

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba's fight against Ebola in Africa is a 'beacon of light'

— PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 7 FEBRUARY 24, 2020

2020 election deepens crisis of Democrats, Republicans

BY TERRY EVANS

For decades working people in the U.S. have faced declining real wages and worsening working conditions as the bosses have gone after them in an effort to defend their profit rates, creating a broad social crisis. This, along with opposition to the capitalist rulers' ongoing wars in the Middle East and elsewhere, has fueled widespread dissatisfaction with both the Democratic and Republican parties, which have alternated presiding over the decline.

The disdain for what workers face by elected officials and the massive government bureaucracy drives a political crisis that wracks both of the bosses' two major parties. The crisis is most obvious among the Democrats today, whose fights with each other flow from the fear that they won't find a 2020 candidate who can defeat the incumbent president.

Many workers are looking for a way to change these conditions.

Continued on page 4

Coronavirus shows need for revolution in health care

BY ROY LANDERSEN

When the first cases of acute pneumonia caused by the new coronavirus were diagnosed last December in Wuhan, China, government authorities there downplayed the development. Now the capitalist rulers worldwide are scrambling about what to do with an epidemic that has taken over 1,100 lives, worse than the SARS outbreak in China 17 years ago.

While the fatality rate is less than half that of severe acute respiratory syndrome, the coronavirus has a far greater number of infections — over 44,000 as of Feb. 12. Active carriers of the virus have now been found in two dozen countries.

Beijing initially tried to minimize and cover up what was happening. They sent a government health official to Wuhan who told people the disease was "preventable and controllable." Then that person caught it himself and became a symbol of government lying and incompetence.

Continued on page 8

Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for president: 'Workers need our own party, a labor party'



Militant/George Chalmers

SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy talks with auto mechanic Rogelio Rodriguez at his home in Dallas Jan. 24. Working people need to break with the capitalists' parties, she said.

BY GEORGE CHALMERS.

DALLAS — The two main capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, are in crisis, Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, told participants in a campaign rally here Feb. 8. And, she said, more and more workers are concluding that neither the Democratic or Republican parties are on the side of working people.

Kennedy explained that she, SWP vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett and over 20 SWP candidates coast to coast are campaigning on the need for workers to have our own party, a labor party, based on our unions.

"One of the ways the wealthy class

maintains its rule has always been its use of the two-party — or more — system," Kennedy said. "If you don't like what one capitalist politician is doing, they tell you to vote for another capitalist politician from the other

Continued on page 3

Miami car caravan protests US restrictions on travel to Cuba



Militant/Chuck Guerra

Andrés Gómez, right, leader of Alianza Martiana, speaks before 50-car caravan wound its way through Miami's Little Havana Feb. 8, calling for end to new U.S. attacks on travel to Cuba.

BY ANTHONY DUTROW

MIAMI — Scores of people joined a car caravan led by the Alianza Martiana in the Little Havana neighbor-

JOIN MAY DAY BRIGADE TO CUBA

— see page 7

hood here Feb. 8 to protest new U.S. government restrictions on travel to Cuba.

Washington passed new regulations

in January barring all charter flights to Cuban cities other than Havana, and curtailed flights to Cuba's capital. The government last fall barred all commercial flights from the U.S. to nine cities outside of Havana.

The caravan also denounced vandalism at the Alianza's headquarters during the night of Jan. 26 after it had sponsored a public meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Cuban independence leader José Martí. The group defends revolution-

Continued on page 7

'This is a fight for the future,' Asarco miners say as strike enters fifth month

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

"We are not crossing the picket line. We will absolutely not cross the line. We're in full solidarity. If one of us falls, we all fall. That's the way we see this with the miners on strike," Chris Cheely, legislative representative of SMART Local 807, told the *Militant* by phone Feb. 11. The local represents conductors and brakemen at the Union Pacific railroad in the Tucson area. The rail workers have refused to run trains into Asarco's Mission Mine in Sahuarita since the strike began Oct. 13.

On Jan. 29 Union Pacific rail bosses used an all-management crew to run a train into the Mission Mine to move

Continued on page 5

Iraqi workers, youth protest attacks by the gov't, Tehran

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Deadly attacks by militias organized by Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr as well as by Iraqi security forces have failed to quell anti-government demonstrations in Iraq.

"This protest movement is going strong and as long as our demands

Continued on page 8

Inside

Sinn Fein vote surge fueled by social crisis, calls for Irish unity 2

Havana book fair highlights solidarity of Cuba, Vietnam 7

SWP campaign: Answer US slanders against Cuba! 8

—On the picket line, p. 5—

East Bay transit workers fight bosses' takebacks, seek support

French workers continue protest against Macron's pension assault

Sinn Fein vote surge fueled by social crisis, calls for Irish unity

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON — None of the capitalist parties contesting Ireland’s Feb. 8 parliamentary election came close to gaining a majority. Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, who have dominated Irish governments since a war for independence liberated a majority of the country from British rule in 1921, received a drubbing. Sinn Fein, which calls for a united Ireland, got its highest vote ever.

The elections gave a picture of real trends at work among working people.

Sinn Fein won 37 seats, one behind Fianna Fail and two ahead of Fine Gael, which had led the previous government. Horse-trading to put together a new government is now taking place.

Outgoing Fine Gael Prime Minister Leo Varadkar ruled out a deal between his party and Sinn Fein, while Micheal Martin, the leader of Fianna Fail, left open that possibility. Varadkar justified his stance pointing to Sinn Fein’s links to the now disbanded Irish Republican Army, which fought a military campaign against the British Army’s occupation of Northern Ireland prior to a cease-fire in 1998.

Compounding the problem to put together a governing coalition, six smaller parties and 19 candidates not aligned to any party won 50 seats, just short of a third of the 160-member Dail, the lower chamber of the Irish parliament.

The support registered for Sinn Fein showed it could have won more seats, but had only run 42 candidates. In addition to standing for Irish unity, it campaigned on a pledge to hike company taxes and raise government

spending to address the lack of affordable housing, patch up the country’s crumbling health care system and increase the number of police.

The social crisis facing working people is reflected in press reports describing “cattle-market”-like conditions in hospital waiting areas, with hundreds of patients waiting for beds. As many as 550,000 people, in a country of 5 million, are on waiting lists for medical appointments. In addition, rents and house prices have skyrocketed and homelessness is rising. These conditions, in an economic upturn, fueled dissatisfaction with Varadkar’s minority government, which had depended on Fianna Fail for support.

The rout of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael at the polls is a response by working people to the role of both parties following the 2007 economic crash, years of high unemployment and the subsequent class-differentiated “recovery.” Fianna Fail’s popularity plunged when it held power earlier and imposed cuts in public sector workers wages, reduced the minimum wage, increased sales taxes, and cut pensions in 2010.

80% back a united Ireland

Sinn Fein’s manifesto contains a commitment to push London to hold a referendum on Irish unity in Northern Ireland in the next five years, alongside a similar referendum in the south.

“Four in five Irish people want a united Ireland,” reported a poll published in the London *Times* of Feb. 3. Former Fianna Fail Prime Minister Bertie Ahern told the Press Associa-

UK: ‘Solidarity with protests by working people in Iran!’



Militant/Hugo Wils

MANCHESTER, England — “Three times in two years, Iranian workers and students have taken to the streets to protest the government’s military intervention abroad and its attacks on living standards,” Pete Clifford, with megaphone, told passersby as he and Hugo Wils campaigned here Feb. 1. Clifford is the Communist League candidate for Sharston ward and Wils for Baguley in the May 7 Manchester City Council elections. Clifford called for “solidarity with workers and students in Iran! U.K. and U.S. hands off Iran!”

“Many stopped by our table, most unaware of the depth of the recent unrest among working people that has spread across Iran,” he told the *Militant*. “They were interested in hearing about our campaign and what working people are doing in Iran.”

The CL candidates explain the regime in Iran today is a product of a counterrevolution carried out by the country’s capitalist rulers four decades ago to push back gains made by working people when they mobilized to overthrow the U.S.-backed shah during the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

CL candidates and campaign supporters sold eight copies of the *Militant*, five copies of the supplement “Revolution, Counterrevolution and War in Iran” by Socialist Workers Party leader Steve Clark and a copy of *The Communist Manifesto*.

— HUGO WILS

tion that moves towards Irish unity were now inevitable.

This is accelerated by the increase in cross-border trade in the two decades since the 1998 cease-fire agreement was signed and the increasing integration of the economies, north and south of the border. During last year’s negotiations over the U.K. leaving the European Union, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Varadkar agreed to maintain a customs border through the Irish Sea rather than along the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland to facilitate trade across the island.

“In any event we’re heading towards a border poll, a referendum on unity,” Sinn Fein leader Mary Lou McDonald

told the BBC Feb. 10. She said, “Certainly, the election result adds to this.”

Interviewed Feb. 10 by Irish state broadcaster RTE, McDonald said she was looking to put together a governing coalition. Danny McCoy, director general of Ibec, the employers lobby group, said company bosses would be able to work with a coalition that included Sinn Fein.

“We have seen them in action in the North. Their instincts are not so mad when it comes to business,” he told the *Irish Times*.

Sinn Fein resumed its power-sharing arrangement with the pro-British Democratic Unionist Party in the Northern Ireland Assembly last month.

The Militant

Vol. 84/No. 7

Closing news date: February 12, 2020

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galsinsky, Emma Johnson, Martin Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

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

Business Manager: Valerie Johnson

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

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

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

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

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

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

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

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

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

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

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to Suite 22, 10 Bridge St., Granville NSW 2142, Australia.

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.

THE MILITANT

Fight for women’s rights, in defense of science!

Maya Forstater is fighting being fired for speaking out against those who undermine women’s rights in the name of protecting those who “identify” as the opposite sex. The *Militant* says the fight for women’s emancipation and defense of science are crucial for the working class.



Maya Forstater fights to overturn firing for speaking out in defense of women’s rights.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE E-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.
OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT:
WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

‘Workers need a labor party’

Continued from front page party in the next election.

“The 2016 election showed that the capitalist rulers can’t depend on this anymore,” she said. “More workers said, ‘He’s worse, she’s worse,’ and that has the capitalist class worried.

“More and more workers sense the dead-end of lesser evil politics,” Kennedy told the *Militant* in an interview a couple days later. “But it’s not immediately apparent to them what the alternative is. What workers need in the political arena will grow out of our experiences fighting to defend our wages and working conditions, for our social and political rights, against the capitalist rulers’ wars abroad.

“Through these battles we’ll transform and rebuild our unions, and transform ourselves, deepening our self-confidence and class consciousness,” she said. “We’ll learn the burning necessity of constructing our own political party, with a program to take power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters.

“A labor party can unite and mobilize all those who are exploited and oppressed by capital, the vast majority,” she said.

“We don’t have a dog in the race for which Democrat or Republican gets elected in 2020,” Kennedy told the rally. “Join with the SWP campaign to fight for our own party, a labor party, to organize a class struggle for power.”

Not a ‘vote-catching machine’

A labor party would need a program that raises the same kinds of demands that the Socialist Workers Party is promoting in its 2020 campaign platform.

“The SWP campaign program says our unions need to fight for workers to take control of production,” she said. “That’s how workers can defend ourselves on the job at the same time as we learn how the working class is capable of organizing the economy itself, of replacing the bosses and their government, and of running society ourselves.

“Think what this would have meant if Boeing workers had conquered control of building and testing the Boeing 737 MAX plane!” she said.

“Workers control of production would enable us to deal with the questions of industrial pollution of the atmosphere that contributes greenhouse gases and other contami-

nation,” Kennedy pointed out. “It is only the working class that is capable — and has the class interests — to defend our land, air and waters. The defense of science and culture, of everything important to humanity, falls to the working class.

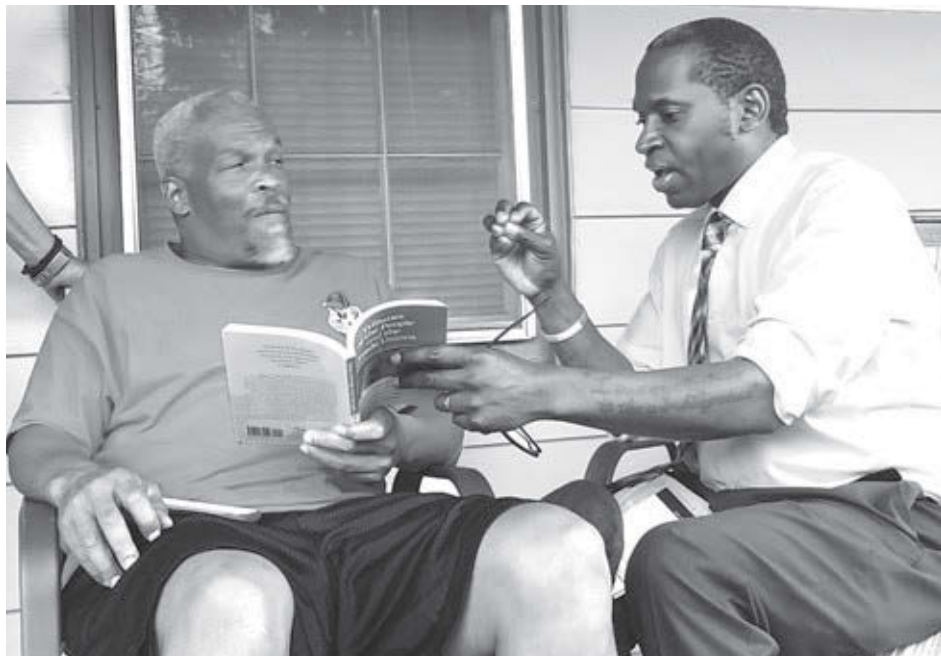
“All of that would point in the direction of working people forming their own labor party, fighting to put a workers and farmers government in power,” Kennedy said.

Open door to Israel-Palestine talks

During the discussion at the forum, Kennedy was asked what the campaign’s view is of the Trump administration’s recently announced Middle East peace proposal.

She encouraged participants to read the December 2017 Socialist Workers Party statement, “For Recognition of a Palestinian State and of Israel.” (Available on themilitant.com.)

“This is a very important opening for working people in the Middle East



Militant/Susan LaMont

Malcolm Jarrett, right, SWP candidate for vice president, visits Reggie Jackson in Hogansville, Georgia, Oct. 1. Jackson got campaign book *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*.

and worldwide,” Kennedy said. “It should be grabbed by the Israeli and Arab governments and the leaderships of the Palestinian organizations to open serious negotiations.”

“These negotiations,” she said,

“would have to recognize, as our statement points out, ‘the right of Jews everywhere to take refuge in Israel in the face of the global rise of Jew-hatred and anti-Semitic violence,

Continued on page 4

Socialist Workers Party 2020 campaign platform

This is the SWP’s fighting campaign platform to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism:

UNIONS/FOR A LABOR PARTY Support workers’ struggles to organize to defend themselves, to use union power on behalf of ourselves and all working people. Workers need their own party, a labor party. *One* union for *all* drivers — taxi, Uber, Lyft, other app-based and car service drivers! Support farmworkers in their fight to organize unions and for safe working conditions.

AMNESTY FOR ALL UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS in the US, a life-and-death question for the unions to unite workers and cut across divisions the bosses use to drive down wages. For access to driver’s licenses for all.

JOBS Fight for a federal government-financed public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages building roads, bridges, hospitals, child care centers, mass transportation and quality affordable housing workers need. Set the minimum wage to allow workers to have a home and support a family.

OPPOSE WASHINGTON’S WARS US hands off Iran, Venezuela and Cuba. US troops out of Afghanistan, Korea, the Middle East. End US colonial rule

in Puerto Rico.

CUBA’S REVOLUTION — AN EXAMPLE End the US rulers’ economic war against Cuba; US out of Guantánamo. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 showed it is possible for workers and farmers to transform themselves in struggle, to take political power and uproot capitalist exploitation.

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL Fight for universal, government-guaranteed cradle-to-grave health care, and retirement income for all.

ABORTION Defend women’s right to unrestricted access to family planning services, including the right to safe, secure abortions.

ISRAEL & PALESTINE For the recognition of Israel and of a contiguous Palestinian state. For the right of Jews to return to Israel as a refuge in the face of capitalist crisis, Jew-hatred and murderous violence.

WORKERS CONTROL OVER PRODUCTION & SAFETY Capitalism’s profit drive is the despoiler of nature and cause of unsafe working conditions. Workers and our unions must fight for workers control over production and safety in the factories, mines, railroads and all energy monopolies to protect those on the job and in nearby communities, and to control emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases to prevent the poisoning of the air, water and soil. Workers control over production to prevent disasters like the Boeing 737 MAX.

“JUSTICE” SYSTEM Fight against police brutality, racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system

with its frame-ups, “plea bargains,” onerous bail and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are Black. For the right to vote for ex-prisoners and all workers behind bars.

POLITICAL RIGHTS Defend democratic rights — the right to vote, to free speech and assembly and to bear arms, under attack from Democrats and Republicans alike. Stop FBI and other government spying, harassment and disruption.

PRISONER RIGHTS End solitary confinement. End suppression of the *Militant*, books and newspapers by prison authorities. Abolish the death penalty, an anti-working-class weapon in the hands of the rulers.

FARMERS — WORKERS ALLIES ON THE LAND To put a halt to farm foreclosures, bankruptcies and skyrocketing rural debt, we demand nationalization of the land. This puts the soil at the service of the farmers who till it, as opposed to control by the banks and landlords. We demand the government guarantee farmers their costs of production, including their living expenses.

Working people must organize and act independent of the ruling capitalists and break from their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans. For a labor party and a movement of millions to fight for these demands along a course to replace the rule of the exploitative capitalist class with a workers and farmers government.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Vote Socialist Workers Party in 2020 Alyson Kennedy for president Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

Regional candidates:

New York/New Jersey

Lea Sherman, US Senate, New Jersey
Willie Cotton, 9th CD, New York
Seth Galinsky, 10th CD, New York
Abby Tilsner, 20th CD, Albany
Jacob Perasso, 21st CD, Albany
Candace Wagner, 8th CD, Union City, NJ

Mid-Atlantic Region

James Harris, delegate to Congress, D.C.
Osborne Hart, 3rd CD, Philadelphia
Ruth Robinett, 14th CD, Washington, PA
Dave Ferguson, 18th CD, Pittsburgh

The South

Rachele Fruit, US Senate, Georgia

See directory on page 5 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

Anthony Dutrow, 27th CD, Miami

Midwest

Naomi Craine, US Senate, Illinois
Maggie Trowe, US Senate, Kentucky
David Rosenfeld, US Senate, Minnesota
Samantha Hamlin, 3rd CD, Chicago
Samir Hazboun, 3rd CD, Louisville
Helen Meyers, 4th CD, St. Paul

Southwest and West Coast

Henry Dennison, Governor, Washington
Gerardo Sánchez, US Senate, Texas
Joel Britton, 13th CD, Oakland
Dennis Richter, 37th CD, Los Angeles
Deborah Liatos, 40th CD, Los Angeles

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign in 2020! Campaign for what you are *for*, not who you’re against!

- ☐ I want to endorse the Socialist Workers Party ticket of Alyson Kennedy for president and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president.
- ☐ Here is my contribution of \$_____ to help spread the word. (Make checks to Socialist Workers National Campaign)
- ☐ I would like a 12-week subscription to the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper. (\$5 enclosed, checks payable to the *Militant*.)

Socialist Workers Party 2020 Campaign, 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, NY, NY 10018.
Tel: 347-871-0282 ✉ Email: socialistworkers2020@gmail.com

Democrats, Republicans crisis

Continued from front page

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party 2020 ticket for president and vice president, Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, find interest among workers in discussing an action program to defend ourselves from the employers and the government that serves them.

In contrast, the capitalist candidates — from President Donald Trump to Joe Biden, Pete Buttigieg and democratic socialist Bernie Sanders — offer different ways to defend, regulate and manage the capitalist system.

This broad discontent helped propel Trump to the presidency in 2016. He presented himself as an “outsider” who would end the carnage working people face and take on the “swamp” in Washington. Today Trump talks less about the carnage, laying claim to having reduced unemployment and creating “the Great American Comeback” as he runs for reelection.

His poll numbers are rising as he campaigns on a platform of “peace and prosperity,” especially after the utter failure of the Democrats’ impeachment crusade and the fiasco of their Iowa caucuses. He’s also making a pitch to win more support among African Americans. All this has deepened the Democrats’ trepidations and backbiting.

The upturn in employment *has* created better conditions for workers to begin organizing to fight attacks by the bosses, as more workers sense if they lose one job they’ll be able to find another. But the bosses aren’t giving up on their efforts to drive down wages as they face competition from rivals at home and abroad.

Democratic and Republican administrations alike have aided the bosses’ efforts to push the crisis of their system onto our backs, and workers continue to feel the impact despite the upturn. Increasing numbers of young people are unable to afford their own homes or start families. Millions face rising costs of basic necessities as well as skyrocketing debt. Insecurity about what the future will bring marks the lives of workers and farmers across the country.

These conditions — ones that brought Trump to the presidency —

are also creating support for the nomination of Bernie Sanders.

Support for Sanders surged in Iowa and he edged out a victory in the New Hampshire primary, followed closely by centrist Buttigieg. And it’s becoming clearer that the Democratic Party machine — that believes a Sanders campaign would mean a rout for the party’s candidates in November — are out to rig the nomination for one of their own, like former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

Joe Biden is rapidly tumbling as the front-runner, making a poor showing as the “beating-Trump-is-everything” candidate that other Democrats can unite behind. He came in fourth in Iowa.

War in the Democratic Party

“In any other country Joe Biden and I would not be in the same party,” Sanders supporter Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said Jan. 7, highlighting the split among Democrats. Days later she assured party members that she was a “proud Democrat” but admitted she was withholding her dues to the party in protest at how it selects its candidates.

Sanders runs on a platform of radical reform, railing against the wealthy and proposing to patch up capitalism. He touts plans to hike taxes to fund an expansion of government-backed Medicare health insurance. He says he would raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and praised Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos two years ago when Bezos set Amazon’s minimum wage at that meager level.

He points workers away from relying on our own capacities to organize and struggle against the bosses and urges them to rely on him to “stand up to Wall Street,” and make things



Top, U.S. Air Force photo/Roland Balik
Dissatisfaction among working people over declining wages, conditions, impact of rulers’ wars fuels crisis in Democratic and Republican parties. Above, remains of GI killed in Afghanistan arrive at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, July 2, 2019. Inset, Remote Area Medical team visits Baltimore, Sept. 7, 2019, to provide health care for a fraction of the millions who are unable to afford health insurance.



Remote Area Medical

fairer. He encourages dependency on the state and its massive regulatory bureaucracy to do good things for working people if they’ll just put him in office. This is his plan, rather than a struggle by workers and our allies to replace the state with our own government — one that can lead millions to transform social relations and ourselves in the process.

His democratic socialist supporters at *Jacobin* magazine say he would emulate Franklin Delano Roosevelt, enacting a raft of executive orders from the White House to do good, because there’s no way he could pass legislation to do so.

They point to how Roosevelt used anti-democratic orders to create the Office of Scientific Research and Development, as well as the key bodies to advance the U.S. rulers’ entry into the second imperialist world war — like the War Labor Board that tried to

impose a wage freeze on workers. The Democrats have spent three years — since the day Trump was elected — trying to overturn the vote that put him in office so they wouldn’t have to face him again this November.

Attacks on workers’ rights

“We might have to impeach him again,” headlined a *Washington Post* column by George Conway Feb. 10, citing the president’s dismissal of Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman and Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, from their jobs Feb. 7, as is his right as chief executive. Both testified against the president during House impeachment hearings.

In their drive to oust Trump and push out of politics the “deplorable” workers who refuse to vote the “right way,” the liberals target key political rights working people have won in struggle — like the right to vote at all.

‘Workers need our own party, a labor party’

Continued from page 3

as well as the unconditional right of the dispossessed Palestinian people to a contiguous, sovereign homeland on territory — including East Jerusalem — conquered and occupied by the Israeli government during the 1967 war.”

There have been no negotiations

for decades, she said, a result of anti-working-class leaderships there.

“The Palestinian people deserve a leadership that takes the moral high ground,” she said. “The U.S. proposal as it stands would leave the Palestinian state looking like a gerrymandered U.S. congressional district. But what could emerge from serious negotiations would have to recognize today’s realities. This could open the road to the fight for two viable states.”

Our starting point, as the SWP statement makes clear, Kennedy said, is “the class interests and solidarity of workers and toiling farmers across the Middle East — be they Palestinian, Jewish, Arab, Kurdish, Turkish, Persian or otherwise, and whatever their religious or other beliefs — as well as working people in the United States and around the world.”

Participants at the meeting contributed \$450 for the national SWP campaign.

Three books to be read as one ...

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions

KARL MARX
V.I. LENIN
LEON TROTSKY
FARRELL DOBBS
JACK BARNES

\$12

Special Offer!
All three \$30

THE TURN TO INDUSTRY
Forging a proletarian party
Jack Barnes

\$15

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power

JACK BARNES

\$20

The Turn to Industry and Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions \$20

Either book plus *Malcolm X, Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power* \$25

... about building the only kind of party worthy of the name “revolutionary” in the imperialist epoch.
See distributors page 5 or visit pathfinderpress.com

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA
Miami
Join in Launching the Socialist Workers Party 2020 Campaign in Florida! Speaker: Anthony Dutrow, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress, 27th District. Fri., Feb. 21, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5. 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 215. Tel.: (305) 929-8966.

ENGLAND
Manchester
Solidarity with Protests in India Against Anti-Muslim Laws. Speaker: Anne Howie, Communist League. Sat., Feb. 22, 6 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Office 329, 3rd floor, 3 Old Bank St., M2 7PE. Tel.: (0161) 312-8119.

Socialist Workers Party new campaign buttons

Alyson Kennedy for president
Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

Alyson Kennedy Malcolm Jarrett
Build a LABOR PARTY
For WORKERS CONTROL of production

for US President **VOTE** for Vice President

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

\$1 Available from SWP campaign offices listed on page 5

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Are you involved in a union organizing drive or strike? Brought solidarity to fellow workers on the picket line? Let us know! Send articles, photos and letters to themilitant@mac.com or through our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

East Bay transit workers fight bosses' takebacks, seek support

OAKLAND, Calif. — Bus drivers, mechanics and clerical workers employed by the AC Transit system in the East Bay held a midday rally outside the agency's headquarters Feb. 5, seeking to win more support for their fight against the company's takeback demands.

Members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 192 voted in September to authorize a strike across the system, which runs from Richmond to Fremont. The last three-year contract expired in June 2019.

The company wants to push through a rule saying if a worker takes off more than 30 days to recover from a debilitating injury or illness, they can be terminated.

Mechanic Pascal Jeandebien told the *Militant* that if the bosses' demand was in place today, he would have been fired, since he just went through a surgery that had him out for 60 days. The previous contract allowed workers to take up to a year.

Driver Terry Johnson said he's opposed to this rule change, which come on top of takebacks imposed in earlier contracts. "In 2015 they lowered the wages and pensions of the new hires," Johnson said. The company is actively recruiting drivers at the lower pay scale.

When asked if he had ever been on strike, Johnson replied, "No, but I'm ready."

Jacque Sharp has worked for AC Transit for 20 years. "An issue I have is that the shifts are sometimes 10 hours, without lunch," she said. "You might have just seven to 15 minutes to turn around at the end of a run, dependent on the traffic, to eat and use the bathroom."

— Eric Simpson and Betsey Stone

French workers continue protest against Macron's pension assault

PARIS — Sizable union-led protests have continued against French President Emmanuel Macron's attack on workers' pensions, despite the end of a six-week national rail strike Jan. 29 called to oppose the assaults. The

strike was joined by workers walking out in other industries.

Over 120,000 workers took to the streets Feb. 6, part of a series of national protests aimed at forcing the government to back down.

After striking for three weeks, workers at the Corsica Linea ferryboat line based in Marseille returned to work Jan. 31 after reaching an agreement with the bosses.

"Our strike is in solidarity with the sailors at La Meridionale whose jobs are being threatened," Corsica Linea sailor Jean-Pierre Ferraggioli told the *Militant* Jan. 27. "We are also against the retirement plan."

"We will be back for the next national demonstration," against Macron's pension cuts, he added.

Macron wants to raise the age workers can retire from 62 to 64 and impose a new system for calculating how much pension workers receive, with



Jean-Pierre Ferraggioli

Sailors march in Marseille, France, Jan. 29 as part of a national day of protest against government plans to raise retirement age from 62 to 64 and to cut back workers' pensions.

many getting less. In an unsuccessful attempt to quell the unrest in January, the government temporarily suspended the rise in the retirement age from taking effect until 2027.

Three waste incinerator plants here have been occupied by striking work-

ers since Jan. 23.

The National Assembly will debate Macron's proposals Feb. 17. The General Confederation of Workers and other union federations have called for another national day of protests on Feb. 20.

— Nat London

'This is a fight for our future,' Asarco strikers say

Continued from front page

copper ore for the first time. Miners and rail workers picketed outside to protest the operation. No other train has gone into the mine since, said Cheely.

Some 1,700 workers from seven unions have been on strike for over four months at the Mission and Silver Bell mines near Tucson; two other mining complexes in Arizona; and Asarco's refinery in Amarillo, Texas. The workers are fighting against a serious union-busting assault by the bosses, who refuse to negotiate. They insist on imposing steep concessions, including extending a decadelong wage freeze for most of the miners, tripling health care costs for workers and their families, and restricting the unions' right to protect workers on the job.

Workers and others in the surrounding communities see the stakes in the fight are high and are offering solidarity and aid.

"We have a lot of guys who'll stop by the line for a couple of hours. Many go by on their way to and from work," said Cheely, noting that a lot of the local's members live near the Mission and Sil-

ver Bell mines. "It's a lot of hands helping out that gets a lot done."

Asarco is owned by Grupo Mexico, one of the world's largest mining conglomerates. Arizona is the center of copper mining in the U.S., with most of the world's main copper bosses operating there, including Freeport-McMoRan and Grupo Mexico. As markets for copper are growing, there are new mines in development by Excelsior, Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton.

While the strikers have shut down the Amarillo refinery and Hayden smelter, the company continues some production at other complexes, using supervisors, nonunion contractors and some workers who have crossed the picket line.

"This is a fight for our future, for our families," Alex Terrazas, a striking miner at Mission Mine and president of United Steelworkers Local 937, says in a video posted on usw.org. "We're the working class. We're the people that matter. We keep this country going. We're the backbone."

"David and Goliath. You know. We will win this," adds Ruben Gonzales, Local 937 vice president. "What we got

to do is expose this company to everybody that's out there so everybody can see what's happening."

"I talked to my girls. It's a sacrifice for all of us," Teamsters Local 104 member Adrian Teran says in the video. "Christmas came around and things are tough but we're getting through it. I told them, 'Dad will never cross the line.' I'm trying to teach them that there's honor and respect here just to fight for what our past brothers have fought for. Until it's over I will not move on. I will not do anything until this contract is done."

Others have chipped in to help and express their support. "The business has been good but with the strike going on it has dropped about 50%," Warren Chester, owner of Eddie Tire in Hayden, Arizona, said on YouTube Feb. 7. "I've supported the union all along because I've worked with them and everything and it's a good thing. Especially a mine like this. You have to have the union. Whenever the scabs come, I have a list and I will not let them come in here. I'll just tell them they're not welcome." The video shows his list of scabs' names.

Solidarity for the strike is crucial — and well deserved. The miners welcome supporters joining their picket lines, and to the dinners and movie nights they organize every week, as well as donations to their food pantry and strike fund.

For strikers at the Ray Mine and Hayden smelter, send contributions and messages to USW Local 915, Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 550, Kearny, AZ 85137. For strikers at the Mission and Silver Bell mines near Tucson, send contributions to the Pima Area Labor Federation Community Services via paypal.me/palfcommunityservice. Solidarity messages to the strike can be sent via palfchair@gmail.com. For strikers at the Amarillo refinery, send to USW Local 5613, 4230 Texas Hwy 136, Amarillo, TX 79108.

—IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP—

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

UNITED STATES

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

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 1444 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 215. Zip: 33132. Tel: (305) 929-8966. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

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

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 455-0111. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

KENTUCKY: **Louisville:** 1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Zip: 40218. Tel: (502) 882-1041. Email: louisvilleswp@gmail.com

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

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

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 257-5753. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com **Albany:** 285 Washington Ave. #1R. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 810-1586. Email: albanyswp@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** P.O. Box 79142. Zip: 15216. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: **Dallas:** 1005 W. Jefferson Blvd., Suite 207. Zip: 75208. Tel: (469) 513-1051. Email: dallasswp@gmail.com

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

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

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

CANADA

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

FRANCE

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

NEW ZEALAND

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

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

New York City
Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa
Sat. March 7 — 6:30 p.m
at The People's Forum 320 W. 37th St

Cuba's fight against Ebola in Africa is 'a beacon of light'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

During a winter when a new epidemic, the coronavirus, is spreading rapidly in China and beyond, when more traditional influenzas have killed some 20,000 people in the U.S. alone, and at a time when Washington is escalating its economic war against the Cuban Revolution, the Pathfinder Press publication of *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* is a beacon of light.

IN REVIEW

The book — a gripping account by Enrique Ubieta Gómez about the Cuban Revolution's response to the 2014 epidemic of the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa — is a powerful argument for socialist revolution and a close-up look at the human beings such a revolution produces. It's impossible not to compare the compassion and solidarity of the policies of the Cuban government and the men and women who carry them out and with the devil-take-the-hindmost profit-driven character of medical care in the U.S., where the care you need is a costly commodity. Much of the book is interviews with those Cubans who volunteered to lead the fight against the disease.

Ubieta's account also thoroughly disproves Washington's slander that Cuba's international medical assistance program engages in "exploitative and coercive labor practices" toward its volunteer doctors, as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said last summer, or that Cuban doctors' chief motivation in taking international assignments is to get their hands on more money.

When the World Health Organization declared the Ebola epidemic in West Africa a "Public Health Emergency" in August 2014 and the United Nations appealed for nations to join the fight to contain and reverse it, several governments responded with economic aid. The U.S. rulers sent 500 soldiers to build hospitals and other facilities.

At that point Cuba was the only government to respond with medical personnel.

12,000 volunteer to go

Cuba's revolutionary leadership acted rapidly, calling for volunteers. Some 12,000 doctors and nurses answered. Of these, 256 were selected and began

specialized training. The first contingent left Cuba for Sierra Leone Sept. 19, others followed in the next few weeks.

Dr. Luis Escalona, an officer in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, exemplifies the attitude of the medical volunteers. He called the head of the medical services department about the mission, who told him, "We're looking for people willing to go to Africa and fight Ebola."

"I replied, 'Sign me up,'" Escalona recounts.

"He said, 'You could die in Africa.'

"I repeated, 'Sign me up.'"

Ubieta quotes what Fidel Castro, the central leader of the Cuban Revolution, said about the volunteers, comparing the Cuban fight against Ebola to the country's military volunteers who joined Angola's battle against apartheid South Africa's invasions decades earlier.

"Just as no one has the slightest doubt that the hundreds of thousands of combatants who went to Angola and other African and Latin American countries gave humanity an example that can never be erased from human history," Castro wrote, "it cannot be denied that the heroic actions of the army of white coats will occupy one of the highest places of honor in that history."

The Cubans methods were different

Cuban doctors and nurses told Ubieta how they overcame their fear with humor, comradeship and dedication to their work. How they comforted the dying as they fought for the survival of each and every person. How they treated their patients with respect and dignity. How they learned about and appreciated the distinctive culture of the people they treated.

The deaths of children touched them particularly deeply. "These were hard blows," Ricardo Zamora Álvarez de la Campa, a nurse, said, "and what always came to mind were our own kids, who were nearly the same ages: four, five years old."

While the Cuban volunteers were putting enormous effort into saving lives, they also were seeing up close the social and political conditions that allowed the Ebola epidemic to flare up in West Africa. Ubieta places the blame squarely on the capitalist system, whose exploitation holds much of Africa's people in underdevelopment and poverty.

Dr. Jorge Delgado, head of the Cuban brigade in Sierra Leone, explains, "Ebola is a disease of poverty ... just as



Photos by Enrique Ubieta Gómez

Top: Cuban doctors and Guinean staff at shift change at the Coyah treatment center in Guinea, January 2015. "As they reported for duty, Cubans always made jokes," writes Ubieta. "It lifted their spirits and those of patients and colleagues." **Below,** three patients who recovered. Now immune, some former patients stayed on to work with the doctors.

malaria is a disease of poverty, along with pneumonia, meningitis, and all other infectious diseases associated with malnutrition." Delgado said that in a few days previous to his interview, 12 or 13 children had been admitted to his clinic. "None tested positive for Ebola. What did they test positive for? Pneumonia, cerebral malaria, gastroenteritis, meningitis, malnutrition with sepsis of various kinds — all associated with poverty."

"Capitalism engenders poverty, biological warfare, the profit drive, and ecological catastrophes," Ubieta comments. "In Liberia, the infant mortality rate is 56 per 1,000 live births (in Cuba it's 4.2). Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births is 990 (44 in Cuba). ... Yet Liberia has only 0.1 doctor per 10,000 inhabitants. In Sierra Leone the figures are even starker."

Red Zone shows the sharp contrast between the approach of the Cuban revolutionaries and that of the imperialist countries. "We can fight for the lives of patients," Dr. Carlos Castro Baras said. "But an epidemic is defeated on the ground by actions taken with the people, cutting off contacts with those infected, tracking the chain of transmission, raising awareness among them."

Epidemiologist Osvaldo Miranda Gómez described how they developed relationships with the Ebola patients and won their confidence. "One afternoon there were about five or six patients gathered together. They were happy because they knew they would be discharged the following day," he said. "We had a cell phone playing music, and we started to joke around and sing, and they started dancing. It was nice, because some of them had come to the treatment center in serious condition."

Some of the patients became volunteers in the clinic, Dr. Miranda said. "It's a very rewarding experience, because they're the ones who help convince new patients."

Red Zone also points to the future of the Cuban Revolution, which has sur-

vived for more than six decades in spite of a bipartisan political and economic war waged against it by 12 consecutive U.S. administrations.

Only two Cuban volunteers died during the mission, both of malaria, and only one, Dr. Félix Báez, contracted Ebola. He was transferred in a coma to Switzerland.

When it wasn't clear whether Báez would survive, the Cuban press kept the population up to date on his condition and published a brief message from his son, Alejandro, that elicited an explosion of support across the island. As Báez recovered, Alejandro published another letter expressing gratitude for that support and taking on those who had questioned the mission.

"Yes, my father got sick, but that doesn't mean, as many say, that he shouldn't have gone. I say it's just the opposite," Alejandro wrote. "My father was over there putting his life on the line because he felt it was his duty to help those who needed it the most. But I say: isn't that what makes us human?"

After his recovery, Báez insisted on returning to his post in Africa.

Cuba's revolution is an example

Ubieta sees the spirit of Cuban volunteers in Africa and on other international missions as an indicator of the continuing strength of the revolution. "The US blockade continues, and it punishes average Cubans. But whenever there is a call to action, thousands of volunteers step forward," he said. "The hundreds of doctors and nurses who volunteered and those who went to West Africa are irrefutable proof of a fact: among the people there are moral reserves — reserves that need to be summoned."

For class-conscious workers in the U.S. and other imperialist countries, reading *Red Zone* can inspire us to emulate the Cuban Revolution by building a mass working-class movement to take political power and transform ourselves in the process.

Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa

"Just as the Cuban combatants in Angola set an example that can never be erased, the heroic actions of Cuba's army of white coats will occupy a place of honor."

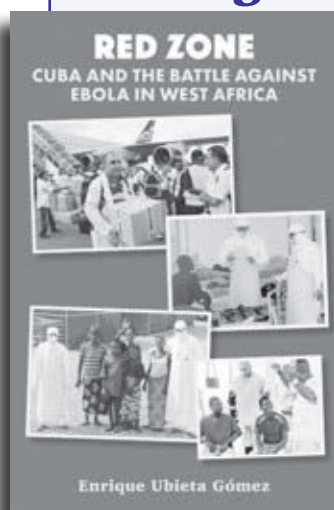
—Fidel Castro, October 2014

Special offer: \$14
Normal cover price \$17

In English or Spanish

See page 5 for distributor nearest you or visit:

pathfinderpress.com



Havana book fair highlights solidarity between Cuba, Vietnam

BY RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA — The history of solidarity between revolutionary Cuba and Vietnam in the struggle against imperialist domination is a major theme of this year's Havana International Book Fair, which opened here Feb. 6. Vietnam is the country of honor at the 10-day festival of literature and culture.

The book fair has featured book presentations, panel discussions and cultural performances highlighting Vietnam's rich history and culture. The well-attended Vietnamese pavilion exhibits books on topics from art and literature to the hard-fought liberation war against Washington in the 1960s and '70s.

A large multipanel photo display there depicts the solidarity the Cuban people and government gave the Vietnamese during their struggle for reunification against the U.S. rulers' brutal war and occupation of the South. The display begins in December 1960, when Cuba's new revolutionary government established diplomatic relations with Hanoi.

The exhibit shows the 1963 founding of the Cuban Committee in Solidarity with South Vietnam, headed by revolutionary leader Melba Hernández. Other photos show the crowds of Cubans who welcomed visits by Vietnamese freedom fighters to Havana, and the equally warm response Cuban revolutionaries received in northern Vietnam during the war.

The Vietnamese "spirit of struggle was like the Cuban spirit," said Nguyen Quang Thieu, vice president of the Union of Writers of Vietnam, at a panel on the 60th anniversary of Cuba-Vietnam relations.

Thieu pointed to the key factors that led the Vietnamese to prevail over U.S. imperialism. "There were two sides to our victory — our revolutionary determination and the growing unwillingness of U.S. soldiers and the U.S. public to carry on the war," he said.



Cubans browse books at Vietnamese pavilion at Havana Book Fair. Displays depict Cuba's solidarity with Vietnam and its battle for independence and unification against Washington's war.

The panel included renowned Cuban revolutionary journalist Marta Rojas, who in 1965 was the first Latin American war correspondent to visit National Liberation Front combatants in areas

of southern Vietnam freed from U.S. control. Also speaking was Nguyen Phuong Nga, president of the Vietnam-Cuba Friendship Association.

In another program, Antonio Guer-

rero, one of five Cuban revolutionaries who spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons, joined members of the Vietnamese delegation and exchanged poetry in a presentation of *Diario de prisión* (Prison Diary), a book of poems by Ho Chi Minh, the central leader of the Vietnamese independence struggle.

Several books available at the fair, either in Spanish or Vietnamese, included the 19th century account of Vietnam's anti-colonial fight against French rule that José Martí, Cuba's national hero, wrote for Cuban children.

In a presentation of his book *Fidel: Un guerrillero antillano en el paralelo 17* (Fidel: A Caribbean guerrilla at the 17th Parallel), Cuban journalist José Ángel Llamo Camejo described Fidel Castro's visit to Vietnam in September 1973. Castro crossed the 17th Parallel separating North and South Vietnam, becoming the first head of state to visit the liberated zones shortly after Washington had been forced to withdraw all its ground troops.

The Vietnamese won full control of their unified country in April 1975 — a victory against U.S. imperialism that inspired working people worldwide.

Sign up for the 2020 May Day Brigade to Cuba!

BY JANET POST

The 15th May Day International Brigade of Voluntary Work and Solidarity with Cuba will bring working people and youth from around the world to Cuba April 26 to May 10. The brigade is sponsored by Cuba's Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

It takes place as the U.S. rulers are carrying out a series of new moves against the Cuban Revolution, seeking to isolate Cuba and punish the Cuban people. The brigade provides a unique opportunity for supporters of the revolution in the U.S. and elsewhere to meet and talk with Cuban workers, farmers and youth, to

become better armed to return home and counter Washington's lies.

A number of the events are co-sponsored by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Cuba's national labor union.

Participants will be based at the Julio Antonio Mella camp in Cai-mito, outside Havana. They will join in volunteer labor alongside Cuban farmers in the fields and meet leaders of Cuba's women, youth and trade union organizations. Brigadistas will visit health care centers, factories, universities, farm cooperatives, museums and cultural venues in a number of cities to learn more about the revolution.

A highlight of the brigade will be joining the million-strong May Day mobilization celebrating the 61st anniversary of the triumph of the revolution. It's a mass outpouring of support for a living revolution and a powerful way to tell U.S. imperialism, "Hands off!" This year the international brigade will help lead the march.

The May Day mobilization will be followed by an international solidarity conference in Havana.

Supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the U.S. are getting out the word about the brigade. In Louisville, Kentucky, Walmart worker and Socialist Workers Party member Kaitlin Estill has been invited by Bishop Dennis Lyons of Gospel Missionary Church to speak about the brigade on his "Voice of Louisville" radio program.

She met Lyons last year while campaigning for the SWP gubernatorial candidates. "We reconnected this year when Bishop Lyons wrote a letter to Indiana prison authorities supporting prisoners' right to receive the *Militant* after it and some other publications had been impounded," said Estill.

The brigade is also an opportunity to bring to Cubans the reality of the class struggle in the U.S. and political activities participants have been part of. Last year 320 people from 21 countries, including 65 from the U.S., joined the brigade. The National Network on Cuba, a coalition of groups in solidarity with the Cuban people, is organizing the U.S. delegation.

Travel arrangements are being organized in accordance with U.S. guidelines by Marazul Tours travel agency. Total cost, not including airfare to Cuba, is \$725. You can sign up through March 27, so get your application today. Get the forms and more information at www.nnoc.info or email iCanGoToCuba@nnoc.info.

Miami caravan hits US restrictions on Cuba travel

Continued from front page

ary Cuba, calls for the U.S. government to normalize relations and demands an end to the U.S. economic war against Cuba's revolution.

The attack on the group's head-

quarters comes as the U.S. rulers have stepped up their slander campaign and other efforts to make the Cuban people pay for support of their revolution. The new travel restrictions, which make it harder for Cuban Americans to visit relatives still in Cuba, are part of these attacks.

Fifty cars kicked off the caravan festooned with Cuban flags and signs featuring the demands of the protest. They traveled over 15 miles on SW 8th Street — known here as *Calle Ocho* — with horns honking. The protest attracted more participants as it snaked its way in disciplined formation through the neighborhood, doubling in size.

While Little Havana had been considered the turf of Cuban counterrevolutionaries in Miami in the past, today it is overwhelmingly Cuban American workers who face the same kind of carnage as all other U.S. workers from the crisis of capitalism.

When protest organizers arrived and began lining up the first groups

of cars, a handful of rightists tried to disrupt the caravan. The Alianza's marshals refused to be provoked and, when the police showed up, the rightists fled.

Participants in the caravan included all ages, from youth to Juan Hidalgo, a veteran Alianza member who recounts how he fought alongside Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra mountains during the Cuban Revolution when he was 16 years old.

In a press release issued after the protest, Gómez thanked all those who helped make the caravan a step forward for the freedom to publically oppose the U.S. government restrictions on travel to Cuba. Eleven different groups had come together to build the action, including the Antonio Maceo Brigade, the Bolivarian Circle of Miami, Cuban American Defense League and the Socialist Workers Party.

Anthony Dutrow is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 27th District in Florida.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes



This is a book about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made. It's about the class struggle in the U.S., where the potential of workers and farmers is today

as utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of the Cuban toilers. And just as wrongly. \$10

Also in Spanish, French, Farsi

pathfinderpress.com

Answer US slanders against Cuba!

The Socialist Workers Party campaign urges working people to speak out against the U.S. rulers' slander attacks on Cuba's internationalist medical missions and their over-60-year economic war against the Cuban people at home.

Washington claims Cuba's medical volunteers in Africa, Latin America and Asia are grossly exploited and that the Cuban government seeks to interfere in other country's affairs by "providing care in exchange for pledges of loyalty."

It is beyond the comprehension of the U.S. capitalist rulers that doctors would volunteer to provide health care in the most isolated regions of the world because they are motivated by proletarian internationalism and solidarity, not by cash.

The capitalists despise the Cuban Revolution and have stepped up their economic warfare against the

people there, imposing more and more biting sanctions and travel restrictions.

This has an impact in Cuba. More electrical blackouts. Less paper and printing supplies, meaning fewer books available at the Havana International Book Fair. More scarcity of basic goods. But U.S. imperialism has always underestimated Cuban working people. They've stood up to U.S. aggression for more than 60 years and they're not about to give up now.

Working people and youth have the opportunity to learn the truth about the Cuban Revolution with their own eyes by joining this year's May Day International Brigade to Cuba April 26 to May 10. And then return home better armed to answer the U.S. slander campaign and oppose the U.S. economic war on Cuba. Sign up today!

Coronavirus: Need for revolution in health care

Continued from front page

Provincial bureaucrats in Wuhan, unwilling to take decisive action without clear directives from Beijing, allowed the viral outbreak to spread.

Accepting Beijing's initial reassurances that things were under control, officials of the World Health Organization waited a month before issuing an international health emergency alert Jan. 30. By then the virus had spread well beyond China.

Ignoring the mounting human toll, the capitalist business press in the U.S. and elsewhere focused their attention on the threat to stock market prices and trading profits.

One of the first individuals in China to sound the alarm was Dr. Li Wenliang. He raised with colleagues online seeing a strange new pneumonia-causing virus that required special precautions. Li was reprimanded by his hospital bosses and taken away by the police, who forced him and some others to sign confessions and pledge to stop spreading "rumors." But it was the disease that was spreading.

When Li got the virus and died, it led to an explosion of anger and protests. Government censors were overwhelmed by online calls for freedom of speech and an end to state censorship.

As the scope of the disease became clearer, the Chinese rulers undertook a rapid and dramatic shift. An unprecedented quarantine lockdown was imposed on Wuhan and the surrounding Hubei province. The Lunar New Year holiday was extended and a large swathe of production and distribution in the world's second largest economy was shut down.

The shutdown of much of China's economy threatens to cut into global economic growth. Chinese tourism abroad has dried up and many Chinese students have been blocked from returning to educational institutions overseas. Many governments worldwide also imposed quarantine steps, such as cutting all travel links to China. The rulers in Russia and North Korea virtually shut down their borders with China.

Fighting disease a social question

This progression has stirred outrage and debate in China and across the world about how to deal with such major public health crises.

There is a shining example of what is possible — the volunteer "army of white coats," in the words of Cuba's communist leader, Fidel Castro, in October 2014 — the doctors and nurses who, with courage and discipline, extended their professional experience and working-class solidarity to successfully help lead the battle that eradicated Ebola in West Africa by mid-2015.

Because of the social conditions in Africa, a result of decades of oppressive colonial rule, that outbreak's 28,652 cases resulted in some 11,325 deaths. The death rate in China today is far less.

This example of what human beings are capable of when science and culture are wielded by a revolutionary people in power is described in detail in *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*. (A review of this book appears on page 6.)

A majority of the viral infections outside China have been among the 3,700 crew and passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, forced to sit off the Japanese port of Yokohama. New cases keep extending the time those in contact with these individuals are being kept aboard. Those infected with the virus are rushed to specialized hospitals on shore, while the rest have to sit on the boat and wait their turn.

Another cruise ship — the Westerdam, with more than 2,000 aboard — is roaming the South China Sea with no government allowing it to dock, although there are no confirmed cases of the virus on board.

Most of the deaths have been in Wuhan, a port hub of 11 million people on the Yangtze River, and in that region. The quarantine zone around Wuhan was extended to encircle up to 60 million people. The lockdown in major cities, towns and villages confined many in their homes. They get by with food delivered by messengers who carry notes showing they don't have a temperature.

Despite Beijing's goal to become a technology superpower, there are less than two doctors for every 1,000 people in China. In the imperialist U.S. there are 2.6 per 1,000, largely deployed in the big cities. In sharp contrast, there are nine doctors per 1,000 in revolutionary Cuba, one of the highest ratios in the world.

Health system overwhelmed

"The hospital systems have been completely overwhelmed by the number of people who have been seeking care," Gabriel Leung, dean of the medical school at the University of Hong Kong, told the Feb. 9 *Financial Times*, describing long lines and overcrowded emergency rooms in China.

In a widely publicized move, the Chinese government deployed soldiers, using resources from its state-linked construction companies, to build two new hospitals with some 2,600 beds in a couple weeks in Wuhan. But this is far from sufficient. "There are too many patients, far too many of them," Wang Jing, a nurse at Wuhan Union Hospital West Campus, one of the facilities designated for coronavirus patients, told the *Times*. "And the demand for beds far outstrips supply."

Concerned about the impact of the unprecedented shutdown of much of China's already slowing capitalist economy, the state bureaucracy has shifted gears again. President Xi Jinping has reappeared — after virtually dropping out of sight for weeks — to warn top officials to refrain from "more restrictive measures" and to get the factories working again. And he ordered the state media to focus on "economic recovery."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry appealed to foreign governments Feb. 11 to lift their travel restrictions, pleading this was needed for the health of the global economy (whatever it might mean to the health of the people). Worried about the combined health and economic crisis fueling domestic instability, the Chinese government now seeks to downplay the disease again and deflect blame from themselves by firing a range of provincial officials.

Iraqi workers protest

Continued from front page

haven't been answered, we will remain here," Sajjad Muyed told Al Jazeera. Muyed, a college student, has spent more than 120 days at the tent encampment in Tahrir Square in Baghdad.

Since the start of October working people and youth have held demonstrations and organized sit-ins in the capital and cities across the south of the country.

Demonstrators in Tahrir Square and other protest encampments are demanding more jobs, the provision of electricity and water, and a halt to government corruption. They want an end to government by parties that have held office since a political setup organized along sectarian religious lines was imposed after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. And they oppose the Iranian rulers' extensive military and political interference in their country, as well as that by Washington.

Iraqi security forces fired at crowds in the southern city of Nasiriyah Feb. 10, killing a demonstrator.

More than 600 Iraqis have been killed in less than five months of protests.

Al-Sadr called Feb. 5 for his supporters to help security forces. Hours later at least eight protesters were killed in Najaf, when al-Sadr's militia members stormed the protest site there, firing live ammunition and chasing down protesters trying to flee. People rushed to donate blood after hospitals appealed for help to the injured.

"The Sadrists and SWAT forces accompanying other, unknown militia members opened fire at the protesters," 25-year-old Alaa Mohammed Hussein told the Middle East Eye news outlet. Nearby Iraqi security forces "did nothing to prevent them killing peaceful demonstrators."

Following the assaults in Najaf and Karbala, people in the provinces of Nasiriyah, Muthanna and Wasit and the city of Basra poured into the streets in solidarity. "Najaf we will never forget you, Baghdad with you," chanted demonstrators in Tahrir Square.

On Feb. 7 al-Sadr's forces took over and evicted demonstrators from the "Turkish Restaurant" tower overlooking Tahrir Square, tearing down portraits of martyred protesters displayed there. Several protesters were seized, "tortured and beaten" for hours, Osamah, a 26-year-old from Baghdad, told Rudaw.

Al-Sadr initially backed anti-government protests in October, but turned on them after Mohammed Al-lawi was appointed prime minister in early February. Al-Sadr has increased his collaboration with Tehran, after previously opposing the Iranian rulers' intervention in Iraq. He heads the largest coalition of parties in the Iraqi parliament.

Following Allawi's nomination as prime minister, thousands of students from different universities in Baghdad and in several cities in the southern provinces marched to protest his appointment.

"They are not listening to us, and want to impose someone from the political parties on us, which is unacceptable," Muyed told Al Jazeera.

Syrian gov't intensifies Idlib attacks

While the Iraqi government has failed to prevent actions aimed at bringing it down, political instability elsewhere in the Middle East continues to be fueled by conflicts between rival capitalist powers.

In neighboring Syria, President Bashar al-Assad is escalating military assaults on opposition-held areas in Idlib province, including assaults on forces allied with the Turkish government. Thirteen Turkish soldiers have been killed in these attacks since Feb. 2, as Assad steps up efforts to retake control of the area, backed by Moscow and its forces stationed in Syria.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to unleash airstrikes and ground attacks against Assad's forces Feb. 12. He has sent some 5,000 Turkish troops into Idlib in the past month.

The Syrian government offensive is exacerbating the disastrous conditions working people face there, with 700,000 people fleeing their homes in the past two months, heading toward the Turkish border.

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com