Mercedes Martínez spoke at the event, concluding a four-day speaking tour organized by A Call to Action on Puerto Rico, which builds support in the U.S. for independence of the U.S. colony.

The two union leaders also spoke at the Cornerstone Academy for Social Action in the Bronx, a public school; at CUNY Graduate Center; and on a



Federación de Maestros de Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Teachers Federation leads San Juan march against school closings Dec. 13. As class struggle heats up, capitalist rulers will try to use Jew-hatred, like views expressed in *Nuevo Día*, to prevent workers from seeing their real enemy — capitalism and imperialist domination.

More Puerto Rican working people both on the island and in the U.S. are coming to see that they suffer from being a U.S. colony. They are questioning the fitness of the imperialists and the Puerto Rican bourgeoisie to rule. There is greater interest in learning

about Cuba’s socialist revolution. They can be won to emulate this example and join the fight to bring working people to power both in Puerto Rico and the U.S. To make that fight successful, it’s crucial to expose and combat the poison of Jew-hatred wherever it rears its ugly head.

panel with Camilo Matos of the Puerto Rico Nationalist Party and Seth Galinsky from the Socialist Workers Party at a Militant Labor Forum on the fight against colonial rule.

The attacks on workers accelerated with President Barack Obama’s appointment of the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico in August 2016, which was given dictatorial control over the government’s finances and tasked with maximizing payment to bondholders on the island’s \$74 billion debt.

Between Washington’s board and the island’s capitalist government, “we are dealing with a monster,” Morales said.

“In response, we saw a rise in class struggle last year,” he said, pointing to a 72-day strike by students against the board’s demand to cut \$500 million from the University of Puerto Rico budget and tuition hikes and other actions.

On May 1, tens of thousands of people marched in San Juan to oppose the attacks on working people and youth. Thousands more joined a general strike across the island that day.

Then Hurricane Maria ravaged the country. “For one month there was no government,” he said. “People were on their own, and communities had to self-organize to get basic necessities. Working people have become disillusioned with the two main political parties.”

Even after the storm “the fiscal board continues on the same path, imposing an illegal, immoral debt,” Morales said. “It’s part of the empire, of the more than 100 years of exploitation and colonialism. We need to build a new economic model.”

The Teachers Federation was the recognized union in public schools until 2008, explained President Martínez. That year more than 40,000 teachers went on strike to block moves to privatize schools and take away hard-won benefits. The government said the strike was illegal and decertified the union.

“We lost our certification, but we won one of our central demands,” Martínez said. “They still have not been able to privatize a single public school.”

At the beginning of 2017, Gov. Ricardo Rosselló appointed Julia Kele-

her, a business professor at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., as secretary of education. Keleher’s attempts to shut down hundreds of public schools have led to numerous protests organized by the federation.

Martínez played videos of news interviews with Keleher, where she claimed that teachers and parents can protest and demonstrate all they want “but it won’t have an impact.”

Nonetheless “our protests were able to stop more than half the closings,” Martínez said.

After the hurricane damaged hundreds of schools, the union joined with parents and other volunteers, she said, and “we cleaned and repaired the schools so they could reopen. We got no help from the government.”

When asked about the offer by revolutionary Cuba to send brigades of electrical workers to help restore power along with a mobile hospital and doctors, Morales said that many working people know about the offer.

“Cuba has always been an ally of the people of Puerto Rico,” he said. “And though Cuba has less resources, they resolved the damage after the hurricane there quickly. There is a lot we have to learn from them.”

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles
Decolonization, Hurricanes and Solidarity. Speaker: Oscar López, Puerto Rican independence fighter, released from prison last year after being incarcerated on frame-up charges in U.S. jails for 36 years. Tues., Feb. 6, 7 p.m. *Maya Angelou High School, 300 E. 53rd St. Tel.: (310) 460-8586.* Hosted by MECHA. For more information on López’s Southern California tour, email: oscarlopezsocaltour@gmail.com.

NEW YORK

New York
Hear Puerto Rican Independence Fighter Oscar López Rivera. Wed., Jan. 31, 6 p.m. *Holyrood Episcopal Church, 715 W. 179 St., Manhattan.* Thurs., Feb. 1, 5:15-7 p.m. *Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse, Bronx.* Fri., Feb. 2, Reception, 5:30 p.m.; program, 6:30 p.m. *Trinity Lutheran Church, 411 46th St., Brooklyn.*

SWP: Jew-hatred is poison to working class

Below is an excerpt on the poison of Jew-hatred in the working class and fights for national liberation from the introduction by Socialist Workers Party leader Norton Sandler to Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? Copyright © 2016 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

Early in the forum, a speaker who said he was visiting from Panama declared from the floor that Jews “have all the money” and control everything from the international banking system to powerful imperialist media conglomerates. In addition, “Jews” control and direct US foreign policy, especially policy toward the Middle East. This myth, infecting growing layers of middle-class liberals and radicals in the United States and other imperialist countries today, is also widely advanced throughout Latin America, including among those who identify themselves as anti-imperialists.

These bigoted, conspiracy-spinning allegations ... conceal the plain truth of how capitalism works. Above all, they deprive working people of the knowledge and confidence that we can be the makers of history — that our own conscious, revolutionary action, and only that, can remove the capitalist ruling families from power and prevent them from blowing up the world.

Following the initial remarks in the discussion period about the rich and all-powerful Jews, I took the floor to point out that Jew-hatred remains one of the most virulent anti-working-class weapons of the ruling classes, as it has been since the birth of the modern workers movement a century and a half ago. Recalling its ghastly consequences in the hands of Germany’s imperialist rulers in the 1930s and ‘40s, I underlined the deadly threat to the workers movement of refusing to intransigently combat any and all targeting of Jews, Latinos, Blacks, gypsies, whites, or any other national, religious or ethnic grouping.

Ukraine gov't sues workers for fighting to win back pay

BY EMMA JOHNSON

"They want this to serve as a vivid example for all," Oleksandr Shershnye, a Ukrainian miner taken to court by the bosses for taking part in what they claim was an illegal strike, told Ukrayinska Pravda Dec. 26. "This is a means of putting pressure on the workers, so that we and the next generation to come to the mine are frightened to fight for our rights."

Shershnye is one of 94 members of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine at the state-owned Ingul'ska uranium mine. After ending their night shift in early November, they stayed underground for 24 hours, demanding a 50 percent wage increase and improved working conditions.

The conflict had been building up as the company refused to make good on promises of pay raises and modernization of outdated and dangerous equipment that kept breaking down. Finally, workers lost their patience.

Over the past two decades prices for consumer goods in Ukraine have gone up on average 35 percent a year and wages have not kept up. The biggest increases are for food, transportation and utilities.

After the protest, the company raised wages 25 percent from November and promised another 40 percent in March.

At the same time the bosses took the miners to court, demanding compensation for alleged income losses totaling about \$51,000 — amounting to \$550 per worker.

At a Jan. 18 court hearing, leaders from miners and other union locals came to support them while Ingul'sk residents held a solidarity protest outside.

Mikhailo Volynets, national chair of the miners union, attended the hearing. He said the state enterprise wants to create a precedent "that can be used to punish workers who are struggling for their rights."

"We won't let that happen," he said.



"They want this to serve as a vivid example for all," says Oleksandr Shershnye, inset, one of 94 Ukrainian miners taken to court by government for "illegal strike." Above, meeting by union local to inform workers about bosses' attack.



SWP presents working-class course at 'Women's March'

BY LEA SHERMAN

This year's 'Women's Marches' on the weekend of Jan. 20-21 drew hundreds of thousands of participants in cities and towns throughout the U.S. and around the world. But march organizers failed to present a road forward to meet the social and political crisis facing working people.

Their central message is that President Donald Trump is the reason for all the problems women and others face today, and they promote backing the Democratic Party in the 2018 elections.

The actions were also marked by social issues, especially the revelations about men in positions of power — bosses, politicians, casting directors and others — abusing and sexually harassing women. This is something that has long been known, but before now seldom talked about in public. Participants also spoke out about attacks on women's right to choose abortion and contraception, opposition to deportations of immigrant workers and students, and many other questions.

"There's greater consciousness about the common obstacles that women face," Julianne McShane, 23, from New York University said at the march in that city. "Because of that there's

also more conversation around how to overcome them."

Members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party across the country joined the marches, armed with tables full of books by party leaders, Fidel Castro, Thomas Sankara, Karl Marx, Evelyn Reed and other revolutionary leaders, as well as the *Militant*. We went to discuss and debate a working-class course forward in the fight against capitalist rule.

We explained that working people today face a deep moral and political crisis brought about by the workings of the dog-eat-dog capitalist system. The only road out is to fight to unify the working class and build an independent working-class movement, break from the Democrats, Republicans and all the "independent" capitalist reformers who will come forward, and take political power into our own hands.

We pointed to the example of the Cuban Revolution, where workers and farmers took power in 1959, reorganized society in the interests of the vast majority and reached out the hand of solidarity to workers worldwide.

Party members discuss these same questions every week, knocking on doors in working-class neighborhoods

in cities and towns across the country to introduce the party and its program.

Dan Fein writes from Chicago that the SWP there put up a number of signs on their table, including one that said, "Break with the Democrats and Republicans." Christy Whitney, a teacher, saw it and stopped to talk.

"Our union just endorsed the Democrats," she said. "I spoke against them saying they were not on our side." She wanted to learn more about the Cuban Revolution and took information on the May Day Brigade being organized for people in the U.S. and elsewhere to go see the revolution for themselves.

She picked up a subscription to the *Militant* and *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

In New York there will be a tour by Griselda Aguilera, who at the age of 7 was the youngest of the tens of thousands of volunteers who led the Cuban Revolution's 1961 literacy campaign. SWP members and others got out flyers for her Feb. 10 citywide meeting.

Party members sold two copies of *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de Los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer. The book explains how Cuban working people were transformed in the course of making their revolution, becoming capable of taking power and running the country themselves.

We also sold copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters; and the *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

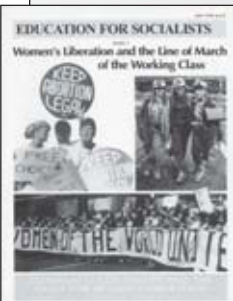
In Ventura, California, near the area where recent wildfires and mudslides killed dozens of people, some 1,500 people marched. Many nodded in agreement at the sign at the SWP table, "Social disaster in mudslide is result of capitalist rule."

SWP members in Seattle staffed a busy party book table at the assembly point of the march, discussing politics and telling people about the May Day Brigade to Cuba.

Lauren Evans, a mechanic in the Navy, joined the action after meeting the party at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration. She said she "is processing who is to blame for the conditions and how things can change."

Bernie Senter and Edwin Fruit contributed to this article.

Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation



Documents of the Socialist Workers Party, 1971-86

This three-part series politically equips the generation of

women and men joining battles in defense of women's rights today. \$12 each; \$30 for set

pathfinderpress.com

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 5, 1993

Another battle in the fight to defend women's right to abortion has been waged in Washington, D.C. Hundreds of pro-choice activists successfully mobilized against Operation Rescue's attempt to shut down abortion clinics in that city January 23. The response of young people to calls to defend the clinics once again points the road forward in the struggle to defend democratic rights today.

Antiabortion forces planned demonstrations and clinic blockades January 20-23 in response to the 20th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* court decision that expanded the right to abortion. These anti-choice groups were able to gather 75,000 for a march and rally January 22. But when they attempted to shut down three clinics the following day, they were met by an effective defense guard of pro-choice fighters.



February 5, 1968

The dramatic guerrilla attack on at least 11 provincial capitals and U.S. bases in South Vietnam is still continuing in all but two places. It has already spectacularly refuted key contentions of U.S. and Saigon military authorities.

For months, U.S. officials have been feeding stories to the press about the "sagging morale" of the guerrilla troops and their "loss of the will to fight."

These attacks show that the morale of the Vietnamese patriots is high and that they are heroically determined to fight to the end to liberate their country.

"In all the raids," *New York Times* Saigon correspondent Tom Buckley conceded, "the enemy displayed coordination and offensive strength without precedent in the war." The NLF attacks hit every large city and Saigon was forced to bomb a "controlled" city to repulse the guerrilla offensive.



February 6, 1943

Working class resentment against rising prices, new tax burdens and monopoly-induced shortages is forcing the leaders of the trade union movement to come out in opposition to the War Labor Board's Little Steel wage formula, which prohibits any increase of more than 15% over wage levels of Jan., 1941 and which has resulted in the freezing of most workers' wages since May, 1942.

During the last two weeks leaders of several of the most powerful unions in the country openly called for a revision of the WLB's formula, demanding that wages be brought in line with living costs.

"Since the adoption of the Little Steel formula," said ILGWU [International Ladies Garment Workers Union] President David Dubinsky, "the cost of living has gone up 22%, while the dressmakers, in that period, have had an increase of only 10%."

Workers in Venezuela face challenges in capitalist crisis

BY SETH GALINSKY

Workers in Venezuela face growing challenges in the midst of the deepening capitalist economic crisis there, exacerbated by sanctions and other attacks from Washington. Oil production — the country's main source of hard currency — is at a 28-year low. Runaway inflation and a lack of paper money, factory closings, rampant crime and black market profiteers combine to make the grind of daily life more difficult.

Washington continues to challenge Venezuelan sovereignty and to tighten the screws on the government of President Nicolás Maduro. On Jan. 5 the U.S. Treasury Department imposed sanctions on four more Venezuelan officials.

And the Venezuelan government faces the continual squeeze of meeting the payments on its foreign debt, estimated to be as much as \$150 billion. The interest on some of the bonds tops 30 percent.

Maduro took office after the 2013 death of Hugo Chávez. He continued on the course set by Chávez of seeking a “third way” — sometimes referred to as 21st Century Socialism or the Bolivarian Revolution — that explicitly rejected following the example of Cuba's socialist revolution. Instead they've sought to administer capitalist economic relations, not overturn them, and promote social welfare programs and charity instead of organizing workers to take control of production and political power. But administering dog-eat-dog capitalism in favor of the working class is impossible.

When capitalists can't make what they consider high enough profits, they just stop production or seek alternative markets. Corruption, theft and shortages are endemic in Venezuela.

Working people face an annual inflation of more than 2,000 percent, the highest in the world.

“It's true, the prices go up every day,” Ana Graciela Barrios told the *Militant* by phone from Caracas Jan. 23. “The wages don't keep up. Really, daily life is very complicated.” Barrios works with a community group in the San Agustín del Sur working-class neighborhood bringing food directly from farmers.

“People are eating fewer meals and less protein. In the popular sectors,

chicken, beef, is almost nonexistent,” Barrios said.

A government subsidized food basket, distributed in working-class and poorer neighborhoods, helps people survive, but lasts a couple of weeks at most, she said. “And money is scarce. A lot of things you can buy with your bank or food cards, but for the bus you have to have cash. For those who live outside Caracas and commute here for work, that takes a large part of their income.”

In an effort to slow the inflation, Maduro has imposed price controls and limited the amount of money that can be taken out of the bank each day. He ordered stores to roll back prices to December levels, with little impact. Soon after, many goods simply disappeared onto the black market.

The recent increase in oil prices — the biggest cash crop in Venezuela — to \$70 per barrel worldwide won't give a big boost to the government's finances because of a steep drop in production.

Oil facilities have deteriorated, as the government decapitalized the industry and used the cash for other purposes. It skimped on maintenance and investment, causing a drastic decline in production — a 29 percent drop last year.

In November Maduro appointed Gen. Manuel Quevedo to head the oil company, ostensibly to fight corruption. And since last August over 50 managers have been arrested for graft. But these top-down, administrative measures have done nothing to reverse the decline.

In January, many oil workers protest demanding government action.

“We are working with just our fingernails” to keep oil production going,



Rayner Pena/picture-alliance/dpa/AP Images

Line for food distributed by government in Caracas, July 20, 2017. Economic crisis in Venezuela is exacerbated by Washington's attacks. Corruption, theft, shortages, inflation plague workers.

Sinutrapetrol union president Fabricio Mejias said, flanked by dozens of shop stewards Jan. 11 in Puerto la Cruz.

The day before, workers at the Petrocedeno division of the state oil company PDVSA in Anzoategui also posted a video on the internet. “There are no *guarimberos* [reactionary thugs] here, just flesh-and-blood workers who are making their best efforts daily to maintain the plant's production,” one worker representative says in the video.

“But it has to be said that we are getting starvation wages,” he added. There is a shortage of toilet paper, safety equipment and food in the company cafeteria is poor. Wages are so low they are not enough to buy a kilo of cheese.

Carlos Oyoque, a leader of the union's Che Guevara council there, said many workers are quitting. “But our homeland runs through our blood,” he said. “Many people still believe that we can raise up the country and move forward.” The workers are demanding a meeting with Maduro and Quevedo to negotiate a new union contract.

Union Secretary General Johnny Linares at the government-owned Venezuela Cement Co. in Puerto Ordaz told El Correo del Caroní that their contract ran out in 2009 and they earn only minimum wage. “By the end of the month there is little that we can buy,” he said. Workers survive by selling or trading bags of cement they are given every month.

Solidarity from Cuba

Washington hates the Venezuelan government and people, because they've aided Cuba, and the U.S. rulers fear workers and farmers there could follow the example of the Cuban Revolution.

The Cuban people continue to offer solidarity to Venezuela. There are more than 20,000 Cuban internationalist volunteers there, many providing medical care, often in the poorest and hardest to reach parts of the country. They treated nearly 6 million patients last year.

The Socialist Workers Party joins Cuba in opposing all of Washington's moves to interfere with Venezuelan sovereignty. U.S. Hands off Venezuela!

May Day Brigade to Cuba builds in Appalachia

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Supporters of the Cuban Revolution are getting out the word and signing people up to participate in the 13th annual May Day International Brigade to Cuba from April 23 to May 6. Come see Cuba for yourself! The brigade is being organized by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

“So far about 10 of us are planning to go from Central Appalachia,” Samir

Hazboun told the *Militant* by phone from Knoxville, Tennessee, Jan. 24. They're young people from Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina, working together in building the brigade and raising funds to cover expenses.

One highlight will be marching in the May 1 International Workers Day mobilization in Havana and participating in the International Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba the following day.

Brigadistas will go to factories to exchange experiences with union workers, meet with members of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and see firsthand how working people led by their revolutionary government met and overcame the impact of Hurricane Irma — organizing evacuations to save people's lives and rapidly repairing and rebuilding afterwards.

They'll visit the provinces of Villa Clara, where Che Guevara led some of the key battles that led to the victory of the revolution, and to Camagüey. They'll meet with representatives of students', women's, union and other mass organizations, and visit museums and sites of revolutionary struggle. Over several mornings they'll do voluntary agricultural work alongside Cuban farmers and brigadistas from other countries.

“In preparation for the trip, we all recently got together to study *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*

together over an internet video conference,” Hazboun said. (See excerpt from this book on page 8.)

The visit of Cuban literacy veteran Griselda Aguilera to the Knoxville area Feb. 20-21, he said, “will help publicize the brigade and encourage others to attend and raise funds.”

At the age of 7, Aguilera was the youngest participant in the revolution's mass literacy campaign in 1961 that taught workers and peasants across the island how to read and write. And she has been a staunch participant in the revolution ever since.

Her tour includes a public meeting at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, sponsored by the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Department, and speaking to high school students in the city, Hazboun said. Tour stops also include Boston; Hartford, Connecticut; New York; New Jersey; Baltimore; and Washington, D.C.

The National Network on Cuba is coordinating efforts to sign up U.S. participants for the May Day Brigade and it's being publicized and built by local Cuba solidarity groups around the country. Registration is open until March 16. The cost of the package, which includes all meals and lodging in Cuba, is \$675 plus airfare. For more information on the brigade and to download an application, go to NNOC.info and click on MayDay Brigade.

Special offers through March 1 in English and Spanish

New edition:

Our History Is Still Being Written The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, Moises Sío Wong

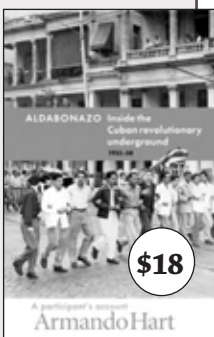
“What was the principal measure to uproot discrimination against Chinese and blacks? Cuba's socialist revolution itself.”

Aldabonazo

Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground 1952-58, a Participant's Account

by Armando Hart

Meet men and women who led the urban underground in the fight against the Batista dictatorship. Along with their comrades-in-arms in the Rebel Army, their revolutionary actions and example changed the history of the 20th century — and the century to come.



\$18



\$12

www.pathfinderpress.com

US rulers' plunder in Haiti

Continued from front page

people and left 1.5 million homeless, is being revoked as of Jan. 22. That means some 60,000 Haitians must leave the U.S. within the next 18 months, many of whom have children born here, barring some kind of reprieve in Congress.

While just a few dozen Haitians have applied each year for H-2A and H-2B visas since they were approved for the program in 2012, mostly for seasonal agricultural work, the administration says 40 percent of these visa holders overstayed in 2016.

Decades of imperialist plunder, and naked theft before that, has resulted in some 60 percent of Haiti's population living under the government's official poverty line. Many workers get wages of less than \$1 a day. The official unemployment rate is 40 percent. More than 70 percent of the population has no access to electricity and over 60 percent have never had the opportunity to learn to read and write. Nearly 75 percent of Haitians are subsistence farmers. Facing extreme poverty, they've resorted to cutting down trees to provide fuel. Coming on top of years of farming by foreign companies, this means the country has only 2 percent tree cover, magnifying the impact of hurricanes and floods that destroy crops and wash away homes.

Garments produced under sweatshop conditions in factories in Haiti are exported to Walmart and others for sale in the U.S. Through unequal trade relations — Haiti exports about \$1 billion of apparel and agricultural products while spending triple that amount to import food and manufactured goods — the government's debt has risen to \$2 billion, over one-fourth of the country's gross domestic product.

In the 1990s, Democratic President Bill Clinton pressured the Haitian government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide to lower tariffs on imported agricultural produce. The influx of cheaper U.S. food drove thousands of Haitian peasants off the land, forcing the import of basic staples like rice. Today more than half of Haiti's food

supply is imported.

Colonized first by Spain — which kept control over what became the Dominican Republic on the other side of the island — and then France, Haiti was exploited to produce sugar. After killing off the native population, which didn't take to slavery, the French brought slaves from Africa.

Inspired by the U.S. and French revolutions of the 18th century, Haitian slaves organized a mass uprising that defeated Napoleon's troops, abolished slavery and declared independence in 1804.

Washington's long-standing hatred

Washington's long-standing hatred of Haiti and its fighting toilers dates back to these revolutionary advances. The pro-slavery rulers here feared the Haitian Revolution would inspire revolts in the U.S. South. They were determined to prevent this.

The former colonial master in Paris refused to recognize the revolutionary regime, insisting the new republic pay huge reparations to France, which began in 1825 and lasted until 1947. To finance this, the Haitian government took out huge loans from U.S., German and French banks at exorbitant rates of interest. By 1900, Haiti was spending about 80 percent of its national budget on loan repayments, reported the *Guardian*, stifling any prospects for economic and social development.

In response to a wave of popular protests in the early 1900s, U.S. Marines invaded Haiti in 1915 and occupied the country for the next 19 years.

The U.S. government backed the dictatorships of Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" and their notoriously brutal Tonton Macoute thugs from 1957 until 1986 — under the administrations of Republican Dwight Eisenhower, to Democrats John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Republicans Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Democrat Jimmy Carter and Republican Ronald Reagan.

In 1986 workers and farmers rose up and overthrew the U.S.-backed



Inset, UN Photo/Pasqual Gorriz

Above, deforested Haiti, next to border with wooded Dominican Republic. Deforestation, and flooding it promotes, is product of plunder by U.S., other imperialist powers. Inset, Cuban doctor attends to child in Haiti after revolutionary government responded to 2010 earthquake.



dictatorship. In 1990 Aristide, a Catholic priest and prominent critic of the Duvaliers, was elected president. He was overthrown by the military seven months later and forced into exile.

In response, tens of thousands of Haitians fled the country, seeking refuge in the United States. President Clinton vowed to intercept them at sea and force them back to Haiti. When this didn't work, U.S. forces incarcerated them at the U.S. Naval Base on occupied Cuban territory at Guantánamo.

20,000 U.S. troops sent to Haiti

Concerned about ongoing protests by workers and farmers in Haiti, Clinton sent 20,000 U.S. troops there and returned Aristide to power in October 1994. Then, in the face of renewed protests, Washington forced Aristide back into exile in 2004.

Some 300,000 people were killed when Haiti was battered by a disastrous earthquake in 2010. Under the watch of Democrat Barack Obama, the U.S. rulers promised lots of aid, but did little. Washington announced it would build 15,000 new homes, but completed only 2,649 before quietly shutting down the program.

The U.N. appointed Bill Clinton its "special envoy" to Haiti and he and Obama's Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went there to announce the opening of the Caracol Industrial Park, which they said would offer

60,000 jobs for Haitians.

To do so, they drove 450 farmers off their land. Ultimately, only 5,000 jobs materialized — mostly at one big garment plant paying \$5 a day, less than half what's required to eat.

Washington arranged to have its occupying troops replaced by thousands of U.N. forces, who occupied the country until October 2017, tasked with rebuilding Haiti's police force and army.

This so-called peace-keeping mission was disastrous for Haitian working people. Waste leakage from a camp where U.N. soldiers were based led to an outbreak of cholera that has killed more than 10,000 people and sickened over 800,000.

It was only the rapid response of the revolutionary government of Cuba that made a difference in saving the lives of patients affected by the cholera epidemic. The number of volunteer Cuban doctors and health care workers in Haiti grew to more than 1,200. They set up clinics from the cities to the most remote parts of the country.

The U.N., which promised to provide \$400 million to treat those affected by cholera, has collected only about \$2.7 million. The Trump administration has said it won't contribute anything.

As this brief history of the U.S. rulers' relations with Haiti shows, Trump continues to carry out their bipartisan policies there.

East Coast tour of veteran of 1961 Cuban literacy campaign Griselda Aguilera

Hear Griselda Aguilera, a participant in 1961 mass campaign that taught Cuban workers and farmers to read and write, and transformed the volunteers, so they could build the revolution.

Screenings of "Maestra," film by Catherine Murphy documenting literacy drive, will be shown during tour.



Tour dates:

Hartford, Connecticut: Jan. 31; Boston: Feb. 2-3

Albany: Feb. 5-6; New York / New Jersey: Feb. 8-12

Washington, D.C. / Baltimore: Feb. 13-17;

Knoxville, Tennessee: Feb. 20-21

Sponsored by Cuba solidarity organizations and activists on the East Coast

For more info: ikenahem@mindspring.com phone (917) 887-8710

Celebrate victory over frame-up

Continued from page 3

and fewer benefits under increasingly unsafe conditions. This is the employers' response to their worldwide capitalist crisis, generated by falling profit rates and the inevitable slowdown in production and trade.

We know that when workplace injuries and deaths occur, whether on railways, in mines, on construction sites, in hospitals or meatpacking plants it is the "boots on the ground," as the prosecution described Harding, who take the rap.

We can fight this carnage by using union power to fight for workers control of safety on the job. Along this road we will transform our unions into class-struggle organizations and gain the confidence and know-how to build our own revolutionary working-class party

— the kind we need to fight to replace the political power of the bosses with a workers and farmers government similar to the government installed by Cuban working people in their 1959 socialist revolution.

With this kind of government we can begin organizing and mobilizing working people to uproot dog-eat-dog capitalist social relations, and build a society where the fruits of our labor are used to satisfy the needs of the working majority across Canada and around the world, where no worker has to die on the altar of capitalist profits.

These are the lessons of this victory to discuss with co-workers, friends, relatives, and workers on their doorsteps. Join us in getting the truth out about this victory and in building the Communist League.

Cuban Revolution brought millions into political action

Below is an excerpt from The First and Second Declarations of Havana. Its Spanish-language edition is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The excerpt is from the preface, written by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press. The declarations — manifestos of revolutionary struggle — were adopted by million-strong assemblies of Cuban workers, farmers and youth in 1960 and 1962. Copyright © 2007 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

“Politics begin where millions of men and women are; where there are not thousands, but millions. That is where serious politics begin.” Lenin reminded delegates to the 1918 congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) a few months after the triumph of the October Revolution. That is the power that speaks through the First and Second Declarations of Havana, the power evident in the photos included here of those immense concentrations of confident, joyous, and determined toilers in the midst of deciding their own future.

The year and a half between the First and Second Declarations was marked above all by the “serious politics” of millions.



Above, Fidel Castro presents Second Declaration of Havana to million-strong assembly of the Cuban people, Feb. 4, 1962. Castro “explained to the vanguard of workers, farmers and revolutionary-minded youth, increasingly engaged in struggle throughout the Americas, including in the United States, why the possibilities of success were in their hands and none others.”

- Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro’s September 1960 presentation of “The Case of Cuba” before the General Assembly of the United Nations, which he ended by citing the closing portions of the First Declaration of Havana summarizing what the Cuban Revolution stands for;
- the mobilizations across the island accompanying the revolutionary government’s Urban Reform Law nationalizing housing, slashing rents to 10 percent of a family’s income, and thus putting an end, in the words of the Second Declaration of Havana, to “the abusive system that turned housing into a means of exploiting people”;
- Washington’s decision to break diplomatic relations with Havana;
- the mobilization of 100,000 young people to the furthest reaches of the countryside and working-class barrios in the massive, successful campaign that wiped out illiteracy in Cuba in less than a year (establishing the model for the hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteer teachers and medical personnel who in coming decades would put their training to use among those oppressed by imperialism the world over);
- the U.S.-organized and -financed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, which ended less than seventy-two hours later in ignominious defeat with the surrender of the invading mercenaries;
- the beginning of the first “Free-

dom Rides” across the U.S. South to challenge Jim Crow segregation in interstate public transportation;

- Che Guevara’s denunciation at Punta del Este, Uruguay, in August 1961 of the fraud of the U.S. government’s newly launched Latin American “Alliance for Progress”;
- Cuba’s first internationalist aid to Africa, sending arms and ammunition to Algeria’s National Liberation Front (FLN) fighting French colonial rule and providing treatment to wounded combatants as well as housing and education to orphans of the war;
- the imposition of a total trade embargo against Cuba by the U.S. government on February 3, 1962.

What was the Cuban people’s response to the announcement that foreign ministers of the Organization of American States would meet in Punta del Este in late January 1962 to consider collective measures to counter “the threat to the peace and political independence of the American states” arising from intervention by “extra-continental powers”?

“Now that they’re preparing the stage to carry out the puppets’ farce,” Fidel announced to a mass rally on January 2 celebrating the third anniversary of the victory over the tyranny, “let’s mobilize!” ...

On February 4 over a million people answered that call to arms, effectively repudiating the resolutions adopted four days earlier by what they referred to as

the “Yankee ministry of colonies.” ...

[T]he declaration effectively explained to the vanguard of workers, farmers, and revolutionary-minded youth increasingly engaged in struggles throughout the Americas, including the United States, why the possibilities of success were in their hands and none others.

- It explained why the national bourgeoisie is incapable of leading a struggle against imperialist domination “even when its interests are in contradiction to those of Yankee imperialism ... for the national bourgeoisie is paralyzed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the cry of the exploited masses.”

- It explained why no revolution could succeed unless the working class was capable of leading the struggle in the countryside as well, forging and continuously working to maintain a powerful alliance in struggle with the peasantry, with the oppressed indigenous peoples of the Americas, with the Blacks, the Chinese, and the other superexploited sections of the population. Over and over, it pointed to the importance of the unfolding mass struggles by Blacks to bring down the system of Jim Crow segregation in the United States.

- It explained how unity in action of the toilers against imperialism and its agents, without which no revolutionary victory is possible, could be achieved only if sectarianism, dogmatism, and the deliberate fostering of division as opposed to common struggle could be eradicated.

- It explained the “bloody drama” Washington and its puppets were preparing for Latin America — one that soon became all too real — as the great masses of the continent began to rise in struggle, and the fatal illusion of believing in the possibility under such conditions of “wresting power by legal means, means that do not and will not exist, from the hands of ruling classes that are entrenched in all the state positions,” a power they “will defend by blood and fire and with the might of their police and armies.”

- And it pointed to the revolutionary victory at Playa Girón — Washington’s first military defeat in the Americas — as the example that the Cuban people gave to the world “that revolution is possible.”

January

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

La Primera y Segunda Declaración de La Habana

(The First and Second Declarations of Havana)

Nowhere are the questions of revolutionary strategy addressed with greater truthfulness and clarity than in these declarations. \$10. **Special price: \$7.50**

Woman’s Evolution

From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family

by Evelyn Reed \$32. **Special price: \$24**

Art and Revolution

Writings on Literature, Politics, and Culture

by Leon Trotsky “Art can become a strong ally of revolution only insofar as it remains faithful to itself.” \$22. **Special price: \$16.50**

The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power

Documents, 1918-1919; Preparing the Founding Congress \$36. **Special price: \$27**

Fascism and Big Business

by Daniel Guerin \$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Samizdat

Voices of the Soviet Opposition \$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT

WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 31

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** P.O. Box 380641 Zip: 33238. Tel: (305) 420-5928. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 3224 S. Morgan St. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **St. Paul:** 1821 University Ave. W Suite S-106A. Zip: 55104. Tel: (651) 340-5586. Email: twincities.swp@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811. Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincn@windstream.net

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 964-4793. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com **Albany:** P.O. Box 8304. Zip: 12208. Tel: (518) 903-0781. Email: albanyswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville, NSW 2142. Tel: (02) 8677 0108. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: cllcmontreal@fastmail.com **BRITISH COLUMBIA:** **Vancouver:** Email: cllcVancouver@fastmail.fm

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 188a Onehunga Mall, Onehunga. Postal address: P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1643. Tel: (09) 636-3231. Email: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26–28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

8 The Militant February 5, 2018

Turkish troops out, hands off the Kurds!

Continued from front page

who sought to resist. Thousands of refugees seeking protection from attacks by his forces, backed by Moscow’s airstrikes and Tehran-backed ground troops, have fled to Afrin.

Kurds — the largest nationality in the world without their own country — have faced repression from the capitalist rulers in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, who keep them divided and without a homeland. Washington was complicit with the Iraqi rulers’ assaults after Kurds there voted overwhelmingly for independence last October.

“The Kurdish people have come to the center stage of world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights,” explains Jack Barnes, Socialist Workers Party national secretary, in his article “Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq” in *New International* no. 7.

The U.S. rulers have a long record of using, then abandoning the Kurds and will do so again whenever it serves their interests.

The U.S. government continues its deployment of troops in Syria. This does not advance the interests of working people there, but defends the prerogatives of the U.S. propertied owners, the most powerful capitalist ruling class in the world. Today they are trying to counter the rising influence of their capitalist rivals in Moscow, Beijing and Tehran.

When working people in the region seek to fight for their class interests — from the Kurds in Syria and Iraq to working people in Iran protesting the deaths and misery inflicted by Tehran’s clerical rulers and their counterrevolutionary wars abroad — they deserve working-class solidarity.

Halt Ankara’s assaults on Afrin! End all sanctions imposed by Baghdad on the Kurdistan Regional Government! U.S. out of the Middle East!

Protest Turkish rulers war moves against Kurds

Continued from front page

The Turkish ground troops, accompanied by Syrian allies, have reportedly made only limited gains so far.

Washington and Moscow, as well as the capitalist rulers in Tehran, Baghdad and throughout the region, are reassessing how best in changing circumstances to defend their national economic and political interests.

The attack comes amid widespread discontent among working people in Iran against the cleric-led counterrevolutionary regime’s military moves in the region that have meant growing numbers of young workers coming home in body bags.

The seven-year-long civil war in Syria grinds on, with a new regime offensive in Idlib province and continuing devastating consequences for working people.

The Turkish rulers have long sought to deal blows to the YPG and the struggle for Kurdish national rights in Syria. Some 30 million Kurds are an oppressed nationality spread across Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Through the course of the Syrian civil war the YPG has been the most effective force pushing out the reactionary Islamic State, and in the process some 2 million Kurds there have carved out an autonomous region along the Turkish border. The capitalist rulers in Ankara fear that advances by Kurds in Syria will inspire Kurds to fight for their national rights in Turkey.

Afrin province has a population of at least 800,000, including many recently arrived refugees fleeing the civil war. It is separated from the other Kurdish areas of northern Syria by a wedge of territory to its east, held by the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army. These forces entered Syria in 2016, as part of a previous Turkish military incursion whose goal had been to push the Kurds east of the Euphrates River.

Erdogan says the Turkish rulers intend to “exterminate” the YPG in all areas west of the Euphrates River and will later force the YPG out of all areas near the Turkish border. Prime Minister Binali Yildirim says the Turkish government wants to create a 19-mile YPG-free zone inside Syria.

Erdogan charges the YPG with being the Syrian wing of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) — an armed party in Turkey with Stalinist roots that has fought a guerrilla war against Ankara for most of three decades.

Protests against the Turkish government assault were organized across Afrin province, in Erbil in Iraqi Kurdistan, in London, cities in Germany and elsewhere. The Turkish government unleashed riot cops on Kurdish supporters in Istanbul as they protested the assault and sharply censored media reporting about it. Erdogan says he will “crush” all opposition in Turkey to Ankara’s military intervention in Syria.

Hundreds of protesters and opposition politicians have been arrested. Dozens have been rounded up for posting notes on social media questioning the attacks.

“This shows how people are afraid of keyboards, pens, words and writing,” Ayhan Bilgen, a leader of the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) told the media.

Moscow tried to convince YPG leaders to hand over power in Afrin to the Assad regime, saying this

would stop the Turkish rulers’ assault. “We drove the Syrian army out of Afrin five years ago, and it’s impossible to allow them back,” Bahjat Abdo, a YPG commander and Head of the Defense Authority in Afrin, told Kurdistan 24.

The U.S. rulers have demonstrated over decades that when push comes to shove they are deadly opponents of the Kurdish struggle for national rights. They were complicit with Baghdad’s seizure of Kurdish cities, land and oil fields around Kirkuk in October, backing the Iraqi rulers moves to stop any implementation of an overwhelming vote for independence by Kurds and others in Kurdistan.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced Jan. 17 that U.S. military deployment in Syria would continue indefinitely. Washington has some 2,000 troops there now. Days later, Defense Secretary James Mattis confirmed that rolling back Tehran’s rising influence in the Middle East was a central concern for Washington.

Workers protest Tehran’s wars

The capitalist rulers in Iran have used their army and militias to extend the sway of the country’s counterrevolutionary leaders across the region. Troops from Tehran’s Quds force, Hezbollah and other Iran-backed militias, supported by Moscow’s air power, were decisive in shoring up the Assad dictatorship. This means Tehran and its allied combatants hold sway from the Afghan border to the west across Iraq and Syria to Lebanon’s Mediterranean shore.

The deadly consequences at home of the Iranian rulers’ wars are class differentiated, hitting the working class hardest. At first the clerical rulers tried to conceal the extent of their military moves. But as the number of dead mounted, they could no longer do so. Then they erected monuments and banners to Iran’s “martyrs” in working-class neighborhoods, hoping to whip up a patriotic support.

Workers there had given support — and voluntary participation — against the U.S.-backed war by Saddam Hussein seeking to bring down the revolution in Iran that overthrew the shah in 1979.

But nothing like that happened this time. The mounting toll from these counterrevolutionary conflicts has fueled a broader social and political crisis. The sacrifices the regime’s wars imposed on workers led to the working-class uprising that swept 90 Iranian cities and towns in a 14-day period earlier this month. Quieted for now by a wave of arrests and deployment of Revolutionary Guard forces to working-class areas across Iran, the discontent continues to simmer.

The question of war — and similar broad questions of morality, culture and politics — are the deepest causes for working-class action.

Kazem Sadighi, a prominent clerical leader, gave a sermon Jan. 12 calling the working-class demonstrators “garbage” — much like Hillary Clinton’s 2016 description of Donald Trump’s working-class voters as “deplorables.” This reflects the contemptuous view of the working class widely held among capitalist rulers and their middle-class supporters the world over.

More subway ‘pain’

Continued from front page

double what they were a decade ago. The bosses of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority have skimped on maintenance on everything from tracks and train cars to signals, bridges and tunnels and cut hundreds of mechanics’ positions — during Democratic and Republican administrations alike.

Twenty years ago workers inspected signals — many installed in World War II — every 30 days. Today they are inspected every 90 days. Train cars and rails are also inspected less frequently. The number of subway maintenance workers, members of Transport Workers Union Local 100, has been cut.

The MTA used to assign workers trained in first aid to some busy stations to help in cases of medical emergency. The agency eliminated that program years ago.

The only growth in the subways is the number of cops and other armed services keeping an eye on the riders.

More than 75 percent of the 472 subway stations do not have elevators to make them accessible to people in wheelchairs or who can’t use the stairs. And 48 people were struck and killed by subway trains in 2016.

Bosses say that they had no choice but to cut back on service and maintenance, because funding from the state and the city has been frozen or reduced.

MTA isn’t a government agency. It’s run by an independent board of 14 voting members, most appointed by the governor. It gets funds from the state and city governments or by wracking up more debt. Fares only covered \$8.9 billion of its \$15.9 billion budget in 2016.

Many of those expenses are the result of filling the pockets of construction and related bosses with boondoggle projects and prioritizing payments to capitalist speculators who hold the system’s bonds, while skimping on maintenance and cutting customer services. Today the MTA pays some 17 percent of its budget on interest and principal. The current debt to bondholders sits at \$37.9 billion and climbing — more than Iceland, Jordan, the Philippines and dozens of other countries. In the last six years alone MTA borrowed \$15 billion for construction projects.

On Jan. 1, 2017, the Second Avenue subway extension — or part of it — was inaugurated, more than 40 years after construction originally started. The construction from 63rd Street to 96th Street, about two miles, cost \$4.45 billion.

The three new stations cost \$2.4 billion, more than the tunnels, track and everything else combined. Why? Because the two-story high stations sit on grandiose, full-length mezzanines. To build them, the tunnels themselves had to be built deeper underground — at much higher cost.

The owners of the *New York Times* ran an article Dec. 28 titled “The Most Expensive Mile of Subway Track on Earth.” But it tries to put the blame on what it paints as overpaid, underworked unionized construction workers, not the bosses who profited from it.

Whenever they can, bosses and the big-business press try to scapegoat subway workers for the system’s growing problems and debt.

So how does the capitalist ruling class plan to overcome the New York City subway and transportation crisis?

You guessed right. On the backs of working people.

One way to do that is with Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s push for “congestion pricing.” The “smart” cameras they’ve put up everywhere would levy a fee on anyone who drives into Manhattan — said to run \$12 a pop for cars and \$25 for trucks.

New chief takes aim at unions

To drive through their anti-working-class moves they’ve appointed Andy Byford, former CEO of the Toronto Transit Commission, to take over as president of MTA’s New York City Transit agency. His signal achievements in five years at the helm there: beginning the switch to one-person instead of two-person train crews and cutting unionized workers by contracting out garbage collections and other work.

The capitalist rulers in Albany and New York City hope that Byford will be the man to push through changes like this. The *Times* editors have called for eliminating late night subway service altogether.

On his first day on the job, Byford was asked by reporters about his plans to “fix” the system. “There’s no gain without some pain,” he said with a smile.