

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Chinese Cubans and Cuba's
socialist revolution
— PAGES 5-8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 82/NO. 8 FEBRUARY 26, 2018

Stock market gyrations sign of capitalism's crisis today

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Huge gyrations on stock prices accompanied by a market plunge that wiped out some \$5 trillion in paper values at the beginning of February highlight the fact that overvalued stocks — fueled by speculative investment — are increasingly vulnerable to volatility.

For days stock prices swung by over 1,000 points as the Dow Jones Industrial Average plummeted by more than 7 percent Feb. 5-9, its biggest one-week drop since October 2008. The decline spread to markets in Asia and Europe. Capitalist investors responded by pulling a record \$30.6 billion from stocks.

These developments come during an uptick in the capitalist economy. At the same time, the underlying crisis of capitalist production and trade that has marked the past few decades — deepening with the financial crash in 2008 — continues to take its toll on the working class.

The capitalists' falling profit rates
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Olympic talks are blow to US moves against NKorea

Washington: More sanctions, but willing to talk



Reuters/Kim Kyung-Hoon

Despite sitting just feet apart, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence avoided all contact with North Korean delegation to the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. Top row from left, Kim Yo Jong, sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un; right, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Bottom row left, South Korean President Moon Jae-in, far right, Pence.

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a setback for Washington's decadeslong campaign to isolate and punish the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North, the South Korean government welcomed a sizable athletic and government delegation, including Kim Yo Jong, sister of the DPRK's

leader Kim Jong Un, to participate in the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang.

Kim Yo Jong extended an invitation for South Korean President Moon Jae-in to visit Pyongyang soon for high-level talks with the North Korean government. There has not been an inter-Korean summit since 2007.

The South Korean president replied carefully, saying, "The early resumption of dialogue between the U.S. and North Korea is absolutely necessary for the development of inter-Korean relations."

Vice President Mike Pence, who also

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Israel-Iran rulers clash as Syria war continues

BY TERRY EVANS

The long-standing struggle between the rulers of Israel and Iran in the Middle East has been sharpened by the Tehran rulers' gains in the wars in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and the strengthening of its ally Hezbollah in Lebanon. This is what lies behind the recent clashes in Syria between Tel Aviv's forces and those of Hezbollah and Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad.

These conflicts are another front in the many-sided war in that country, as the capitalist rulers in the U.S., Russia, Turkey and across the region seek to advance their competing national interests.

As Assad's military was collapsing, the rulers in Tehran stepped into the vacuum in fighting against rebel forces, and — with the aid of Moscow's air and naval support — salvaged his dictatorial rule with devastating costs for working people.

An Israeli helicopter shot down a stealth spy drone that crossed Israel's border Feb. 10. Tel Aviv says the drone was assembled by Tehran and launched from Assad's T4 airbase deep in Syria. The Israeli government responded by launching eight F-16s to retaliate against the base and other Tehran-related targets in Syria. One was shot down by Syrian anti-aircraft fire, the first Israeli jet lost in combat in 36 years.

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Rising support for abortion rights forces referendum vote in Ireland



Reuters/Clodagh Kilcoyne

Sept. 24, 2016, protest in Dublin, part of fight for repeal of abortion ban in Irish Constitution.

BY PAMELA HOLMES
AND CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LONDON — In response to a growing campaign for abortion rights, Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar announced Jan. 29 that a referendum will be held in Ireland this spring on repealing the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment, approved in a 1983 public vote, "acknowledges the right to life of the unborn" and effectively prevents wom-

en's access to abortion.

"We welcome the decision," Linda Kavanagh, spokesperson for the Abortion Rights Campaign, told the *Militant* in a phone interview from Dublin. "Without a repeal of the Eighth Amendment there is no way to extend the right to abortion."

Support for a woman's right to abortion has grown as part of a broader shift in backing for social rights in

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The FBI, US rulers' political police, is the enemy of the working class!

BY TERRY EVANS

Since it was tasked with going after revolutionary-minded workers and "subversive activity" in 1939, the FBI has an unbroken record of trampling on political rights.

In their frenzy to derail the Donald Trump presidency, the liberal press and middle-class left are increasingly championing the rulers' political police — the FBI and the top-secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act courts. Democrats in Congress, American Civil Liberties Union spokespeople and more, say that what the FBI is doing is necessary and good. They seek to reinforce former FBI chief Robert Mueller's witch hunt against the Trump administration.

But the FBI is a deadly enemy of the working class. Its reason for existence is to spy on and disrupt the working-class, revolutionary-minded political fighters and others the propertied rulers choose to target.

The liberals are trying to defend the FBI against a short memo by Re-

publican Congressman Devin Nunes that reports how agency operatives and lawyers used deceptive methods to get a warrant to go after a former adviser to the Trump campaign. They did not acknowledge the source used

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Workers in Finland pay for deal to make bosses stronger

Literacy drive ‘changed people, advanced revolution’ in Cuba

BY TERRY EVANS

NEW YORK — When U.S.-backed mercenaries invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, “literacy volunteers didn’t stop doing what we were organized to do — wipe out illiteracy across the country — we kept on going,” Griselda Aguilera told some 30 people attending a Feb. 9 meeting here in Brooklyn. Fidel Castro organized Cuba’s workers, peasants and militia to defend their socialist revolution, crushing the invasion in 72 hours.

The meeting was organized by *Haiti Liberté*, a newspaper distributed throughout North America. It was one of a dozen events in New York and northern New Jersey, part of an East Coast tour sponsored by a coalition of Cuba solidarity groups.

At the age of seven, Aguilera was the youngest of the tens of thousands who responded with zeal and determination to Castro’s call to join a campaign to teach Cuban workers and farmers to read and write. This was part of the revolution’s broader program to expand education and culture for working people and deepen their ability to participate

and lead in social and political life.

“With ignorance,” Aguilera explained, “people lose their dignity.”

The mass mobilization to eradicate the scourge of illiteracy was carried through just two years after Cuban workers and farmers toppled the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship and took power into their own hands.

The meeting began with a screening of Catherine Murphy’s movie “Maestra” (Teacher), which features interviews with volunteers.

“As I taught, so I learned,” Aguilera said, describing the experience she and other young volunteers went through in the yearlong campaign. Many lived away from home for the first time, often in remote rural areas. They joined peasants working the land during the day, discussed the unfolding revolution and its effects in the area, and taught them to read and write at night.

She explained the rising self-confidence of the volunteers and their resolve to shoulder more responsibilities to advance the revolution. This was demonstrated at the mass rally in Havana Dec. 22, 1961, that celebrated the successful



Militant

Literacy campaign that involved millions was key to expanding education and culture for Cuban people, Griselda Aguilera, left, told Feb. 9 meeting at Haiti Liberté in New York.

completion of the campaign. “Thousands of volunteers returned from across the country,” she said, “and chanted the question to Cuban President Fidel Castro: ‘Tell us — what do we do next?’”

A couple of meeting participants snapped up *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer, one of the books at the Socialist Workers Party literature table. It includes Castro’s talk at the rally.

The literacy campaign “would have been an impossible task for a people who live under oppression,” Castro said. “Only a revolutionary people could marshal the effort and energy necessary to carry out such a huge campaign.”

In response to a question about the drive’s political impact on those who learned to read and write, Aguilera said it made it more possible for them “to take over and run the factories abandoned by the bosses. Today Cubans are a more cultured, more political people.”

Because of her age she was assigned to teach workers in Havana. In the cities, “workers who were illiterate would give up an hour a day after work and stay in the workplace to study with the volunteers,” she said.

Following a lively discussion, four meeting participants signed up for more information about the April 22-May 6 May Day Brigade to Cuba. Brigade members will spend two weeks working alongside farmers in the fields; meet with leaders of mass organizations, participants in the revolutionary struggle and volunteers in internationalist missions; and join hundreds of thousands at the annual May Day rally in Havana.

The brigade is an opportunity to learn how workers and farmers were able to overturn capitalist rule, establish their own government and set a living example for workers and farmers to emulate worldwide.

Nancy Boyasko contributed to this article.

Rising support for abortion rights forces Irish vote

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Ireland. In 2015 a change to the Constitution to legalize the right of same sex couples to marry was approved 62 to 38 percent. “It’s a historical day for Ireland,” Varadkar, then health minister, said at the time, “a social revolution.” He had come out as gay during the run-up to the vote.

Currently abortion is only allowed when a woman’s life is at immediate risk, but not even in cases of rape, incest or fatal fetal abnormality. Fear of prosecution makes doctors reluctant to use the procedure.

The fight heated up after Savita Halappanavar, a 31-year-old dentist, died on Oct. 28, 2012, after University Galway Hospital authorities refused to give her an abortion. She went to the hospital in extreme pain as she was having a miscarriage that was blocked. She got septicemia, several organs began to fail, but hospital authorities said there was nothing they could do, because Ireland is “a Catholic country.”

Within weeks protests were mounted in towns across Ireland, including in Galway. Some 10,000 people marched in Dublin, protesting her death and the constitution’s onerous restrictions on access to abortion.

“Several things came together in 2012. In the summer before Halappanavar’s death there was a quite active anti-choice campaign with posters going up all over Dublin,” Kavanagh said. “People reacted to both these things and the Abortion Rights Campaign was formally launched in January 2013.”

Sustained campaigning across the island — both in the North and the south — has placed abortion rights firmly on the agenda, despite opposition by the ruling parties and Roman Catholic Church. In Dublin, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael now say their members will have a free vote on repeal of the Eighth Amendment. In Northern Ireland, the Democratic Unionist Party and republican party Sinn Féin have both opposed extending to Northern Ireland a 1967

British law that legalized abortion. Sinn Féin last year did adopt a motion accepting “the need for the availability of abortion where a woman’s life, health or mental health is at serious risk.”

Demonstrations in Dublin, Belfast and London in September and October 2017 mobilized growing support for changing the law. Between 30,000 and 40,000 marched in Dublin.

More than 3,500 Irish women seeking abortions are estimated to travel abroad every year, an average of 12 per day. Most go to England.

The trip puts greater burdens on working women, because of the costs involved — up to £2,000 (\$2,765) for travel, accommodation and the procedure. Others can’t take time away from work. These women are left with two choices — take illegal abortion pills ordered online or give birth. The estimated three women who take the pills every

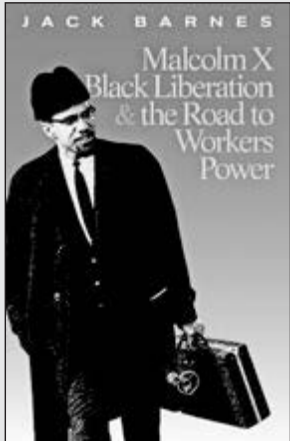
day live in the fear that some complication will force them to go to a doctor and face possible prosecution.

At least 700 women traveled from Northern Ireland to England in 2016 to get access to abortion. In June 2017 the U.K. government announced a decision to finance abortion costs for women from Northern Ireland who travel elsewhere in the U.K. to have the procedure. In October that was extended to cover travel costs in “hardship cases.”

The Abortion Rights Campaign is planning to mobilize to win the referendum. “We will have stalls out every weekend in Dublin and around the country,” Kavanagh said. “The response to our stalls is overwhelmingly positive. Most people appreciate having more information.” A protest is being organized March 8, assembling at 5:30 pm at the Garden of Remembrance and marching to the Dáil in Dublin.

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Workers in Finland pay for deal to make bosses stronger

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Thousands demonstrated in Helsinki Feb. 2 protesting laws that cut government aid to unemployed workers if they don't seek jobs "actively" enough. This is the latest step in an ongoing "Finland First" campaign to strengthen the capitalists' ability to compete against bosses abroad. The campaign is based on propaganda arguing Finland's workers and bosses have common interests.

In a brazen display of class collaboration, officials in the main national union federations bought into the campaign and signed onto the Competitiveness Pact in 2016. It spells out in no uncertain terms that it's the workers who carry the burden in sharpening the competitive edge of Finland's capitalists.

The deal froze wages; lengthened annual working hours; increased workers' contributions to pension, social security and unemployment funds; and lowered holiday bonuses. Union federations rep-

resenting some 85 percent of Finnish workers signed the agreement.

"Today we are making history in Finland. Only a few countries are able to make a decision this tough by a joint agreement," Prime Minister Juha Sipilä wrote when the unions signed the pact.

Now the government is moving to cut unemployment pay, as well as health care and local services. They say "we" need to sacrifice more to let the bosses take on their rivals. The Feb. 2 demonstration was called by the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, SAK, which represents 1 million workers.

Union head Jarkko Eloranta told the rally they had reluctantly supported the Competitiveness Pact, but part of the deal was government promises not to touch unemployment pay.

Union officials waited to call the demonstration until after the anti-working-class legislation had gone into effect.

FBI is enemy of the working class

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was bought and paid for by Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Democratic National Committee.

Christopher Anders, deputy director of the ACLU, claims Nunes' account is false. What Nunes recounts simply bears out the fact that FBI bosses — along with President Barack Obama's Department of Justice and the Hillary Clinton campaign — were trying to derail Donald Trump's campaign.

Democratic Congresswoman Jackie Spier called for defense of "our intelligence community" and its work seeking to buttress Mueller's "investigation" into whether Trump colluded with Moscow to influence the election. Like grand juries and all such bodies, the special counsel starts with a target and digs around for "evidence" to get them. Neither the FBI nor Mueller's freewheeling probe are "ours" as Spier claims.

The FBI was set up to defend the class interests of the capitalist rulers. It has been the spearhead of decades of attacks on working-class militants, Black rights fighters, opponents of Washington's wars and many others.

Historically, the liberals have led drives to attack political rights in the interests of the propertied rulers. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt unleashed the FBI on the Socialist Workers Party and others in the labor movement who were campaigning against the U.S. rulers' drive to make working people the cannon fodder in the fight for spoils in the second imperialist world war.

The FBI engineered the frame-up that imprisoned 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and others in the class-struggle leadership of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis.

In 1939 Roosevelt signed a secret executive order tasking the FBI with stamping out "subversive activities."

When Assistant Attorney General Robert Keuch was asked what that meant during the 1981 trial of the SWP's lawsuit that challenged decades of FBI attacks on the party, he said the White House was trying to stop those like the SWP "who were trying to influence public opinion to keep the United States out of war."

The secret FISA courts were set up so the FBI didn't have to go to a regular court to get a warrant, to keep its requests to target and spy on people veiled in secrecy. They are an integral part of the agency's frame-up operations.

They rubber stamp 99.99 percent of spying requests. The written request of the FBI's proposal for a warrant to wiretap an official of the Trump campaign remains under wraps.

Olympic talks blow to US moves against NKorea

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attended the Olympics, shunned all contact with the North Korean delegation. But on his way back from Pyeongchang, he told the press that if North Korea wants "to talk, we'll talk."

At the same time, "the maximum pressure campaign is going to continue and intensify," Pence said, referring to draconian sanctions imposed on North Korea by Washington, until DPRK leaders "are actually doing something that the alliance [of Tokyo, Seoul and Washington] believes represents a meaningful step toward denuclearization."

He said Washington was planning another round of yet harsher sanctions. The U.S. rulers have succeeded in getting the U.N., China and other capitalist governments to join in the pressure.

Even as Washington tightens the economic screws on North Korea, President Donald Trump agreed to Moon's request to postpone provocative annual joint U.S.-South Korean military war games until after the Olympics and following Paralympic Games end. This removed the last obstacle to a united Korean team. The war games are scheduled to begin in April, but South Korean daily *Hankyoreh* reported the government is considering proposing to reduce their scale and duration.

Washington also agreed with South Korean leaders to temporarily lift some sanctions for the Olympics, including a ban on international travel for North Korean sports officials.

Since 2016, the United Nations Security Council at U.S. urging has approved five resolutions that impose some of the toughest sanctions in the world on the

Arrest cop who refused Andrew Kearsé medical help!



John Carl D'Annibale/Times Union

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. — "Justice for Andrew Kearsé!" chanted 100 participants in a Feb. 10 march here, demanding arrest of the cop who ignored Kearsé's repeated pleas for medical help. Kearsé, a 36-year-old man from the Bronx, died of a heart attack in the back of a cop car last May 11. Holding pictures of Kearsé, handmade signs and battery-powered candles, protesters marched from the First United Methodist Church to the police headquarters.

Kearsé's wife, Angelique Negroni-Kearsé, speaking above, told participants she saw the police dashcam video last month. She watched her husband repeatedly say that he can't breathe and plead for medical care. Protesters demanded public release of the video and arrest of the unidentified officer who refused Kearsé's requests for help.

Other speakers included Jamaica Miles, lead organizer for Citizen Action of New York Capital District, and Hawk Newsome from Black Lives Matter of Greater New York. Both groups helped organize the protest. A group of students from Union College came, including representatives from Campus Action and the Black Student Union. Accelerators, Democratic Socialists of America and the Socialist Workers Party also took part.

The State Police and the New York State Attorney General's Office are currently investigating Kearsé's death. In November, Negroni-Kearsé filed legal notice that she intends to sue the city for \$25 million.

— SAMUEL ZINS

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in addition to the even harsher unilateral U.S. sanctions. These restrictions hurt working people the most.

U.S. provokes Korean War

Korea was split in two by Washington, with the connivance of Moscow, as the second imperialist world war wound down in 1945. The war ended with Washington dropping atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, the only time nuclear weapons have been used.

As workers and peasants in the north carried through a social and political revolution, the U.S. military crushed a popular movement in the south, killing tens of thousands. In 1950 Washington provoked what became the Korean War. As U.S. forces drove into the north, the Chinese government sent troops to aid the Koreans. In April 1951 President Harry Truman sent nine nuclear bombs to Okinawa for use against North Korean and Chinese troops.

The U.S. rulers ultimately decided not to use them. What stopped Washington wasn't fear of nuclear retaliation — neither China nor North Korea had atomic bombs — but fear of the political cost they would pay because of the deep opposition of working people around the world to nuclear weapons.

Even without nuclear weapons, Washington's war left North Korea devastated, with more than 4 million dead, including 2 million civilians.

With help from Beijing, U.S. forces were pushed back to the 38th parallel, dealing U.S. imperialism its first ever military defeat.

That resistance enabled the North Korean people not just to fight the U.S. rulers into a stalemate, but to hold the moral high ground.

In the face of unrelenting U.S. hostility for more than 80 years — including U.S. refusal to sign a peace treaty after the war, a refusal that stands today — the North Korean government says that having a nuclear arsenal is crucial to protect the country from a U.S. nuclear strike.

But the development and possession of those arms over the last several years — and threats by the DPRK government to turn South Korea and the United States into "a sea of fire" — have given Washington a handle to turn history on its head and claim that North Korea is the threat to the world, not U.S. imperialism.

The Socialist Workers Party joins the Korean people to call for a nonnuclear Korean Peninsula and Pacific, and demands the U.S. rulers unilaterally destroy their entire nuclear arsenal today!

— Socialist Workers Party statement —

- For recognition of a Palestinian state and of Israel
- For repeal of U.S. Jerusalem Embassy Act
- For workers' solidarity in Israel, Palestine, the world over

Download text of statement at www.themilitant.com

Chinese Cubans and Cuba's socialist revolution: Lessons for workers on how to fight and win

Book presented at Havana int'l book fair where China was 2018 country of honor

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND ELLIE GARCÍA

HAVANA — “From the contributions of our ancestors in the 1800s down to this time, Chinese Cubans have been an integral part of each and every stage of Cuban history,” said Gen. Gustavo Chui. “We continue to contribute today.”

Chui was speaking at the Feb. 6 presentation of a new edition of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* during the Havana International Book Fair. The book, published by Pathfinder Press in Spanish and English, is based on interviews with Revolutionary Armed Forces Generals Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong. More than 100 presentations of the book have taken place in the Americas, Asia, Europe, Africa and

**REMARKS BY
Mary-Alice Waters,
Gustavo Chui,
Harry Villegas**
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the Mideast, since 2006.

The event was one of hundreds of book launchings, poetry readings, panels, films, art exhibits, children's plays and concerts during the annual literary festival here. Over 11 days the fair drew some 450,000 workers, youth and others. In coming weeks it will travel to every province before closing May 13 in Santiago de Cuba. This year the fair was dedicated to Eusebio Leal, the longtime Historian of the City of Havana.

Fair highlights Chinese culture

China was the book fair's 2018 country of honor. A delegation of more than 130 took part in dozens of events at the fair, in Havana's Chinatown and across the city highlighting Chinese culture — from book presentations to music, dance, acrobatics and Chinese opera. The Artistic Ensemble from China's Shandong province performed twice at the Alicia Alonso National Theater. The large China pavilion included books by Chinese authors translated to Spanish, an exhibit on the invention of paper and printing in ancient China, documentaries and a stand where throngs of Cubans got their names written in Chinese calligraphy.

The fair's daily program included books on the history of the Chinese in Cuba and panels organized by Chinese Cuban associations based in Chinatown. One was a 90th anniversary tribute to *Kwong Wah Po*, the longest-running Chinese-language newspaper in Cuba. Originally a daily, it is now a monthly with a page in Chinese and several in Spanish.

The presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written* drew a standing-room-only audience who came to hear the story told by the three generals. Among the more than 100 present were combatants who had fought alongside

Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong in Cuba's 1956-58 revolutionary war and are now members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. Also attending were Caridad Diego, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and president of the Cuba-China Friendship Society, and a delegation representing the 13 Chinese associations long established here.

The speakers were Gen. Chui, Gen. Harry Villegas, and Mary-Alice Waters, Pathfinder president and editor of the book. Also on the platform were Gen. Choy and Iraida Aguirrechú, editor of the Cuban edition published by Editora Política.

“Above all, this is a book about the Cuban Revolution,” said chairperson Martín Koppel, who was responsible for Pathfinder's Spanish-language edition, in opening the event. Noting that it was first published 12 years ago, he called attention to the added photos and footnotes, updated glossary, and new foreword by Wang Lusha, translator of the 2008 Chinese edition.

Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong recount how as youth in the mid-1950s they joined the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army, which, led by Fidel Castro, spearheaded the revolutionary struggle that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959. Their victory opened the door to the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

The generals describe their experiences in Cuba's internationalist mission in Angola from 1975 to 1991, which helped defeat invasions by South Africa's white-supremacist regime. They explain how the Cuban people and revolutionary leadership met the challenges of the economic crisis of the 1990s, when Cuba abruptly lost most foreign trade after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

When the book first appeared, Chui was part of the national leadership of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution; today he is president of the Casino Chung Wah, the umbrella organization of Chinese associations in Cuba. Choy, now retired, organized the administration of the port of Havana. Sío Wong, who died



China was country of honor at 2018 Havana International Book Fair. **Top photo:** One of many cultural events by members of China's 130-person delegation. **Second photo:** Armando Choy (left), and Gustavo Chui at Feb. 6 book launch of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. **Third photo:** (from left) Martín Koppel, Mary-Alice Waters, Harry Villegas and Iraida Aguirrechú at Feb. 6 event. **Bottom:** Chui and Choy sign books for meeting participants.

in 2010, was president of the National Institute of State Reserves and of the Cuba-China Friendship Association.

Example for workers worldwide

Mary-Alice Waters, a National Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S., focused on the worldwide impact of the book, as communist workers have organized to

make it available in some two dozen countries. She highlighted the wide circulation of the Farsi-language translation of *Our History Is Still Being Written* in Iran and Afghanistan.

How can we explain this broad interest? Waters asked. “Above all, the explanation is the Cuban Revolution itself.”

This is especially true, she said, given the political awakening among working people everywhere today “whose lives have been shattered by economic and social devastation, by the cumulative consequences, of capitalism's deepening world crisis. And this includes the United States.” They are searching for answers, for alternatives to this capitalist world order. “That is the source of the interest in this book,” Waters said, “and why it is needed by those on the front lines of the class struggle, wherever they may be.”

As recounted in the book, “Cuba's socialist revolution stands as the practical lesson for our class of how to fight and, most importantly, of the only course that can win against the immense power and brutality of our class enemy.”

Cuba's unique history

Chui highlighted the historical significance of Chinese immigration to Cuba. More than 140,000 were brought as indentured labor in the 19th century, as the Spanish colonial rulers sought to augment the dwindling supply of African slaves and boost output on Cuba's vast sugar plantations. The Chinese were a weighty component in forging the Cuban nation, he said.

During Cuba's 30-year war for independence from Spain, the liberation army, which also fought to abolish slavery and bonded labor, included all-Chinese battalions. It had military leaders such as José Tolón and José Bu, who due to their outstanding record were among only four foreign-born Cubans who earned the right to be eligible to run for president of

Cuba in the 1901 elections, Chui said.

During the fair, many visitors to the Pathfinder stand who saw *Our History Is Still Being Written* expressed pride in their Chinese roots. They were interested in reading the three generals' first-hand accounts of the conditions Chinese and blacks faced in capitalist Cuba, and how, through a socialist revolution, the

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‘Why has this book found such interest worldwide? The answer is Cuba’s revolution itself’

Below are remarks by Mary-Alice Waters, Gustavo Chui and Harry Villegas (Pombo) at the Feb. 6 presentation during the Havana International Book Fair of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. They were joined on the platform by Armando Choy, Iraida Aguirrechu and Martín Koppel. All six are identified in the news article on page 5.

The talk by Waters is copyright © 2018 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission. The translations of Chui’s and Villegas’ remarks are by the *Militant*.

‘A book for workers searching for an alternative to capitalism’

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Thank you, Martín, for the introductions.

And a warm welcome to all of you here with us today, including Caridad García, president of the Cuba-China Friendship Association; the large delegation representing the leadership of the Casino Chung Wah and other associations of the Chinese Cuban community in Havana; and members of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, including those who fought alongside Choy, Chui, and Sio Wong in the Rebel Army and other missions and responsibilities over the years.

It is good to be among so many friends we have known and worked with for well over a decade, including Pombo and Iraida, and so many new faces as well.

Of course, I want to address a special thank-you to Generals Chui and Choy.

It was 16 years ago that Iraida, Martín, and I sat down with Choy, Chui, and Gen. Sio Wong — who we all miss so greatly — in the office of Gen. Harry Villegas, then the executive secretary of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. That turned out to be the first of many interviews that, four years later, had been transformed into this book.

To all of you I want to say it has been an honor — and a pleasure — to work with you, to come to know you, over these years.

And we’ve had fun, haven’t we?

We traveled the length and breadth of Cuba together to talk about the revolutionary course of the Cuban people that this book brings to life. Those were meetings in which hundreds participated — some 250 in Santiago de Cuba alone — and others in Matanzas, Santo Domingo, Fomento, Santa Clara, Guanajay, Ciego de Avila, Holguín, Bayamo, Quemado de Güines, and Corralillo.

Over the years, we’ve had meetings at nearly a dozen different places in Havana. The Havana International Book Fair in 2006. The Casa de Artes y Tradiciones Chinas [House of Chinese Arts and Traditions]. Multiple meetings in different municipalities with the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. Others on university campuses and high schools. And then Tarará in 2009, where more than 1,000 Chinese youth were studying at the time.

Martín and I learned a great deal from all of you in the course of those activities.

I want to focus my remarks today, however, on the impact the contents of this book — which is truly an introduction to the Cuban Revolution — has had outside Cuba. Not only in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom,

and other countries where English is the dominant language such as Australia and New Zealand, but quite literally around the world.

It is safe to say that no other book published by Pathfinder Press in recent years has had such broad international circulation.

Impact the world over

In addition to the editions in English and Spanish published in the U.S. in 2005 by Pathfinder, a Chinese edition was published in 2008, a Cuban edition by Editora Política in 2010 and a Farsi edition in Iran in 2006 by the publisher Talaye Porsoo. A French-language edition by Pathfinder will come off the presses later this year.

Altogether more than 15,000 copies have already been sold — not counting books sold in China! We know the first run of some thousands of the Chinese edition sold out and a second run was printed, but we never learned the total number.

Well over 100 presentations have taken place in cities and on university campuses around the world, in which more than 5,000 people participated. The truth is we stopped keeping track after 100 events!

These panel discussions, book fairs, academic conferences, and other special activities have taken place in some two dozen countries — including Venezuela, Panama, the People’s Republic of China (with presentations in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong), Singapore, Malaysia, Japan; youth festivals in South Africa, Ecuador, and Russia; Cuba solidarity events and book fairs in Egypt, Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Namibia, Equatorial Guinea, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Haiti.

And I’m sure I’ve left some out!

One of the largest meetings of all — some 300 — took place in Vancouver, Canada, where more than a quarter of the population in the city proper is Chinese. There were multiple meetings in Toronto, whose Chinese population is over 1 million, and then in 2010 Choy joined us for a very successful tour in the French-speaking city of Montreal.

In the U.S. alone, where unfortunately the authors were prevented by Washington from joining us, meetings took place in more than 27 cities and on an equal number of university campuses, from one corner of the country to another.

Iran, Afghanistan, Kurdistan

I want to make a special mention of the Farsi-language translation of the book. Today it is sold not only at book fairs and in bookstores in more than 30

Continued on page 8



Militant/Jonathan Silberman



Militant/John Steele



Militant/Martin Koppel



Militant



Militant/Linda Joyce



‘We learned to be revolutionaries as fighters in the Rebel Army’

BY GUSTAVO CHUI

The book whose second edition we are presenting today is more than a history of three Chinese Cubans in the Cuban Revolution. It’s a tribute to the contribution of Chinese immigrants who, since their arrival in Cuba in the 19th century, struggled tenaciously to settle in our country, to become part of its people, to identify with and fight for the same ideals as all Cubans — ever since the war of independence from Spain, the U.S.-dominated republic, the revolutionary war in the Sierra Maestra, and later after the triumph of the revolution.

That’s why we say our history is still being written. From the contributions of our ancestors in the 1800s down to this time, Chinese Cubans have been an integral part of each and every stage of Cuban history. We continue to contribute today.

When we began the interviews for this book, we really had no idea the impact it would have. One interview, that’s it, we thought. But after the first interview, they kept asking question after question, as the chair said. The next year came, and there were yet more questions. “Good Lord!” I said. “We’re never going to be done.”

When we began work on the book, we were thinking it was just for us in Cuba. Later we came to realize it was really a book for people around the world. It led to a deeper knowledge of our revolution in countries where it circulated in various languages.

The three of us didn’t really know each other during the revolutionary war. By an accident of history, each of us came from a different area in Cuba. [Moisés] Sio Wong was from the west. He was born in San Pedro de Mayabón to a family of 12. When he was a child his parents moved to Havana. And that’s where he became active as a revolutionary.

My dear compañero [Armando] Choy is from Fomento. He was born there but moved at an early age to Santa Clara, where his father had a small business.

Me, I’m from Santiago de Cuba and grew up like most other Chinese kids there. We weren’t the poorest of the poor, we weren’t starving, but we did experience the objective reality of what the country was going through in those days.

What did we know at the time we joined the struggle? Were we Marxists? Were we revolutionaries? No. In reality we were illiterate — culturally, politically and ideologically.

I first learned about Fidel at the time of the attack on the Moncada barracks. One day, very early in the morning, we heard gunshots. The carnival was going on in Santiago de Cuba, and we thought the shots were fireworks. That’s the soldiers having fun with some fireworks, we said.

After a while we began to see jeeps loaded with soldiers wearing helmets — that’s strange, we thought. A little later word spread there was shooting going on at the Moncada barracks.

We thought the soldiers were fighting among themselves. Later we learned that Fidel had attacked Moncada. But we didn’t know who he was.

That was the beginning of our revolutionary education. We saw how viciously the soldiers mistreated us and murdered compañeros at that time. There were some compañeros who lived in my neighborhood. And then I joined and became involved as a revolutionary.

We went up to the Sierra Maestra mountains. We began to *become* revolutionaries when we joined the struggle there.

It was Fidel who taught us to be revolutionaries. Along with Raúl [Castro] and all our leaders, like [Juan] Almeida, and Guillermo [García], who was my immediate superior. But at first we weren’t yet revolutionaries. We were learning.

Today, we have deeply rooted political convictions, and we are defending the revolution at all costs against the U.S. empire.

The large number of Chinese who arrived in the 19th century — some

140,000 — played a decisive role in our society. There is a saying in Cuba: “Whoever doesn’t have some Congo in them has some Carabali” [two African peoples]. And I sometimes say to compañeros, “No — and some Chinese too.”

Because you can’t talk about our society if you don’t also talk about the Chinese. There were Cubans of Chinese descent who fought in the war of independence. The Chinese are an integral part of our society.

I didn’t know this book had reached so many countries. So much the better!

‘A vision of how to help others understand Cuba’s revolution’

BY HARRY VILLEGAS

I want to thank the compañeros of Pathfinder who invited me to be with you this afternoon, with the combatants here, with Choy and Chui. And there’s something that members of the leadership of the Association of Revolutionary Combatants cannot forget — at that time our organization was headed by Juan Almeida.¹

Books like this represent precisely Almeida’s vision of the future. He put great emphasis on publishing some of the history of members of the association as a way, an enjoyable and fruitful way, to help those outside Cuba understand the revolution.

Today, as we heard the results of getting this book out, we were astounded. It struck Chui the same way it did me. It’s immense — the list of places this book has gone as a voice of the Cuban Revolution. The fact that it has reached so many young people around the world, all through the efforts of those who produced it.

How Almeida’s hopes have been realized! They have been realized much more broadly than we thought.

I personally feel very happy to have lived and worked alongside Chui, Choy and Sio Wong.

Chui and I weren’t combatants together during the revolutionary war. We were comrades in the broad sense, because we were members of the Rebel Army. But we weren’t part of the same front.

With Sio Wong, I had a little closer connection. We were together in the mountains. We were part of Column 8, the invading column under Che’s leadership. And we were together in the entire Las Villas campaign.²

With Choy, after completing the invasion I had the privilege and opportunity of getting to know him during the Battle of Santa Clara. I don’t mean the city of Santa Clara alone, but the entire campaign in Las Villas province — all its municipalities — and the integration into Column 8 of the July 26th Movement members already there.

These three compañeros were later part of internationalist missions. In one place or another, we were all part of these missions.

I think this new edition of *Our History Is Still Being Written* is important because there are many young Cubans who aren’t familiar with these events, with how humble people, normal people — which is what we all were — made the revolution. Our revolution was made by the Cuban people.

Before the revolution, Chinese faced particular discrimination, as did blacks — it was even greater against blacks. When a people rebel, all those who are part of the people become involved. So you had Chinese, you had blacks, you had those whose ancestors came from Spain. Together they made the revolution.

And I think that this book, the story of the three generals, clearly leaves us with a saying that’s a household word for Cubans: “No Chinese Cuban was a traitor.”³

That’s what I meant when I said I’m proud to be with these three, and to have fought alongside them.

- 1 Juan Almeida (1927–2009) took part in the 1953 attack on the Moncada barracks and 1956 *Granma* expedition, turning points in the revolutionary struggle led by Fidel Castro. He was a Rebel Army commander and, after the 1959 victory, had central leadership responsibilities in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, Council of State and Communist Party.
- 2 In August 1958 Ernesto Che Guevara led a column of 140 in a march from the Sierra Maestra mountains to Las Villas province, 370 miles west. As combatants under Fidel Castro defeated Batista’s troops in eastern Cuba, Guevara’s column captured the provincial capital, Santa Clara, Jan. 1, 1959, helping to seal the fate of the Batista dictatorship.
- 3 A monument in Havana is inscribed with the words of General Gonzalo de Quesada, a leader of the war of independence: “There was not a single Chinese deserter. There was not a single Chinese traitor.”

Our History Is Still Being Written has been presented in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Farsi at events — and is found in bookshops — the world over.

Top, left to right: Havana book fair, February 2006, with (right to left) Moisés Sio Wong, Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and then Vice President José Ramón Fernández; Montreal, March 15, 2010, greeting Choy (center, light jacket) at airport for speaking tour; Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan region of Iraq, July 2017, where the book (center, on table) is one of Pathfinder titles sold at biggest bookstore; Caracas, November 2006, Waters talks with participants at event during Venezuela International Book Fair.

Bottom, left to right: Havana, June 2007, participants view photos from book at Chinatown meeting; San Francisco, September 2006, with Ling-chi Wang, founder, International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas, speaking and Mary-Alice Waters at right; Beijing, March 2009, launching Spanish and Chinese editions, with Li Xiaolin of Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries at podium.

Chinese Cubans

Continued from page 5

new workers and farmers government took decisive steps to uproot racist discrimination and superexploitation.

Chui, who grew up in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba, described how he and others came to join the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro.

‘Didn’t start as revolutionaries’

“Were we Marxists? Were we revolutionaries?” Chui asked. “No. In reality we were illiterate — culturally, politically, and ideologically.” It wasn’t until we went up to the Sierra Maestra mountains and joined the struggle, he said, that this began to change. It was Fidel and other leaders “who taught us to be revolutionaries.”

Chui said it was Gen. Harry Villegas, known by his nom de guerre Pombo, who, as executive secretary of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, arranged the interviews that led to *Our History Is Still Being Written*. Like Chui, Choy, and Sio Wong, Villegas fought in Cuba’s revolutionary war and served in Angola.

Villegas paid tribute to Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida for his “vision,” as president of the Combatants Association at the time, to encourage publication of such firsthand accounts. Almeida saw it as a way “to help those outside Cuba understand the revolution,” Pombo said.

Villegas said that he, like Chui, was astounded by how widely the book has circulated worldwide, a realization of Almeida’s vision far beyond their expectations. Another such account is Villegas’ *Cuba and Angola: The War for Freedom*, published by Pathfinder in 2017.

These books are important in Cuba too, Villegas said. “There are many young Cubans who aren’t familiar with these events, with how humble people, normal people — which is what we all were — made the revolution.”

Before then, “Chinese and blacks faced particular discrimination,” Villegas said. “It was even greater against blacks. When a people rebel, all those who are part of the people become involved. So you had Chinese, you had blacks, you had those whose ancestors came from Spain.

“Together they made the revolution.”

Lessons for workers

Continued from page 6

cities of Iran, but in other regions of the Middle East where the Persian language is read. The distribution spreads from parts of Iraq to Afghanistan, where Farsi — or Dari as it is known there — is the most widely spoken language in the country. There is a large bookstore in the center of Kabul itself where you can buy this book!

To give you some idea of the importance of getting books like this into Afghanistan, a publisher there in recent years has sold more than 1,000 copies of another Pathfinder title in Farsi translation, *How Far We Slaves Have Come!* It includes the speeches by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro in Matanzas, Cuba, on July 26, 1991, at the time that Mandela came to thank the Cuban people for their unparalleled contribution to the liberation of southern Africa from the yoke of apartheid.

It will come as no surprise to those of you here that just three days ago, an article appeared in the *New York Times*, one of the major voices of the U.S. imperialist rulers, expressing amazement that there are so many Afghanis who love to read! It's the same contemptuous ignorance the U.S. ruling families have about working people in Cuba — and in the U.S.

Our History Is Still Being Written was also distributed last year at the international book fair in Erbil, in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq, a few kilometers from what were then the front lines of battle in Mosul. And it is today on the shelves of the largest bookshop in Sulaymaniyah in eastern Kurdistan.

I don't need to explain to this audience how important it is that the true history and example of the men and women who made Cuba's socialist revolution — and who have defended it for 60 years — is known in those war-torn parts of the world, where the imperialist powers and their capitalist collaborators in the region have wreaked such devastation and misery on working people.

Why such interest?

How can we explain such broad interest in a book about the lives of three Chinese Cuban generals?

Above all, the explanation is the Cuban Revolution itself.

But to that we have to add something that is often not seen or understood clearly. A broad political awakening has begun among working people every-

where whose lives have been shattered by the economic and social devastation, by the cumulative consequences, of capitalism's deepening international crisis. And this includes the United States.

Working people are searching for answers and alternatives to a world order they don't yet fully understand. A world of perpetual wars and deepening exploitation. Of racism and other forms of discrimination and oppression used by the capitalist owners to divide and weaken us. Of the pervasive and unstoppable destruction of land and labor — the source of all wealth — by the domination of the market and blind workings of the law of value.

That is the source of the interest in a book like *Our History Is Still Being Written* and why it is needed by those on the front lines of the class struggle, wherever they may be.

The example of the Cuban Revolution is not only a moral one, as important as that is. It is our only *living* example of the revolutionary morality of the working class on the road to its emancipation — of the political centrality of those working-class values and outlook.

Cuba's socialist revolution stands as the practical lesson for our class of how to fight and, most importantly, of the only course that can win against the immense power and brutality of our class enemy.

Foreword by Chinese translator

I want to end with a few words about the excellent foreword that appears in Spanish and English for the first time in this new edition of the book. It was written in 2008 as an afterword to the Chinese edition of the book by its translator, Wang Lusha. And it captures in a powerful way what we are talking about today.

First a word about the translation and how it came to be. We've never had the pleasure to meet the translator. He works in the Chinese TV and film industry, where he wrote the script for a 28-part TV series on the Chinese in Cuba.

When the first edition of the book came off the press at the beginning of 2006, a Chinese TV crew had been working in Cuba preparing the multipart TV series. Sio Wong asked the director if he could help get the book translated and published in China. "Yes," gladly, the director said, and two years later the book appeared.



Courtesy Armando Choy

Armando Choy (back, second from right) with fellow Rebel Army combatants, late 1958. They were part of "an immense popular struggle that transformed millions," says Mary-Alice Waters.

Chinatown event welcomes Chinese Cuban generals



Militant/Carole Lesnick

HAVANA — The House of Chinese Arts and Traditions in Chinatown here hosted a presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The*

Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution. The Feb. 13 event drew 60 working people, students and artists who use the cultural center, including members of Havana's Chinese associations. Chen Xi, China's ambassador to Cuba, was a featured speaker; he was joined by embassy political counselor Yao Fei. On panel from right are Mary-Alice Waters; Chen Xi (speaking); chair Martín Koppel; Gen. Gustavo Chui; Gen. Armando Choy; and Iraida Aguirrechú.

— CAROLE LESNICK

In his foreword Wang Lusha explains that he first encountered the name Moisés Sio Wong while surfing the internet. He was studying abroad at the time, first in the Netherlands, and then in New Zealand. In both countries he had encountered firsthand the anti-Chinese discrimination and prejudice he had never known before, of which he gives numerous examples. It made him doubt his own capacities, he writes — his own worth as a human being.

But "one man changed my way of thinking." And "that man was General Moisés Sio Wong."

When Wang Lusha read on the internet that in Cuba someone of Chinese descent was a general of the armed forces, an aide to Raúl Castro, a deputy to the National Assembly, he thought it must be what today is called "fake news." His experiences abroad had taught him it simply wasn't possible that someone who was Chinese could be so respected and hold such high responsibilities outside China!

Then "by pure coincidence," he says, a friend in Christchurch, New Zealand, where he was studying, gave him a copy of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

Of course it wasn't "by pure coincidence." Communists in New Zealand, supporters of Pathfinder, had a book center there and were selling the newly published book as broadly as possible at workplaces, universities, and political events. The author of the foreword writes:

I felt overwhelmed as I read through the pages of the book. I discovered that, in addition to General Sio Wong, there are many other Chinese who made remarkable contributions in Cuba. ... These included José Wong, José Bu, José Tolón, Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and many more. ...

So I asked myself, what happened in Cuba that gave Chinese the status and positions they enjoy today, something they are denied in other countries?

And Wang Lusha answers his own question by citing the response given by

Sio Wong in the pages of this book.

The difference between the experience of the Chinese in Cuba and those in other countries of the diaspora, says Sio Wong, is that

Here a socialist revolution took place. The revolution uprooted discrimination based on the color of a person's skin. That's because, above all, we overturned the property relations that create not only economic but also social inequality between rich and poor.

That's what made it possible for the son of Chinese immigrants to become a government representative, or anything else.

Uniqueness of Cuba

Around the world those who have come to know the truth through the words of Chui, Choy, and Sio Wong are stunned by that reality. Cuba is the only country in the world where large numbers of Chinese settled yet today there is no discrimination against them. There is no "glass ceiling" and no ghetto here. No occupation or level of responsibility from which Cubans of Chinese ancestry are excluded, or to which they are relegated.

As all of you are well aware, the president of the National Assembly of Peoples Power, Esteban Lazo, is a Cuban of Chinese and African descent.

Like Wang Lusha, on learning the truth, many begin asking, "Why is this so?" As Choy, Chui, and Sio Wong explain, the reason Cuba is different is that here an immense popular struggle took place that transformed millions of men and women, like many of you in this room today, young and old, as you fought and continue fighting to lay the foundations of a new economic, social, and moral order.

And that is why your example, and books that carry that truth, are so necessary in the world today.

As Choy says in the words that conclude this book, "Yes, a better world is possible. But only with a socialist revolution."

Israel-Iran rulers clash in Syria

Continued from front page

Iran's counterrevolutionary cleric-led regime has expanded its influence in Syria, establishing a route Tehran can use to send materiel to its forces there and to its Hezbollah ally in Lebanon.

Tehran has also signed deals with the Assad government for mining rights and to set up air and sea bases in Syria. The Iranian rulers confront working-class unrest as a consequence of body bags coming home carrying working-class youth killed in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. But they have no intention of halting their intervention, having made substantial gains in the fighting.

The Israeli rulers say they will not accept a permanent presence of Iran's Revolutionary Guard forces and Hezbollah and other Shiite militias groups organized and armed near Israel's border. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Russian President Vladimir Putin in January that Tel Aviv will "act accordingly" to drive Tehran back and prevent Iran's rulers from aiding Hezbollah in producing advanced weaponry in Syria or neighboring Lebanon. Israeli forces have consistently launched airstrikes against convoys it says Tehran is running through Syria to Lebanon.

With Washington's backing, the Israeli rulers waged a murderous war against Lebanon in 2006, with the goal of decimating Hezbollah. They attacked shortly after Assad ended the Syrian rulers' 29-year occupation of Lebanon. At its peak, Damascus had 30,000 troops stationed there. They fought against both Israeli troops and various Lebanese political factions.

As Iran's counterrevolutionary regime consolidated its rule in the early 1980s, it began efforts to establish allies in the region. One of their first moves was to set Hezbollah up in Lebanon and aid the outfit in targeting Israeli troops that had invaded that country.

Last month Israeli officials announced plans to build a new class of medium-range missiles that can target Hezbollah. Tel Aviv is also building a wall along Israel's Lebanon border.

The Israeli government has made it clear they will take whatever steps they deem necessary to keep Hezbollah and Revolutionary Guard troops away from its border. "There are no limitations," Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman told the *Jerusalem*

Post Feb. 13. "This is not the time to bark, this is the time to bite."

Alongside Tel Aviv, the U.S. capitalist rulers are also determined to counter Tehran's rising influence in Syria. On Feb. 7 U.S. forces launched air and artillery strikes at Syrian government forces and a Tehran-backed Afghan militia that were attempting to retake oilfields held by the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces in Deir el-Zour province. Washington, with 2,000 troops and its air power, and the Kurdish-led SDF control over a quarter of Syria, including most of its oil fields, which were taken in beating back Islamic State. The airstrikes stopped the attack, killing 100 of the pro-Assad fighters..

At the same time, Assad's forces, backed by Moscow's air power, are carrying out brutal bombing assaults on opposition-held areas in the eastern Ghouta suburb of Damascus and the northwestern province of Idlib. They and their Tehran-backed allies have besieged eastern Ghouta for five years. With food and medicine almost out, many among the 400,000 people living there face starvation.

Stock gyrations sign of capitalism's crisis today

Continued from front page

have led to a contraction in investment in capacity-expanding plant equipment and employment. Instead, the propertied owners have sought higher returns by speculating in stocks, bonds, derivatives and other forms of financial paper.

Among these "products" are a range of highly leveraged investments called exchange-traded funds and notes. Last week one of these notes — based on betting against volatility in stock prices — "went from being one of the world's most lucrative investments in 2017 to being wiped out, and implosion rippled through global markets," reported the *Financial Times*.

While the capitalist families and their meritocratic flacks watch the market gyrations with trepidation, workers continue to face crisis conditions. The uptick in capitalist production and hiring is good for workers and their self-confidence. More workers are finding or changing jobs, looking for higher pay and better conditions. But life is still hard for many.

Protest Turkish rulers' war against Kurds in Afrin!



Militant/Frank Gorton

Protests in Toronto, above, and worldwide continue against the Turkish rulers' weekslong bombardment and invasion of the Kurdish province of Afrin in northwest Syria. Ankara's forces and their Free Syrian Army allies continue to make little progress in the mountainous terrain and against the popular support for the Kurdish-backed government there. Scores of Kurds from the Sheikh Maqoud district of the nearby Syrian city of Aleppo have joined the defense.

Moscow controls Afrin's airspace and gave the Turkish rulers a green light for the invasion. Washington also signaled agreement, asking only that Ankara make it "limited in scope and duration." The capitalist rulers of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey all seek to block their own Kurdish populations from fighting for their national rights.

— TERRY EVANS

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