

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Jim Spaul: 30 years building
the communist movement**

— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 83/NO. 16 APRIL 22, 2019

SWP moves out to expand political reach of the party

BY BETSEY STONE

REEDLEY, Calif. — Socialist Workers Party members and supporters from the Bay Area and Los Angeles spent two days in California's agricultural heartland, the Central Valley, April 6-7. They knocked on doors to meet and get to know fellow working people here and in Kingsburg and Raisin City.

They discussed with workers on their doorsteps and passed out flyers with the party's program. People they talked with bought seven books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and two subscribed to the *Militant*.

Party members and supporters, and members of the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K., are engaged in a seven-week effort to expand the political reach of the party and the paper and books they circulate, and to raise \$115,000 to meet the *Militant's* operating costs. They look to exchange views and share experiences with workers and farmers, small producers and other toilers, in cities, towns and farming communities.

Continued on page 3

Rail barons slash training, safety in move to boost profits

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Freight rail bosses across North America are cutting training time and standards — on top of reducing crew size and running much longer trains — to save money and boost profits, regardless of the risks to the safety of rail workers and the surrounding communities.

Teamsters Canada Rail Conference, the union that organizes rail workers there, says new engineer training has been cut in half to three months, with no experience operating in winter conditions. The union called on Transport Canada, the government agency responsible for rail regulation, to intervene. But the agency, which usually functions as a shill for the rail bosses, said that "there were no safety issues" with the abbreviated training!

A Canadian Broadcast Corporation article, published in March 2017 that's being widely recirculated today, exposes the sharply truncated training imposed by Canadian Pacific Railway. The article has received renewed interest as other railroad bosses are following suit.

Entitled, "They Are Scared": CP

Continued on page 9

Workers protest gov't raid at factory in Texas

Demonstrate against ICE arrest of 284 workers



Kera News/Anthony Cave

Protesters outside factory in Allen, Texas, during April 3 immigration raid. Immigration and local cops surrounded plant, detaining 284 workers, in largest factory raid in decade.

BY GEORGE CHALMERS

ALLEN, Texas — Two hundred Immigration and Customs Enforcement police and local cops surrounded the CVE Technology Group factory here April 3 and arrested 284

immigration cops detained 389 immigrant workers at the Agriprocessors Inc. meatpacking plant in Postville, Iowa.

**MARCH MAY 1 FOR DRIVER'S
LICENSES, AMNESTY!**
— SWP campaign statement p. 9

workers. They were accused of not being authorized to work in the U.S.

It was the largest single site immigration raid since May 2008, when

The cops shouted, "Don't move. Don't make us shoot," Amalia Martínez, a worker at the Allen plant, told Univisión TV. The bosses "didn't say anything," she said. "It's as if they were in favor.

Continued on page 9

Protests in Sudan, London demand fall of Omar al-Bashir government



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Several thousand protesters in London April 6 demonstrate in solidarity with massive wave of protests across Sudan calling for ouster of regime of President Omar al-Bashir.

BY HUGO WILS

LONDON — "The reason we're all here in the U.K. is because of the regime of President Omar al-Bashir in Sudan. Everyone here has a similar story," Ahmed Mustapha, a physician working for the National Health Service, told the *Militant* as several

thousand converged in London April 6. They mobilized in solidarity with the massive wave of protests across Sudan against the Bashir government. The actions are fueled by years of hardship and war confronting millions of working people there.

Continued on page 8

Dozens at meeting in Kurdistan region debate road to women's emancipation

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

SULAYMANIYAH, Kurdistan Region, Iraq — "It's important to share experiences, especially at a time when a great crisis of the capitalist 'world order' is unfolding

around all of us — here in the Kurdistan Region, in the United States, and elsewhere," Alyson Kennedy told a March 30 meeting here to discuss the road to women's emancipation. Kennedy was the Socialist Workers Party's candidate for president of the

Continued on page 7

US rulers exploit crisis in Venezuela as pretext to push attacks on Cuba

BY SETH GALINSKY

Washington is using the ongoing economic crisis facing working people in Venezuela to further its main goal in the region — weakening the Cuban Revolution. The U.S. Treasury Department's latest round of sanctions target two maritime companies and an oil tanker that have been shipping crude oil from Venezuela to Cuba under longstanding agreements

Continued on page 5

Inside

Cuban health workers deliver aid to cyclone-hit Mozambique 2

New Jersey SWP candidate speaks at community meeting 4

Asian Studies conference goes debate politics, get books 4

Mass protests in Algeria force president to resign 8

—On the picket line, p. 5—

Ukrainian rail workers rally for higher wages, better conditions

Cuban health workers deliver aid to cyclone-hit Mozambique

BY RÓGER CALERO

A brigade of 40 Cuban health workers have been in the coastal city of Beira, Mozambique, providing aid to those injured and ill in the wake of a devastating hit there by Cyclone Idai March 14. The storm wreaked havoc across Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi. The Cuban government sent members of the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Physicians Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics.

“More than 400 patients a day seen in a Cuban hospital in Sofala,” the Cuban medical brigade said April 1 in a post on its Facebook page. The members of the specialized contingent joined over 270 Cuban doctors and nurses already in Mozambique as part of a longer-term program to provide medical services to workers and peasants there. They were among the first to join the recovery efforts providing care and clearing debris from damaged medical facilities.

Nearly 900 people died in the three countries from rain and flooding. The storm surge left an area nearly 80 miles long by 15 miles wide under water around Mozambique’s coastal cities. Hundreds of thousands lost their homes and crops — nearly 90 percent of Beira, home to 500,000 people, was damaged or destroyed — and people are facing the looming threat of a cholera outbreak and other diseases.

The ensuing social disaster was magnified by a legacy of imperialist underdevelopment and exploitation in what is one of the poorest countries in the world — even though it has rich farmland and vast resources of coal and natural gas.

After winning its independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique was devastated by a civil war that lasted over 15 years. The post-independence FRELIMO-led governments (Mozambique Liberation Front) did not undertake a course to organize the country’s exploited producers to fight in their own class interests and take power.

Instead, imperialism’s plunder and capitalist exploitation has continued, coupled with official corruption, with devastating consequences for working people.

Following the discovery in 2011 of huge natural gas reserves, the country’s rulers were beset by predatory imperialist investors. Up until 2018, Mozambique became one of the world’s fastest growing economies, producing billions in profits for the investors, and leaving the social and economic burden to Mozambican toilers to carry.

Cuba’s internationalism

The brigade volunteers are “going with the best disposition to fulfill the internationalist commitment of Cuban health professionals,” Cuban Health Minister José Ángel Portal Miranda said to members of the Henry Reeve contingent on their way to Mozambique.

More than half of the brigade’s members have served in medical missions — some more than once — in other countries. Cuba’s revolutionary government has made missions to provide medical care a hallmark of its international solidarity, including helping to lead the fight against the 2014-15 Ebola epidemic in Africa. The brigade — named after a



Brigada Médica Cubana en Mozambique

Cuban doctor treats patient in Mozambique after Henry Reeve brigade of health workers arrived to provide care to those injured and ill from devastating Cyclone Idai that hit March 14.

young fighter from the U.S. who joined and died in the Cuban peoples’ struggle against Spanish colonialism in the 1870s — was formed in 2005.

“The richest, most developed societies, ruled by consumerism and a thirst for profit, have made the health service into a common business, inaccessible to the poorest sectors of the population,” Fidel Castro explained to the founding members of the brigade. From the beginning of the Cuban Revolution, he said, workers and farmers there have viewed it as a duty to provide this kind of solidarity “since Cuba sent its first brigade [in 1963] to Algeria, a country that had just freed itself from colonialism following an heroic struggle for independence.”

“It’s my first [medical] mission abroad and I am very proud it is with the Henry Reeve contingent,” said nurse José Luis Díaz. “To provide aid in a disaster zone means a lot to me.”

There are currently more than 50,000 Cuban doctors, nurses and medical technicians in over 65 countries around the world.

The U.S. capitalist rulers and media, fearful of that example, wage a constant smear campaign against the contributions of Cuban medical volunteers. On March 17 the *New York Times* published an article accusing Venezuela President Nicolás Maduro of using Cuban medical personnel in that country as a tool to “coerce Venezuela voters.”

“Over the years we have earned international prestige because of our selfless solidarity and willingness to give our lives in order to save others,” Cuban medical volunteers in Gambia wrote in response.

“*Señores imperialistas*, you have no clue what it is to be an internationalist,” said the statement. “As Fidel Castro taught us, ‘being an internationalist is paying our debt to humanity. Whoever is incapable of fighting for others will never be capable of fighting for himself.’”

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

The 1959 Cuban Revolution had a worldwide impact. It set an example that socialist revolution is not only necessary — it can be made and defended.

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THE MILITANT

Albert Woodfox speaks out for rights of prisoners!

Albert Woodfox spent nearly 44 years in solitary confinement. He is on a speaking tour to help expose the abusive conditions that exist in prisons across the country and highlight the example he and other prisoners set standing up for dignity. The *‘Militant’* reports on his tour!



Militant/Seth Galinsky

After 44 years in solitary Albert Woodfox is on tour speaking against abuse of prisoners.

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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.

SWP to expand political reach

Continued from front page and to make lasting contacts.

"I'm here to learn what people in the Valley are going through," SWP member Joel Britton told Vince, a longtime employee at the Del Monte cannery, now a high school teacher.

Vince, who declined to give his last name, replied that his stepfather has a grape ranch of 20 acres that has been in the family for five generations. Now the ranch doesn't make enough to live on.

"The SWP raises the need for all workers to defend the working farmer," Britton replied. "An example is what was accomplished by workers and farmers in Cuba as a result of their revolution. Farmers in Cuba cannot be foreclosed on if they are working their land."

Campaigners met Burl Holley, an electrician and former farmer, who was plowing under a field of grass.

says we need to unite workers and farmers, wherever we live, to fight in our own interests. We can build a movement strong enough to forge a workers and farmers government."

Britton pointed to the example of the yellow vest movement in France, where people hit hard by the crisis of capitalism in the small towns and rural areas have been protesting for weeks. "I think a similar thing is bubbling here below the surface," he said.

"You should talk to the farmers up and down this road," Holley said. "They're friendly people."

Along the road lined with fruit and nut orchards, Britton talked with farmworker Oscar Unanzor, who was flying a kite with his son. Unanzor said his biggest concern was getting a raise to pay his family's rent, which has gone from \$750 a month to \$950 in the last few years.

Unanzor's daughter, Nicole, who is in high school, joined the discussion. She said she wants to study agriculture and remain in the area. "I like it here because it's quiet, and people help each other. There is a community," she said. After they talked more about what faces working people today, Unanzor decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

SWP members are learning more about the wide-ranging impact of the capitalist crisis on all layers of the working class and other exploited producers. And they're expanding the readership

of the *Militant* and books by leaders of the revolutionary working-class movement and raising \$115,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund.

The party has set a goal of selling 1,050 subscriptions and 1,055 books in an international effort through May 28. All books are being offered at 20% off. There are additional offers



Militant/Mary Martin

"I can't understand why they would allow a plane to fly when it's not proven safe," former Boeing worker Karen Berney told Henry Dennison, SWP candidate for Seattle City Council, outside her home in Issaquah, Washington, April 4. Bosses' drive for profits was behind recent Boeing crashes, Dennison said.

After learning Britton was a member of the SWP, he turned off his tractor to talk.

"I think our problem is lawyers and politicians. I'm for capitalism. What are you campaigning for?" he asked.

"Both the Democrats and Republican politicians serve the interests of the wealthy," Britton said. "Our party



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

"For years I've hated how capitalism pits everyone against each other," nurse Mickale Hensley, left, in her front yard, told SWP member Maggie Trowe in Williamstown, Kentucky, April 5.

on titles featured in the ad below.

Party members in Oakland have gotten the Militant Fighting Fund off to a solid start, sending in checks totaling \$2,050. With eight other areas sending in contributions, the fund has raised \$4,493 in the first few days of the effort. Getting an early start is key to raising the funds needed to ensure the paper can continue to cover political developments.

Oakland jump starts fund drive

Carole Lesnick reports that SWP members there asked readers of the paper who hadn't made up their minds on how much to contribute to write a check now for what they could. They can give more later as the drive continues.

With the Democratic and Republican parties gearing up for the 2020 presidential election, SWP candidates for office — presenting a working-class alternative to the twin parties of capitalist rule — get a hearing among working people.

When SWP campaigners Maggie Trowe and Jacquie Henderson knocked on Mickale Hensley's door in Williamstown, Kentucky, they showed her the campaign flyer for Amy Husk and Samir Hazboun, SWP candidates for governor and lieutenant governor. "I've been thinking about many of these questions, but didn't have anyone to talk to about them," she said as she studied the flyer.

Hensley, 26, works as a nurse. "For years I've hated how capitalism pits everyone against each other," she said. "I was a sort of 'Bernie Sanders person,' but I don't see much there either."

Trowe pointed to the experiences workers and farmers went through in the course of the Cuban Revolution as an example for working people here. Hensley wanted to learn more and got a subscription and four books, including *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

Jonathan Silberman in London reports that Communist League members there sold 60 books and five *Militant* subscriptions to politics-thirsty young people at a thousands-strong protest against the hated rule of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan April 6. Among the titles were five books by Thomas Sankara, the central leader of the popular revolutionary government in Burkina Faso in the 1980s. One woman who is going back to Sudan snapped up *The Communist Manifesto* and *Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun* in Arabic to take with her.

To join in this effort, or for more information, contact the party branch nearest you in the directory on page 4.

Terry Evans contributed to this article.

Discounted books for prisoners

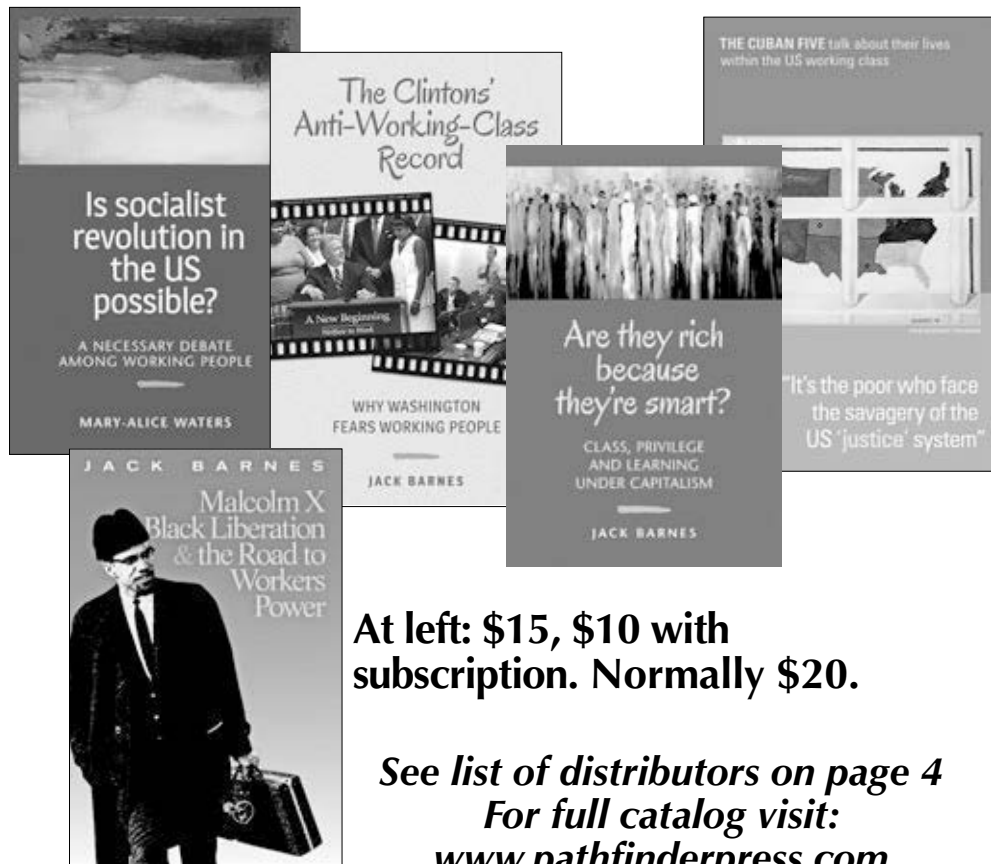
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Pennsylvania

Osborne Hart, Mayor of Philadelphia
John Staggs, Philadelphia City Council
Malcolm Jarrett, Pittsburgh City Council

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, Mayor of Dallas

Washington

Henry Clay Dennison, Seattle City Council

See directory on page 4 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

SWP candidate for State Assembly speaks at community meeting in NJ

BY JENNY KING

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — Fifty people attended the April 1 meeting of the Regional Alliance of Students and Professionals to hear Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey State Assembly, speak about her campaign. The meeting here, part of a monthly series on social issues, was built through their church, La Luz del Mundo.

The event was chaired by Esther Rodriguez, organizer of the group. The audience was in large part workers and students from Jersey City and the surrounding townships of Union City, Weehawken, and West New York, some of whom had their children with them.

“Licencias sí! Promesas no! Amnistía! Si se puede!” (Licenses, yes! Promises, no! Amnesty! Yes, we can!) Sherman said to applause to open her presentation. She explained that a week ago she had marched in Bridgeton to demand driver’s licenses for all. Bridgeton is in a rural farming area in southern New Jersey.

Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City Public Advocate, joined Sherman up front, translating her remarks into Spanish and participating in the discussion.

People asked a range of questions. Does the Socialist Workers Party have any members in New Jersey or New York sitting in positions of power?

What do they do to help workers?

One woman read from the New Jersey SWP campaign statement about how declining real wages make it difficult for workers to start a family, asking what would you do to change this?

“You mentioned that you support driver’s licenses for everyone. What else are you going to do for undocumented immigrants?” Esther Rodriguez asked. And “what is socialism? So much is said about it.”

“Democrats and Republicans say vote for me and I’ll fight for you,” Sherman said. “But lesser-evil politics doesn’t work for the working class. They are parties of the bosses. We must fight together to make a change and build a new society based on solidarity, not on exploitation. Capitalism is a calamity for working people around the world, including its ongoing wars. It’s a moral question.”

She said the bosses at Walmart, where she works, were forced to raise wages to \$15 an hour, but that isn’t enough to support a family today.

Change takes a movement of millions

Sherman explained that she grew up in the 1970s in Dallas before the civil rights movement exploded there and overthrew Jim Crow segregation. It wasn’t elected officials, Sherman said, but a movement of millions in the streets that ended Jim Crow.

“I call for amnesty for all immi-

Cuba through their participation in the 1959 revolution led by Fidel Castro that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and the decades of revolutionary action and internationalism since. Over 20 copies were sold in English, Spanish and Chinese.

Conference goers also purchased four copies of *Maoism vs. Bolshevism*, a bulletin on the 1965 Indonesia massacre, and three of *Leon Trotsky on China* — all the copies we had with us.

There was also interest in U.S. and world politics today, with a number of participants getting *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power*; *Are They Rich Because*



Militant photos by Vivian Sahrner

Inset, Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey State Assembly, and Seth Galinsky, SWP candidate for New York City public advocate, speak at April 1 meeting of Regional Alliance of Students and Professionals at La Luz del Mundo church in Jersey City, New Jersey. Above, Sherman shows meeting participants *Militant* and Pathfinder books on working-class struggle.



grants living here without papers,” she said. “We need to strengthen the labor movement, to make our unions a vehicle to fight for the working class.”

“This isn’t an immigrant question,” Seth Galinsky added, “but a working-class issue. It’s the working class that creates the wealth. We pick the crops, build roads and housing, work in the factories. But the bosses and their government make the decisions.”

He pointed to the bosses at Boeing

They’re Smart?; and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record*, all by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes. Two other popular titles were *In Defense of the US Working Class* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

Many participants took promotional flyers with them, signed up to be on Pathfinder’s mailing list, or took photos of the books, saying they would order them when they got home. A number told Pathfinder volunteers to get in touch with them to set up a visit to discuss ordering books for their classes or libraries.

Asian Studies conference goers debate politics, get books

BY SCOTT BREEN

DENVER — There were over 350 panel discussions and film presentations at the 2019 Association for Asian Studies Conference here March 21-24 on a wide variety of subjects. These included the Japanese rulers’ abuse of Korean “comfort women” during the Second World War; labor relations in China and Vietnam; the Indonesian military’s massacre of hundreds of thousands of unionists, Communist Party members and other workers in 1965; as well as Beijing’s Belt and Road initiative today and its impact on Africa and Latin America.

Several thousand attended — a majority professors, graduate students and researchers from U.S. universities. There were also many associated with universities in China, Korea, Japan, elsewhere in Asia and around the world.

The conference also featured a special presentation on the Chinese rulers’ mass detention of Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims by China. A few days after the conference, the Association for Asian Studies issued a statement protesting the Chinese government’s repression, saying it “constitutes a major violation of human rights, and in the case of our academic colleagues, a clear disregard for academic freedom.”

Supporters of Pathfinder Press set up a booth that was visited by scores of participants. Sixty-four books were purchased, with the best-seller being a new edition of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. The book — interviews with Generals Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sio Wong — tells the story of the historic place of Chinese immigration to

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Ukrainian rail workers rally for higher wages, better conditions

Some 500 rail workers, members of the Free Trade Union of Railway Workers of Ukraine (VPZU), and trade unionists from across the country picketed the central office of Ukrainian Railways in Kiev March 19. The union is demanding a wage increase, pensions, improved medical services and protection against layoffs.

The majority of Ukrainian rail workers receive a minimum wage of 3,723 hryvnya per month (\$137). Many work overtime to try and keep up with the cost of living.

“Our main requirement is to raise wages for railway workers urgently,” VPZU Chairman Volodymyr Kozelskyi

said at the action. “We want justice for our workers.”

Company bosses came out to talk to the rail workers and agreed to discussions. On March 20, the union’s wage demands were raised with the Parliament Committee on Transport. Negotiations began March 26, discussing “concrete percentages of raising salaries for workers,” said Kozelskyi.

The state-owned company is the 12th largest railroad system in the world, with some 263,000 workers running both freight and passenger service. Last year the workers organized a work-to-rule protest against low wages, deteriorating working conditions and the dangerous state of the trains.

—Janet Post



Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine

Members of Free Trade Union of Railway Workers of Ukraine and union supporters march in Kiev March 19 for wage increase, pensions, medical care and protection against layoffs.

US rulers exploit Venezuela crisis as pretext to step up attacks on Cuba

Continued from front page

between the two sovereign nations.

The Treasury Department also designated 34 ships owned by Venezuela’s oil company as blocked property, prohibiting all transactions with them.

In an April 5 speech announcing the reactionary measures aimed at increasing hardships on working people in Cuba, Vice President Mike Pence promised that “in the coming weeks, the United States will be taking even stronger action against Cuba.”

The U.S. government — no matter which party has occupied the White House — has carried out unremitting efforts to bring down the revolutionary government that came to power in 1959 when workers and farmers in Cuba overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

To justify the latest measures, Pence turned reality on its head, charging that “Cuba’s leaders are the real imperialists in the Western Hemisphere.” He claimed that “Cuba exports tyranny and strong-arm tactics” and “has tried to create client states across this region. ... Cuba’s influence has driven Venezuela’s failure and the time has come to liberate Venezuela from Cuba.”

But it is U.S. imperialism, not the Cuban Revolution, that has a history of backing dictatorial regimes and blatantly violating national sovereignty in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The U.S. rulers invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 to crush a movement demanding the return of the elected president there; backed the overthrow of the Salvador Allende government in Chile in 1973 and the imposition of a bloody dictatorship; backed death squads in El Salvador for over 30 years from the 1960s; organized and financed the contra war against Nicaragua in the 1980s; and armed and backed military dictatorships from Brazil to Argentina.

Cuban internationalist volunteers

After Hugo Chávez won election as president of Venezuela in 1998, in the midst of a rise in struggles by workers and peasants, Havana agreed to help his government expand medical care, educational opportunities and access to culture. At the same time the Venezuelan government began selling up to 100,000 barrels of oil a day to Cuba — at below world market prices —

like it did to many Caribbean nations, and providing free heating oil to some working-class neighborhoods in the Bronx, New York.

Thousands of Cuban internationalists have taken part in these social programs in Venezuela. This included doctors and nurses, who went to the poorest neighborhoods and the most isolated regions to provide medical care; teachers, who helped organize a campaign to teach illiterate workers and farmers how to read and write; as well as sports and dance instructors. The internationalist volunteers also included some military advisers.

There are more than 20,000 Cubans still volunteering there today, mostly health care workers. Cuba carries out similar missions around the world.

Washington’s slander campaign

Aiming to tarnish the example set by the Cuban Revolution in the Americas and around the world, Washington and enemies of the revolution, both liberal and conservative, falsely claim Cuban agents have “hijacked” Venezuela, “run” its army, and use the same “repressive measures” used in Cuba in “a way that is almost invisible.”

None of this is true. Medical volunteers from Cuba serve all who need care. And Cuban revolutionaries have never conditioned their aid on agreement with the course of the governments that asked for their help.

In Cuba, working people, under the leadership of Fidel Castro, not only overturned the Batista dictatorship, but dismantled the old army; advanced workers control over production; carried out a deep-going land reform, which broke the power of the landlords and agribusiness; and nationalized foreign companies and large Cuban-owned corporations. Workers and farmers took power and opened the road to a socialist revolution. These transformations are the foundation for the continuation of the revolution to this day, not “repressive measures.”

In Venezuela, Chávez and Maduro led what they called a “Bolivarian Revolution,” which tried to administer and regulate capitalism, alongside a range of welfare programs. Their course and policies are radically different than those carried out by the workers and farmers in Cuba.

In the midst of the deepening capitalist economic crisis and an inter-

national fall in oil prices — striking the heart of Venezuela’s economy — the Maduro government has cut the amount of subsidized oil it provides to Cuba by as much as 50 percent.

Cuba’s Prensa Latina reported in March that Multibank Panamá has closed all the bank accounts it held covering financial transactions with Cuba.

U.S. banking sanctions hit Cuba

Bank officials denied that the action was due to U.S. sanctions and pressure. But Prensa Latina investigated further and confirmed that the measure is exclusively aimed at Cuba.

Granma, the newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba, replied to Washington’s moves, quoting from a 1990 speech by Fidel Castro. “If we had given in even once to the imperialists’ demands, the Cuban Revolution would not exist,” Castro said. “What has stopped the imperialists is the heroism of our people, the price that they know they would have to pay for any aggression against our country.”

If you have any question this is true, watch the million-strong May Day march coming up in Havana.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 25, 1994

For the first time since World War II, Washington is carrying out direct military intervention in a war in Europe. The bombing of sites near Gorazde, Bosnia, came just weeks after U.S. planes shot down four jets linked to the Serbian regime. These actions can only deepen the war and increase the price in blood the workers and farmers in Bosnia pay. They will also intensify conflicts among the various supposed allies in NATO and outside it.

Contrary to their pretensions, the U.S. rulers have no humanitarian concern whatsoever for the victims of the carnage in the former Yugoslavia. In fact for the last two years the governments of the United States and most European countries have slammed the door in the face of refugees fleeing the slaughter, which has been organized by rival gangs that were part of the former Stalinist regime before the breakup of Yugoslavia.



April 25, 1969

Attorneys for the Ft. Jackson Eight have moved to obtain a writ of habeas corpus to free the imprisoned antiwar GIs. Five of the servicemen have been in the stockade since March 20 and three are under barracks detention. Their sole crime is association with GIs United Against the War in Vietnam and seeking to exercise their constitutional right of free speech.

Jailing of the men and the court-martial threatened against them violates military law as well as their civil rights. The Uniform Code of Military Justice provides for pre-trial confinement only in cases where there is danger the defendant will not appear for trial.

Since the development of the Ft. Jackson GIs United and the Army’s attempt to victimize those associated with it, major national press and television publicity has focused on the still-growing antiwar servicemen’s group.



April 22, 1944

CHICAGO — The first war-time strike authorized by a CIO international union is holding firm in its sixth day here. Some 5,000 workers of Montgomery Ward and Co., one of the world’s two largest mail order firms, are fighting on the picket line to compel the company to renew its contract with CIO United Mail Order, Warehouse and Retail Employees Local 20, following the failure of the War Labor Board to enforce its three month old order against the company.

Only when the workers took matters into their own hands and struck at Ward’s key mail order plant, central warehouse and largest retail outlet store, did the War Labor Board, which moves so quickly and harshly against workers defying its decrees, finally certify the case to the President.

In sharp contrast to the speed with which he acts against striking workers, Roosevelt has made no statement.

Jim Spaul: 30 years building the communist movement

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON — “Jim Spaul came to recognize more is needed to emancipate the working class than militant trade unionism, as important as that is,” Communist League Central Committee member Jonathan Silberman told a March 31 meeting here to celebrate 76-year-old Spaul’s political life. He died March 6.

Spaul, a 30-year veteran of the League, was an underground coal miner for 36 years. He was involved in four major national fights by the National Union of Mineworkers, including the yearlong strike by 150,000 miners in 1984-85.

In the wake of that battle Spaul joined the Communist League, having become convinced the liberation of working people “requires a political struggle to overturn capitalist rule,” Silberman said.

The 50 people at the meeting included members and supporters of the Communist League, others who had worked with Spaul, nine of his family members, and some who didn’t know Spaul but wanted to learn about his union and political activities and about his party. They came from the U.K., Norway, France, Belgium and the U.S. Julio Pujol, political counselor from the Cuban Embassy in London, also attended.

An attractive display of some 35 photos and newspaper clippings was set up, illustrating three decades of the class struggle and the Communist League’s activity while Spaul was a member. Participants at the meeting could see there how Spaul “responded to the big political questions of the day, how he stuck to the communist politics he was won to, how he served in whatever capacity he was asked and how well he carried through his political activity,” Silberman said. Spaul shouldered a range of responsibilities for the League, including as an elected member of its Central Committee for a number of years.

Won through internationalism

Paul Mailhot, who spoke on behalf of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party from the U.S., described how in 1989 Spaul and fellow coal miner and League member Paul Galloway went to Virginia to extend solidarity to striking Pittston coal miners there. “Jim Spaul was attracted to and won to the com-

munist movement through internationalism,” Mailhot said. “He saw workers’ struggles in the U.K. in common with the fight of working people in other parts of the world.”

Mailhot read from a message by SWP National Committee member Norton Sandler, who has worked for many years with the League. “The wealthy rulers in Britain, like their counterparts across the world, act on the conviction that working people are trash with little capacity,” Sandler wrote. “But during the strike coal miners like Jim demonstrated fighting resolve, great dignity, and considerable political imagination that won the support of trade unionists around the world.

“His recruitment was realized through an international collaboration, one the Communist League and the Socialist Workers Party can be proud of,” Sandler said.

Pat Nixon, who organizes the print project leadership responsible for production of Pathfinder books, described in a message how she met Spaul — who hadn’t yet met the League — when she came to the U.K. as part of a delegation of women miners and other workers from the U.S. in 1987. After attending the Yorkshire Miners Gala, a union-organized celebration of thousands of miners, they traveled together by bus to the Kellingley mine in West Yorkshire where Spaul worked. She met Spaul on the bus, and he was “immediately interested in the working class perspective of the *Militant* and bought a subscription,” Nixon said.

She sent him material about the fight against the cop frame-up of SWP member Mark Curtis, who was facing trumped-up charges of rape and burglary. Curtis had been arrested and beaten by Des Moines, Iowa, cops in the midst of his involvement in a fight to defend immigrant co-workers at the meatpacking plant where he worked.

Spaul understood through his own experience in the “Justice for Mineworkers” campaign that “an injury to one was an injury to all.” He immediately turned to campaign for Curtis among fellow workers.

In a tribute to Spaul sent to the meeting, Curtis wrote, “I learned what ‘Workingmen of all countries, unite!’ really means through men like Jim



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Jim Spaul campaigning for the Communist League in Dalston during the 2015 general elections. March 31 meeting in London celebrated Spaul’s political life as a party leader and member of the National Union of Mineworkers. Spaul was “a party man,” speakers said.

Spaul. Jim showed why coal miners like him would stand with meatpackers like me even though we were thousands of miles apart.”

Jim’s life stamped by world politics

“Giant developments were shaping world politics and they were having an impact on all thinking workers” when Spaul was attracted to communist politics, Silberman said. He pointed to the combined impact of the 1987 stock market crash, the openings scored by Cuban-Angolan-Namibian forces that inflicted a crushing defeat on apartheid South Africa’s invading army in 1988; and the shattering of the counterrevolutionary Stalinist regimes in central and eastern Europe in 1989.

The display featured how Spaul responded to these developments. He joined a solidarity brigade to learn firsthand about Cuba’s socialist revolution in 1993. His union paper, the *Yorkshire Miner*, ran his review of *US Hands Off the Mideast* by Fidel Castro and Ricardo Alarcón, a book Pathfinder rushed to print in 1990 to respond to Washington’s war propaganda preparing for their invasion of Iraq.

“Jim was inspired by the African National Congress’ successful struggle to overthrow the hated apartheid regime,” Alan Harris, a long-time leader of the Communist League in the U.K., wrote to the meeting, “and was proud to be identified with South African miners who played an important role in the victory.”

Communist League leaders Caroline Bellamy and Andrés Mendoza described the impact that Spaul’s contribution to the communist movement had on them. Bellamy had joined Spaul on a 1993 solidarity brigade to Cuba before she joined the CL. She recalled him telling her “as soon as he got back from the brigade, he’d be changing suitcases and flying to the U.S. to bring solidarity to a miners’ fight there. I was struck by the breadth and international character of what the Communist League was doing, and also Jim’s lack of self-promotion as he spoke.”

Andrés Mendoza, organizer of the League’s London branch, said what struck him as a new recruit 10 years ago was that Spaul was a “party man.” “His discipline had an impact on me,” Mendoza said. “He would always help you to see that it was how you carry out a task that was more important than just getting it done.”

In recent years Spaul had taken on responsibilities ranging from organizing the League’s finances to the distribution of the *Militant* throughout the U.K. and into Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Mendoza described how keen Spaul had been with the door-knocking campaigning of the League. As he talked to fellow workers Spaul would point to *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and ask what they thought of the book’s final paragraph — For the working class “the greatest of all battles in the years ahead” is “the battle to throw off the self-image the rulers teach us, and recognize that we are capable of taking power and organizing society.”

After the program, participants stayed on to enjoy a buffet and continue discussion. “I found out a lot about fights before my time,” said Oliver Jones, a young worker from Manchester who has been joining in the League’s campaigning.

Jim’s son Jamie, who had sent a message describing how he knew his father had “kept within the front line of union fights,” talked about how he would often accompany Spaul to miners’ rallies. He said that through the meeting he had learned “more about the extent to which Jim was part of a broader international effort.” Spaul’s 17-year-old grandson Jack, who took a bundle of *Militants* with an article about Spaul’s political life, said he appreciated the meeting and learned a great deal about Cuba’s revolution and workers’ battles in the U.S.

An appeal for funds to the League’s work in honor of Jim Spaul raised £2,590 (\$3,380).



Members of National Union of Mineworkers and supporters rally in Nottinghamshire, May 1984, in defense of what became a yearlong strike. Jim Spaul, an underground miner for 36 years, was won to the international communist movement on “the big political questions.”

Where is Britain Going?

And other writings on the United Kingdom

by Leon Trotsky



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Dozens at Kurdistan meeting debate women's emancipation

Continued from front page
United States in 2016.

Sixty women and men of all ages participated in the lively exchange, hosted by youth organizations Tema and Nova. Savan Ako welcomed participants on their behalf and introduced the two speakers, Kennedy and local women's rights activist Dashne Nariman. "We want to be a platform for discussion," Ako said, "in the hope of making radical changes and seeing men and women hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder."

Kennedy, who is the 2019 SWP candidate for mayor of Dallas, pointed out that Texas has a high percentage of young working-class men and women who are military veterans. "Most are pushed into the army by unemployment and other economic conditions. They were sent to fight and die in the U.S. government's wars. These wars aren't popular among working people. When I return home, I will talk about what I learned here and what these wars have meant for you."

The consequences for working people of Washington's never-ending military actions are part of a wider social crisis in the U.S, Kennedy said. "The load falls on the family, especially women, who bear most of the respon-

sibility for the care of children, the sick and the elderly."

Women, oppression, and labor

"Women's place in human society wasn't always degraded," Kennedy said. "That oppression has an economic and social origin — the rise of class society, of private property and the state. If it had a beginning, then it can be ended as well."

Kennedy pointed to lessons taught by SWP leader Evelyn Reed in books such as *Problems of Women's Liberation*, *Woman's Evolution*, and *Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* Reed, who was a leading participant in the women's rights movement of the 1960s and '70s, showed that in early human society women were held in high esteem. "Social production was organized communally and its product shared equally," Kennedy said. "Women had a central place as producers *and* as the nurturers of new human life."

"The decline in the status of women developed as the growing productivity of human labor produced a surplus — wealth — that came to be privately



Militant/Ögmundur Jónsson

March 30 meeting in Sulaymaniyah in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Purpose of meeting was to be a platform for discussion on women's emancipation "in the hope of making radical changes and seeing men and women hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder," chairwoman Savan Ako said to welcome participants.

accumulated. Women and their children, like cattle, became private property. Women's status was determined by the man and the family to whom they were subordinate."

Kennedy emphasized the importance of the expansion of women working outside the home over the last half-century, describing her own experience of how women gain new confidence in leading fights for social, economic and legal rights.

"I began working in the coal mines in 1981 in West Virginia. I and other SWP members were among thousands of women who fought to work in mines. We were confident we could do the work — *and we proved it*."

"At first, some mine bosses, as well as some male co-workers, harassed women, trying to get us to quit. But working side by side with men breaks down these divisions. We won support from the United Mine Workers union. We began to see each other as co-workers and co-fighters."

Nariman opened by saying she agreed with Kennedy on the origins of women's oppression, so she wouldn't say much on that. She described struggles for women's rights in Kurdistan and Iraq over the past century in face of imperialist domination and political tyranny.

"The Iraqi state was established in the 1920s by British imperialism. Imperialism brought capitalism." Women fought for their rights in the '20s, '30s and '40s as part of the

movement against imperialism.

Nariman said that from the mid-1970s, Saddam Hussein's tyrannical regime had channeled the struggle for women's rights into support for the ruling Baath Party. "The numbers of women working in professions rose dramatically," she said. "But women's emancipation didn't advance. The number of women workers changed based on needs of the capitalist market. They were a reserve army of labor."

From family to economic bondage?

"Yes, it's important for women to come out of the home, out of domestic bondage," Nariman said. "But we shouldn't forget that this is simply going from family bondage to economic bondage. ... Only the form of women's oppression has changed. It's not emancipation. We must go to the root of the problem: capitalism."

These differing views on the importance of women's participation in the labor force and other issues were joined in the discussion period. A number of speakers said they were members of left-wing political groups. One man criticized Kennedy for participating in elections, saying this was the opposite of empowering workers. Another spoke in a similar vein, scorning the demand that women control their own property and wages. "This serves capitalism," he said.

In her talk, Kennedy had explained that the fight for immediate and dem-

Continued on page 8

Erbil book fair draws thousands, reflects Kurdish gains



Militant/Ögmundur Jónsson

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region, Iraq — The 10-day-long 14th Erbil International Book Fair opened here April 3, attracting tens of thousands of people seeking novels, poetry and books on science and technology, religion and philosophy, social sciences and politics. The annual cultural event, attended this year by some 300 publishers from 21 countries, is a conquest of advances in the struggle for Kurdish national rights over the past quarter century, as well as broader political and cultural openings in Iraq and the region.

Along with Erbil residents, many people traveled to the fair from other parts of the Kurdish Region, such as Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, Ranya and other cities and towns; from Kirkuk, a disputed city that was under Kurdish control before being militarily wrested by the Iraqi government in December 2017; as well as from Baghdad, Basra and other parts of Iraq. Others who came to the fair live in Erbil after fleeing Islamic State tyranny in Mosul and elsewhere, or the destruction wrought by the war against IS carried out by Iraqi and Kurdish forces backed by U.S. air raids.

Book presentations and panel discussions have addressed social and political questions, such as discrimination against religious and national minorities and struggles for women's rights.

Pathfinder Books, London, is participating for the third time. Many who visited the stand in previous years returned, knowing they would find books that provide a working-class perspective on the unfolding crisis of world capitalism and lessons from history for today's struggles — as well as volunteers eager to exchange experiences and opinions.

As of April 9, 832 Pathfinder books have been sold including 134 copies of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart: Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*, the top seller, and 37 copies of *In Defense of the US Working Class*.

— ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

More reading on the fight for women's emancipation

Three books by Evelyn Reed that explain:

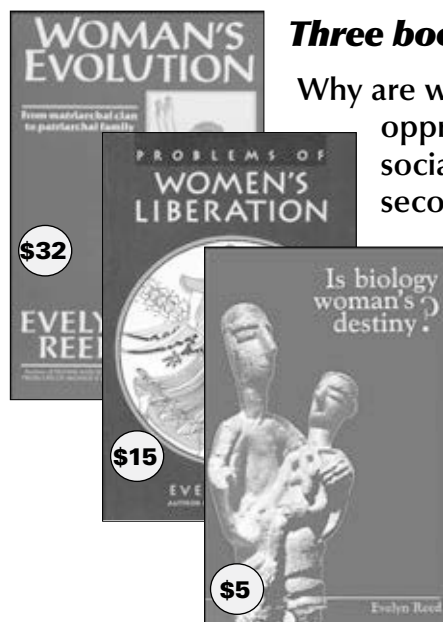
Why are women oppressed? How did that oppression begin? Who benefits? What social forces have the power to end the second-class status of women and have common interests in the fight for women's emancipation?

Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family

Problems of Women's Liberation

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Ongoing mass protests in Algeria force president to resign

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In response to ongoing protests by hundreds of thousands of people over the past six weeks, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika resigned April 2. He had ruled the country for the past 20 years.

The protests began when Bouteflika, 82, who has rarely been seen in public since suffering a serious stroke in 2013, announced he would seek a fifth term as president. The scope of the actions reflect the pent-up anger over government corruption and the dire economic conditions working people face there.

On March 11, Bouteflika attempted to defuse the demonstrations by saying he would withdraw his run for reelection. But he also postponed the election indefinitely, seeking to keep his grip on. He said he wouldn't step down until a new constitution was passed and a successor elected.

The demonstrations continued, and cracks developed in the military brass.

Three days after Bouteflika's resignation thousands of demonstrators

took to the streets again, calling for removal of his entire regime. "We now want the rest of the old guard to leave," 25-year-old Kamel, who only gave his first name, told Al Jazeera. "We also want the corrupt businessmen to be judged. We have won one political battle, not yet the war."

Toilers in Algeria had won their independence in a popular revolution against French colonial rule that culminated in 1962. More than 1 million people were killed and 300,000 children orphaned by the brutal French colonial regime before the Algerian people defeated them.

As the revolution deepened, workers and farmers there took power in a government led by Ahmed Ben Bella. It conducted a broad-reaching agrarian reform and organized working people to limit the power of the former French colonizers and Algeria's native capitalists. Strong ties of collaboration were established with Cuba's revolutionary government.

But this was cut short in June 1965 when Minister of Defense Col.



Reuters/Ramzi Boudina

Protesters in Algiers April 9 demand removal of entire government after Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was replaced by Abdelkader Bensalah. Placard reads, "Bensalah, not fit."

Houari Boumedienne arrested Ben Bella and overthrew the workers and farmers government. Boumedienne was backed by then-Foreign Minister Bouteflika.

That revolution inspired a generation of young fighters in Africa and worldwide, like Malcolm X in the U.S., as today's protests have inspired fighters in Sudan and elsewhere.

Demonstrations in Sudan tell regime to 'Just fall, that is all!'

Continued from front page

"Just fall, that is all," and "Freedom, justice, democracy" were among the main chants in both English and Arabic.

Buses from Glasgow, Cardiff, Newport, Nottingham, Birmingham, Wolverhampton and other cities and towns across the U.K. brought people to the protest outside the Sudanese Embassy. "We chose April 6 because it's the anniversary of the 1985 uprising that toppled the regime of Jaafar al-Nimeiri, another dictator in Sudan," many demonstrators said.

Around 200 people — five buses full, with this worker correspondent on board — came to the demonstration from Manchester. By going to London "the world can see our struggle," Muzamil Musa, one of the organizers of the contingent from Manchester, told the *Militant*. "And London is the capital so we can do it in front of the U.K. government." The British rulers had imposed their colonial rule over Sudan for over 50 years, ending in 1956.

The protests in Sudan began in opposition to Bashir's decision to triple bread prices in mid-December. Inflation, felt most sharply by working people, hit 70% at the end of last year. "Last summer, 50 Sudanese pounds equaled 1 British pound, now it's 100 pounds, but the salaries remain the same!" said Khalid Gaily, a petrol sta-

tion worker in Droylsden, Tameside near Manchester.

"When I lived in Sudan, I used to work in the petroleum industry and my contract stated that I should earn \$300 a month. But my employer paid me in Sudanese pounds instead! I ended up earning the equivalent of \$250 a month after eight years of working there, because of inflation," said Gaily.

Khartoum's involvement in the civil war in Yemen is another source of anger against the regime. For nearly four years at least 14,000 Sudanese militiamen have been fighting in Yemen alongside Saudi-backed forces. "They take young people from poor families, promise them money if they go to Yemen, but they don't properly tell them what they are going in for, what they will be doing," said Yahya Khalafalla, a warehouse worker from north Manchester. "People talk about this and don't like it."

The protests have been marked by efforts to overcome the various divisions among toilers in Sudan. "We need unity from west to east and north to south in Sudan," Musa pointed out, saying that people there are fighting to overcome

divisions based on language, religion and national origin. These were fostered by the former British colonial rulers and perpetuated by the current government to bolster its rule.

Another prominent feature of the demonstrations is the mass participation of women. An estimated two-thirds of the people involved in the protests in Sudan are women, and there were many women at the London action.

The crowd in front of No. 10 Downing St., the U.K. prime minister's residence, where the march ended, erupted in an explosion of joyous celebration when news reached them that protesters in Sudan had arrived at the headquarters of the Sudanese military in Khartoum without the army intervening.

Ali Ibrahim of the Sudanese Professionals Association, an organizer of the Khartoum protest, told EFE news agency that military units had fired into the air to prevent other security forces from dispersing the demonstrators.

On the bus ride home to Manchester, Musa said people were inspired by developments in Algeria. "Now that [Algerian President] Bouteflika

was forced to resign, that will give the people in Sudan more confidence," he said. Protesters in Sudan told the press the same thing.

"We will continue to demonstrate, even after Bashir has fallen," said El-mutwakil Ibrahim, a petrol station worker near Stockport and law school graduate in Sudan, "because we'll still need to win our political and democratic rights."

Members of the Communist League from London and Manchester built and joined the protest. Talking with others in the crowd and from a literature table, they met a hunger for books by communist leaders in English and Arabic. Participants thronged our table, buying five *Militant* subscriptions and 60 books on revolutionary politics.

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Kurdistan meeting debates women's emancipation

Continued from page 7

ocratic demands that take on all forms of discrimination against women is part of mobilizing their strength as part of revolutionary struggles to conquer state power and establish a workers and farmers government. "SWP candidates get a hearing among working people when we raise that perspective," she said.

Common labor, common fights

Steve Clark, a member of the SWP National Committee and editorial director of Pathfinder Press, spoke from the floor. "As Dashne said, the bosses employ women to exploit them and make profits, just as they do men. And they superexploit women and make an even greater rate of profit.

"What's important for the workers movement, however," Clark said, "is that

when women work outside the home or break out of 'women's jobs,' they become part of what Marx — referring to all workers, regardless of sex — called the 'gravediggers of capitalism.'

"They gain confidence through common labor and common fights alongside men," Clark said. "Women become leaders, including leaders of men in struggle, not just of other women."

Lessons from socialist revolutions

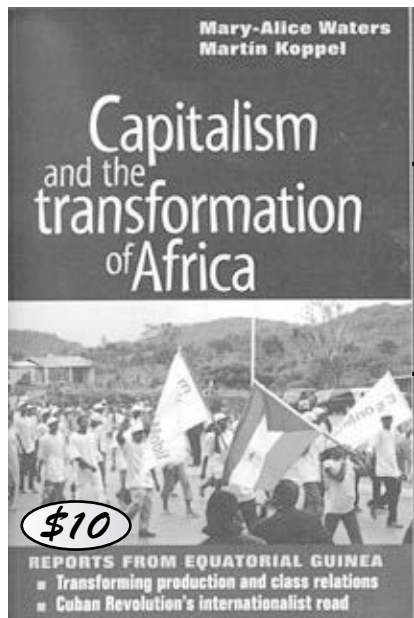
The final person to take the floor attacked both Kennedy and Nariman for pointing to the socialist revolutions in Russia and Cuba as examples for working people today. "That's all in the past," he said. "There is a revolution going on right now in northern Syria, in Rojava. Why don't you talk about this?"

"You talk about work. I don't want

to work, I want freedom!" he said.

Kennedy responded to this tirade. Returning to the common interests of workers and farmers in the United States and the Middle East, and the social crisis wrought by imperialist wars, she said, "There will be more rebellions, there will be revolutionary struggles. That's why it's important to learn about what working people accomplished in Russia and Cuba. And the Cuban Revolution is not in the past; it's a living revolution."

After the meeting, Ako told the *Militant* that the organizers were pleased with the turnout and with the chance to collaborate with workers from other countries to shed light on the road to women's emancipation. "We will have more discussions and continue spreading knowledge of the issue," she said.



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March May 1 for driver’s licenses, amnesty!

The following statement was issued April 8 by Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey State Assembly.

The immigration raid in Allen, Texas, April 3 was aimed at intimidating all “unauthorized” immigrants in the U.S. The raids and deportations are also aimed at dividing U.S.-born from immigrant workers, by scapegoating workers without papers and painting them as criminals and claiming the government is acting to defend workers born here. The real criminal is the capitalist system, which is driven relentlessly by their thirst for profit to attack working people, whatever the cost on human lives. Workers without documents the government accepts are here because of the normal workings of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. U.S. capitalists exploit the resources of less developed countries, distorting their economies, driving peasants off the land and into the cities, setting in motion gang violence and backing undemocratic regimes in power. In the absence of a class-conscious workers movement in their own countries that can fight against exploitation and oppression, many working people decide to try their luck up north. And U.S. bosses depend on immigrant workers as a source of cheap labor to compete against their economic rivals worldwide. They try to turn the spigots of immigration on and off depending on the ups and downs of capitalist production and trade.

The bosses need immigrants here, but they prefer that they are forced to live in the shadows, afraid to join unions or speak out. And if they can get native-born and immigrant workers blaming each other for the conditions they face, not capitalist exploitation, all the better. Once here the government treats undocumented immigrants like criminals, in most states denying them access to driver’s licenses and holding the fear of deportation over their heads. Working people understand right away what it means to be denied the right to drive. In many states — no matter what their “status” — workers can lose their license if they owe taxes, are behind on child support, or owe court costs, fines or tickets. It’s a catch-22. Don’t go to work, you can’t pay what you owe. Drive without a license, you risk more fines, even jail time. Immigrant workers have an added risk — deportation. The fight for driver’s licenses and the rights of immigrants is a question for the entire labor movement. To stand up to the bosses’ attempts to divide us, to fight for higher wages and better working conditions the unions need to say: “No more raids! Amnesty for the 11 million workers without papers in the U.S.!” On May 1 — International Workers Day — join marches and protests across the country around these demands.

Workers protest ICE factory raid in Texas

Continued from front page
So many years raising the company up. It’s not fair. It’s not fair to those they are going to deport.” While the raid was going on several dozen people came from throughout the area to protest outside the plant. Among the signs they held were: “No human is illegal” and “ICE stop terrorizing our communities.” CVE repairs consumer tech products, including Samsung cellphones sold by T-Mobile and AT&T. It employs several hundred workers. Besides at CVE search warrants were executed at four of the staffing companies that funnel workers there. Starting pay is only \$8 an hour. The workers who were detained — 80% women — are from 15 different countries, including 112 from Mexico, 48 from Nigeria and 38 from El Salvador. By the end of the day 174 had been released for “humanitarian” reasons — like being a single parent with children — and given notice to appear for a deportation hearing. “It’s insane to just get people who are working to make a living,” Valerie Trevino, 24, told the *Dallas Morning News* as she was waiting for her mother, Graciela Velazquez, to be released. “They’ve done nothing wrong besides work. My mom’s worked her entire life here. Other than that, what really is her crime?” Velazquez came to the U.S. from Mexico 25 years ago,

Defend workers without papers
At a press conference after the raid, Homeland Security Investigations agent Katrina Berger tried to stoke divisions between U.S.- and foreign-born workers by claiming the purpose of the arrests was to “ensure U.S. citizens and legal U.S. residents are hired for jobs in the U.S.” She cynically claimed it was also to “ensure that illegal workers are not preyed upon or paid less than the going wage or otherwise coerced or cheated or subjected to unsafe working conditions without any means of complaint.” In fact, one of the main reasons the employing class depends on

workers without papers is to drive down conditions of all workers, hoping they’ll be too intimidated to fight against low pay and speedup. ICE says that it is investigating CVE Technology and the four staffing companies with an eye to bringing criminal charges against them. Since January, ICE and Homeland Security officials have given notices of I-9 audits like the one carried out at CVE prior to the raid to 5,200 businesses nationwide. Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Dallas, denounced the raid and threat of deportations. “My campaign fights for the rights of workers here without all the papers the government says are required. We demand amnesty for all 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S.,” Kennedy said. “The government hopes to divide workers from fighting together by promoting the lie that immigrant workers ‘take’ jobs from U.S. workers. Working people need to say to each other, ‘We don’t care where you were born, what language you speak, what papers you have or don’t have. Let’s join together to fight for better wages and working conditions for all.’” “I urge people to join in the upcoming May Day protests in your area,” she said.

— May Day Marches — for Driver’s Licenses for Immigrants

GEORGIA Athens Old St. Joseph church, 4:30 p.m. Sponsored by Dignidad Inmigrante	MINNESOTA St. Paul University Avenue and Dale Street, 3 p.m. Sponsored by May 1 Coalition, Twin Cities
INDIANA Elkhart 317 Lusher Ave., 12 noon Sponsored by Cosecha	NEW JERSEY Perth Amboy 260 High St., 10 a.m. Sponsored by Cosecha
MICHIGAN Grand Rapids Garfield Park, 12 noon	OREGON Salem State Capitol, 900 Court St., N.E., 11:30 a.m. Sponsored by Causa Oregon
Kalamazoo Upjohn Park, 1018 Walter St., 4 p.m.	WISCONSIN Madison Sponsored by Voces de la Frontera. Details to come.
Detroit De Patton Park (Vernor and Woodmere), 11 a.m. Sponsored by Cosecha	

Rail bosses slash safety

Continued from front page
Workers Say Rookie Engineers Ill-Prepared for Dangerous Job,” the article describes a near disaster involving a more than 27,000-ton one-and-a-half-mile-long Canadian Pacific train barreling downhill in British Columbia. The new engineer hadn’t ensured sufficient air pressure for the brakes on the steep descent. The conductor, who had years of experience, overrode the controls, applying the emergency brakes just in time. In 2013 Canadian Pacific began requiring its office workers and managers to train and qualify as conductors and engineers. The company says it needs them in case of emergencies, labor shortages — and strikes. Unlike union engineers, who first have to work for two years as conductors, office workers and managers go straight to classroom instruction and two to four weeks practicing on simulators before they do some supervised runs on real trains. Canadian Pacific rail bosses cynically call this “state of the art” training. “Simulators are not adequate compared to years of hands-on training and running experience,” Jack Krueger, 63, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, told the *Militant*. Krueger has worked in freight and passenger service as a locomotive engineer for almost 40 years in and out of Lincoln, Nebraska. In the last two years “almost all railroads in North America have gone over to training engineers largely by simulators,” he said. Train engineers have to be aware of the train’s weight and speed, the track incline, weather and other factors. Depending on conditions, it can take a mile to stop after applying the brakes. Operators need to know their territory, Krueger said. Otherwise you can head into a curve too fast, run through a red signal you didn’t expect, and other errors that can cause the train to derail, or worse. “It takes two to three years experience to work safely with confidence” in large rail yards like the Lincoln terminal, “where there are half-a-dozen rail lines with over-the-road trains leaving or coming,” Lance Anton, a conductor and member of the SMART rail union in Lincoln, told the *Militant*.

Bosses’ moves upend safety
“A Revolution Sweeping Railroads Upends How America Moves Its Stuff,” was the headline of an April 3 *Wall Street Journal* article that reported on how rail bosses are using what’s called “precision-scheduled railroading.” Canadian Pacific, Canadian National, CSX, Union Pacific and other major rail companies have turned to this scheme. Their aim is to move more freight with fewer trains and workers, by holding businesses that need pickups or deliveries to a tighter schedule and reducing the time equipment is idle in rail yards. This is based on a speedup of yard workers who must switch cars and locomotives more rapidly between incoming and outgoing trains. And more and more of these jobs are being done by a one-person crew using a remote control to operate the trains. Railroad stocks went up tens of billions of dollars in the past six months “as investors anticipate lower costs and higher profits,” the *Journal* said. Norfolk Southern bosses say they hope to use the new system to cut 3,000 employees from its workforce of 26,000 and shed 500 locomotives of its 4,100. Even before “precision scheduling,” rail bosses’ have been eliminating rail jobs and making significant — and dangerously fatiguing — changes to work schedules. More engineers and conductors are now drawn from “pools,” and are expected to run trains on a larger number of routes on a moment’s notice. Only through solidarity can rail workers and others find the ways to fight the bosses’ moves, and organize to use union power to impose workers control of training, crew size, schedules and working conditions.

Joe Swanson from Lincoln, Nebraska, contributed to this article.

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