

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'A US working-class party that is serious about socialist revolution'
— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 84/NO. 10 MARCH 16, 2020

Budget failure at EU meeting shows the bloc is unraveling

BY TERRY EVANS

A rancorous summit over the European Union's effort to adopt a new six-year budget broke up Feb. 21 with no agreement among its rival capitalist powers. The deep divisions among them show that far from coming together after the U.K. walked out of the EU in January, the competing capitalist ruling classes face intractable conflicts that are tearing at the seams of the bloc.

And the pipe dream of some day having a superimperialist state in Europe is shattering.

The governments of Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden refused to agree to demands they pay more into the coffers to make up for the loss of revenue following the U.K.'s exit.

They are backed by the rulers of Germany — the strongest capitalist power in the EU — who also have no intention of paying more. But the four
Continued on page 2

Say no to US gov't slanders against Cuban Revolution!

BY JOHN STUDER

Washington has stepped up its economic and political war against the Cuban Revolution over the past year — increasing the shortages and hardships faced by working people there. The U.S. rulers, and their Democratic and Republican parties alike, have tried to bring down Cuba's revolutionary government since it came to power in 1959.

And their effort has become part of the 2020 presidential campaign, as it has before. In 1960, the liberal John F. Kennedy blamed then Vice President Richard Nixon for allowing the Cuban Revolution to succeed.

Today they've focused on remarks made by Bernie Sanders, who says Cuba's government is "a dictatorship," but says you have to admit the 1961 literacy drive there was a good thing. All the presidential wannabes from both parties agreed they would like to see the Cuban Revolution over-
Continued on page 11

For-profit US 'health care' will increase virus threat

Revolutionary Cuba points the road forward



ACN/Rodolfo Blanco Cúe

Clinic in Camagüey, Cuba, in March. Through its neighborhood doctors, nurses and special programs put in place since outbreak of coronavirus, Cuba has mobilized to confront new disease. Unlike the for-profit system in capitalist countries, in Cuba no one is left on their own.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

The coronavirus contagion is now spreading faster outside China, where it first appeared in December, than inside. The Chinese regime's extremely aggressive lockdown of hundreds of millions slowed the advance of the disease for now, but by March 2 the highly contagious COVID-19 strain had spread to at least 82 countries. The new hotspots are in Iran, South Korea, northern Italy and Japan.

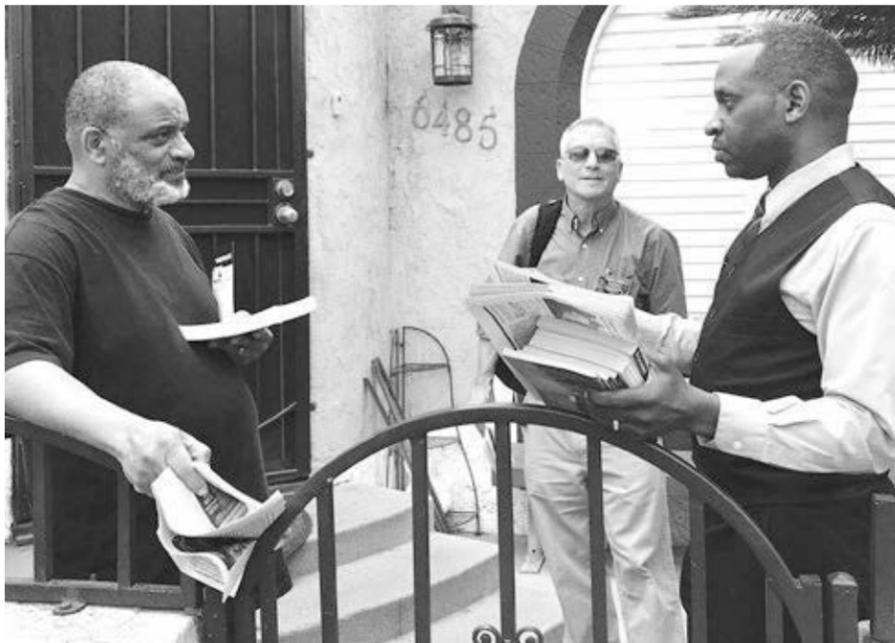
COVID-19 is a new disease, and that makes it more dangerous. So far no government — except revolutionary Cuba — has mobilized all its re-

sources to prepare and organize its people to fight it.

The death toll as of March 4 was 3,221 and confirmed cases were over 94,000. The march of the virus is compounding economic, political and social crises facing capitalist govern-
Continued on page 6

Socialist Workers Party campaigns in Los Angeles:

'We need our own party, a labor party'



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Retiree Ernest Williams, left, in North Long Beach Feb. 27, tells SWP candidate for vice president Malcolm Jarrett, right, and campaigner Bernie Senter that half his pension goes for medical expenses. SWP calls for government-guaranteed cradle-to-grave health care, Jarrett said.

BY BERNIE SENTER

LOS ANGELES — The Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president, Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett, campaigned among workers at the Farmer John pork processing plant here Feb. 28 during shift change.

"It's good you're here in the community and I can meet and talk with you," said Roberta Young, one of dozens of workers who stopped to talk with them. Kennedy works as a ca-

shier at Walmart and Jarrett is a commercial cook in Pittsburgh.

"The rich and their parties — the Democrats and Republicans — think they know what's best for working people," Jarrett told her. "The bosses they serve say they can't afford to pay higher wages and then just want us to work harder."

"I work in the bacon department and make \$12.83 an hour," Young said, and that isn't a wage you can live on.

Continued on page 4

Asarco copper strikers face a serious fight and deserve solidarity

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

With their strike against Asarco now into its fifth month, copper workers continue to put up their picket lines 24/7 and to win solidarity in the face of the company's blatant union busting and refusal to negotiate.

"They're fighting for what they deserve, for their jobs, and we have to support them," Reyna Freeman told Spanish-language Univision TV Feb. 25 at the Mission Mine picket line in Sahuarita, Arizona. She and her husband had stopped by to drop off firewood. "It's not the first time we've come by. And we are going to keep on supporting them. To do what we can."

Frank Ortíz, another worker, also came to show solidarity. "I used to work at the Duval mine and we were forced out on strike every few
Continued on page 3

Syrian, Turkish forces clash in Idlib as 9-year civil war widens

BY TERRY EVANS

The Syrian and Turkish governments are intensifying airstrikes on each other's forces as they fight over control of Syria's Idlib province, a region held by armed groups opposed to the Bashar al-Assad regime.

Alongside the two fighting forces, Moscow, Tehran and Washington also
Continued on page 11

Inside

- Campaign for women's right to abortion launched in Argentina 3
- 'Workers need to rely on themselves in fight for safety' 4
- SWP candidates tell Asarco strikers, 'We'll tell your story' 5
- Muslims in India protest attacks on citizenship rights 6
- Indigenous people debate building Canada pipeline 7
- Editorial: 'Only working class can protect humanity' 11**

Budget failure at EU meeting

Continued from front page

northern governments can no longer count on backing from the British government, a former ally in their recurring fights over who pays for the ever-rising size of the EU budget.

The rulers of these wealthier nations begrudge demands from the rulers in weaker countries in eastern and southern Europe that want to continue receiving special subsidies, dubbed “cohesion funds” by EU bureaucrats, aimed at papering over inequalities between member states that have very different levels of industrial and economic development.

Though it's far from being a state, the EU member nations have assembled a vast bureaucracy in Brussels that churns out rules and instructions it tries to impose on constituent governments. And it feasts upon a huge trough of cash.

But the bottom line is that from the beginning the EU was structured to benefit the ruling classes in Germany and, to a lesser degree, France — the two most powerful imperialist powers on the continent — at the expense of the others.

Last year a majority in the EU's parliament forced through new rules allowing it to punish governments by withholding these “cohesion funds” if they don't comply with the EU's dictates. The move was adopted at the behest of Berlin and Paris, in order to strengthen the EU's ability to discipline new governments elected in Hungary and Poland. EU bureaucrats claim that anti-EU ruling parties in both countries ran afoul of what they haughtily call the EU's “core values,” by extending government control over their judicial systems.

As the dispute continues to simmer, EU officials are considering whether to ask their European Court of Justice to take action against the Polish government.

These attempts by the rulers of Germany and France to use the EU to impose their orders on different nations fuel the divisions rending the bloc. A European “union” among capitalist rivals that are sharply divided by cutthroat conflicts for markets and resources was always an illusion. But creating such a “union” and imposing its rules made conflicts that were never far from the surface more volatile — and had ruinous consequences for the working class.

The adoption of the common euro currency by many EU countries in 1999, supposedly to pave the way for unity and prosperity, gave the German rulers even greater clout over neighboring governments. For all practical purposes, the euro is the German mark under a new name.

Under the impact of the 2008 financial crash, Berlin and Paris accelerated their plunder of the weaker nations, hitting working people in Greece and Spain especially hard. They insisted the Greek government carry out assaults on workers and farmers as a condition for receiving new EU loans. The government obliged, slashing the minimum wage, imposing massive layoffs, cutting pensions and benefits and hiking sales taxes in the face of protests by working people. In 2018 EU bosses forced the Greek rulers to agree to restrictions on spending for 40 more years!

French President Emmanuel Macron berated those governments at the sum-



dpa picture alliance/Alamy stock

Greek teachers protest against layoffs in Athens, March 21, 2014. “Merkel out” sign shows anger over Berlin's demand that Athens impose greater “austerity” on working people to get new EU loans. In 2018, Greek rulers agreed to restrictions on social spending for next 40 years!

mit who opposed increasing the size of the EU budget, complaining, “It would be unacceptable to have a Europe that compensates for Britain leaving by scaling back its means.”

Macron says fund ‘EU army’

Initial budget proposals had included cuts to the EU's military spending, which Macron wants to expand in order to create a European-wide army he dreams Paris will command.

For decades the rulers in Germany and other powers in Europe have sought protection under Washington's nuclear umbrella and the massive military forces it deploys. They've let their own military forces languish, under the illusion they can compete with rivals around the world using just EU tariffs, with no serious military might to stand behind them.

The EU and its predecessors were founded as a trading bloc by weakened capitalist classes in Europe in the decades after the Second World War, when the U.S. emerged as the uncontested preeminent imperialist power.

As the EU expanded, many of the capitalist parties across the continent and beyond saw it as a model for a globalized world — in which different economies were increasingly integrated and interdependent, and national conflicts would be a thing of the past.

But in the real world of dog-eat-dog capitalism, where exploiting ruling

classes are driven to compete with each other or go under, such harmonious relations can never be realized. Each ruling class uses its state power, including the armed forces, to press forward its interests against competitors. Today, with the prospect of a new economic slowdown and sharpening conflicts, so-called globalization is coming apart.

This fact is vividly reinforced by the crisis created for many bosses and their governments worldwide caused by the shutdown of production in China from the coronavirus outbreak there.

“Conflicts between rival national capitalist classes and governments are blowing apart the myth of a ‘united Europe’ at an accelerating pace.”

pathfinderpress.com

THE MILITANT

Back prisoners protesting abusive conditions

The ‘Militant’ supports the fight by inmates against abusive conditions, solitary confinement, brutality and extended lockdowns in prisons around the country.

This includes fights against authorities’ bans on literature and newspapers, including the ‘Militant.’

American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia
Rachele Fruit, SWP senatorial candidate, at speakout against conditions in Georgia jail.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

<p>NEW READERS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$5 for 12 issues</p> <hr/> <p>RENEWAL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$10 for 12 weeks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$20 for 6 months</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$35 for 1 year</p>	<p>NAME _____</p> <p>ADDRESS _____</p> <p>CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____</p> <p>PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____</p> <p>UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____</p> <p><small>CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018. OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT: WWW.THEMILITANT.COM</small></p>
---	---

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)

The Militant

Vol. 84/No. 10
Closing news date: March 4, 2020
Editor: John Studer
Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martín 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.

Campaign for women's right to abortion launched in Argentina

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Led by young women, fighters for abortion rights are on the move in Argentina. In the past few years they have organized a series of large mobilizations, won growing support and forced a first-ever vote on legalization in the National Congress that lost by only a few votes in 2018. This vote came just a few months after hundreds of thousands marched in cities across the country on International Women's Day, March 8. Now they're pressing to win a new vote.

"I have been active in this campaign for 15 years and we have seen a huge change over the recent period, I would say since 2015," Victoria Tesoriero, a spokesperson for the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion, told the *Militant* by phone from Buenos Aires Feb. 28. "The next few days are very important to us. The president opens this session of Congress March 1 and he says he will present a bill to legalize abortion."

The details of the bill President Alberto Fernández will introduce have not yet been made public. The 2018 bill would have made abortion legal in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.

"We organized a big mobilization Feb. 19 with tens of thousands participating across the country to put pressure on the government and the president," Tesoriero said.

Young women lead the way

The growing strength of the movement and popularity of the campaign reflect a transformation in people's attitudes. Tesoriero said an important change is how widely and openly abortion is discussed today, as opposed to before when nobody talked about it.

"We have a new generation joining. Most significant is the number of young women, 15, 16, 17 years old. They play a key role in winning others, including their mothers and other family members," she said. "And we have international support. While Congress debated in 2018 there were actions in front of Argentine embassies in 100 cities around the world."

In today's mobilizations, chants like "It's my body, I decide" are popular, reflecting the view that the fight is a question of equal protection under the law and a democratic right for women.

"We have always campaigned that abortion is a health issue," Tesoriero said. "We believe this is how you can win support broadly among the general public." Under Argentina's current law

abortion is legal only in cases of rape or risk to a woman's life or health. Women in the ruling class and middle classes can afford to end an unwanted pregnancy by seeing costly doctors in the big cities or outside the country. But working-class women and those living in rural areas are forced to turn to "clandestine" abortions, the leading cause of maternal death in the country today.

The forces leading the opposition are Catholic and evangelical church officials. The Catholic bishops conference has launched a campaign, "Yes to woman, yes to life," to stop the decriminalization. Their next action against changing the law will be a Mass on International Women's Day in the national shrine of Our Lady of Luján, patroness of Argentina.

Growing numbers of Catholics do not follow the call of the bishops, a reflection of the broader changes in public opinion in recent years. Catholics for Choice is one of the stronger groups marching for abortion rights today.

Fight to broaden support

"But one thing we are trying to do is take abortion out of being seen as only

Asarco strike is 'serious fight and deserves solidarity'

Continued from front page

years. So I know what they're going through," he said.

"We've spoken to local politicians, but I don't see them putting on any kind of pressure," striker Kurt Kuta told the reporters.

Some 1,700 workers from seven unions have been on strike since Oct. 13 at Asarco's mine complexes in Sahuarita, Hayden and Ray in Arizona and its refinery in Amarillo, Texas. The company insists on an extension of the decadelong wage freeze for most of the miners, freezing pensions, doubling or tripling health care costs, and restricting the unions' right to protect workers on the job.

Bosses have been using supervisors, nonunion contractors, newly hired strikebreakers and about 300 workers who have crossed the line to try to get production back up. But production at the mines is substantially lower than before the strike began.

Grupo Mexico, which owns Asarco, is one of the world's largest mining conglomerates. It has made clear it doesn't intend to give in. In a Feb. 26 "earnings conference call" with stockholders and investors, the bosses boasted



National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion
Tens of thousands march Feb. 19 in Buenos Aires for legalization of abortion in Argentina. Young women lead campaign for right to choose and play key role in building support.

part of the feminist agenda," Tesoriero said. "We're reaching out to win other organizations, like unions in factories and industries, where men mostly work. Workers in the public health sector have organized and affiliated with us, which is very important."

Another challenge she said is to win support in rural areas. "I don't think women in the countryside are organized."

But women there are being won to the fight. In 2007, 20-year-old Anna María

Acevedo, mother of three children in the province of Santa Fe, died in a cesarean delivery 22 weeks into her pregnancy, as did her fetus. Diagnosed with cancer, she was refused treatment on grounds that radiotherapy could hurt the fetus. Her case focused national and international attention on Argentina's laws.

"Her mother has now become a supporter of legalizing abortion and campaigns in the countryside," Tesoriero said. "People like her will lead the way to others in rural areas."

that they had finally defeated the union at its San Martín underground copper mine in Zacatecas, Mexico, and restarted operations. Workers there had gone on strike 11 years ago.

The mining giant is counting on wearing the Asarco strikers down. That's why the strike needs to get as broad a hearing among working people as possible and growing public and financial solidarity.

Solidarity from nuclear workers

Down the road from the Amarillo refinery is the Pantex nuclear weapons plant. Workers there "drive by the picket line on their way to work. They bring us water, sausage, biscuits and donuts," Leonardo Segura, vice president of United Steelworkers Local 5613, told this worker-correspondent Feb. 23 at pickets' weekly dinner at the Mission Mine. Segura and several other strikers from Texas drove 10 hours to come to the picket line and to participate in a solidarity rally in Phoenix the next day.

"It's important to come here, so we can see how our brothers and sisters are handling the strike and give them support on the line," said Segura. The copper workers from Texas visited three strike pickets in Arizona.

"I've worked at the Amarillo refinery for a year and this is my first strike," Brittany Perdue, 30, told the *Militant* at the Phoenix protest. "Coming out here — it's good camaraderie."

Debora Hewitt, who has worked 24 years at the refinery, also made the trip to Arizona. "We're getting some support for our strike but we need more," she said at the dinner in Sahuarita. "We're not giving up."

Kerri Wilkinson, 26, works at the refinery like her father and grandfather did. She organizes the food pantry for strikers at the local union hall. "We're not asking Asarco for unreasonable things," she told the *Texas Observer* Feb. 19. "We're asking that they don't

take away what we worked for."

Members of United Auto Workers Local 862 at two Ford plants in Louisville, Kentucky, sent a contribution of \$250 to the strike fund in Kearny. "We hope that our modest token of support has helped during this time when you are fighting for your futures and for your families," Local President Todd Dunn wrote in a March 2 letter. "Stand strong and know that we in Kentucky support you in your strike for your wages and your working conditions."

More solidarity is needed — and it is deserved. The miners welcome supporters joining their picket lines and the dinners and movie nights they organize every week. They'd be happy to come and speak to unions and other groups if invited. They need donations to their food pantries and strike funds, and messages of support.

Send financial contributions and solidarity messages to USW Local 915 Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 550, Kearny, AZ 85137; USW Local 5252 Strike Assistance, P.O. Box 896, Kearny, AZ 85137; USW Local 5613, 4230 Texas Hwy 136, Amarillo, TX 79108; or via paypal.me/palfcommunityservice for Tucson area strikers. Solidarity messages can be sent to palfchair@gmail.com.

Contribute to the food pantries at: USW 915 and 886 hall, 107 Hammond Dr., Kearny; IBEW Local 570 hall, 750 S. Tucson Blvd., Tucson; USW Local 5613, 4230 Texas Hwy 136 Amarillo, Texas.

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

San Leandro

Meet Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett — Socialist Workers Party Candidates for U.S. President and Vice President. Sat., March 14. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$10. Community Center, 13909 E. 14th St. Tel.: (510) 686-1351.

Further reading...

Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation

Documents of the Socialist Workers Party, 1971-86

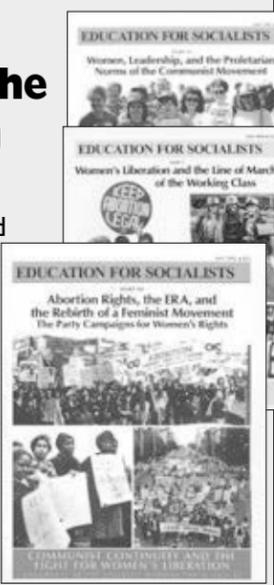
This three-part series helps politically equip women and men joining battles in defense of women's rights today. \$6 each; all three for \$12

Vol. 1: Women's Liberation and the Line of March of the Working Class

Vol. 2: Women, Leadership, and the Proletarian Norms of the Communist Movement

Vol. 3: Abortion Rights, the ERA, and the Rebirth of a Feminist Movement

www.pathfinderpress.com



SWP: 'We need a labor party'

Continued from front page

"I just got back from Arizona where 1,700 copper workers have been on strike against Asarco for five months," Kennedy said. "After going without a raise for 10 years plus facing the bosses' demand for another four-year wage freeze and doubling or tripling of health care costs, they said, 'No more.' It's an example of what workers need to do."

While speaking with Josue Rodriguez, Kennedy noted that the way the government is dealing with coronavirus shows how capitalism not only can't solve humanity's problems, but makes them worse. She pointed to the lack of accurate information, inadequate testing and medical care, the bureaucratically imposed lockdowns, all implemented by the capitalist rulers of the world over, which leave people on their own.

Kennedy contrasted health care under capitalism — where it is a commodity, sold to those who can afford it, to maximize profits — and Cuba where it is guaranteed to everyone.

Rodriguez knew about Cuba's health care system. "Cuba is not scared of the coronavirus because they have a system that takes care of people," he said. "But in Mexico, the way they treat people there is the same as here. The problem is the system. They exploit people."

Pedro Albarran, a union leader at the processing plant, joined the candidates and introduced them to his co-workers. "As workers we don't have representation in government," he told Zenaída Lagunas. "They are workers like you and me. They are part of the fights for better conditions on the job, health care and fair wages."

Lagunas said her health care insurance doesn't cover medicine or anything serious.

"The capitalist system can't be fixed. It will take a movement of millions to get rid of it," Kennedy said.

"People need to stand up for themselves and become confident," Lagunas said.

Victor Jarman was skeptical about the campaign. "Politics is just another hustle. People in Congress and the Senate are some of the richest people there are," he told Kennedy. "What specifically do you people want to do?"

"The two-party system is a trap," Kennedy replied. "They try to make us think we can make change by picking the least bad of candidates they put forward. It's a scam." The Socialist Workers Party 2020 platform says workers need a labor party based on the unions, a party that organizes working people to fight all year round for the interests of all the oppressed and exploited.

Workers need to begin organizing in defense of their own interests. "Workers need to bring solidarity to fights like the Asarco copper miners on strike in Arizona and Texas," Kennedy told him. "And the ongoing fight in Florida for

the right of the formerly incarcerated to vote. A referendum there to do this passed by over 60% in 2018 but the state government is trying to gut it."

Workers they met at the plant gate bought two books by SWP leaders, 14 copies of the *Militant* and two subscriptions, and contributed \$30.

Talking to workers on their doorstep

Jarrett met Ernest Williams while campaigning in North Long Beach Feb. 27. "I worked for the City of Long Beach," Williams said. "Now that I'm retired I'll have to pay half my pension, \$1,200 a month, to have health care." Jarrett pointed to the campaign plank in the *Militant* that says, "Health care for all. Fight for universal government-guaranteed cradle-to-grave health care, and retirement income for all."

The SWP candidate told Williams that he had just returned from participating in the Havana International Book Fair in Cuba. "I met doctors who traveled to Africa to help eradicate the scourge of Ebola. It's an example of the revolution's internationalism," Jarrett said.

Their attitude is similar to that of Malcolm X, he said, showing Williams the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. "Malcolm X said you don't have to wake people up to their oppression but to their worth," said Jarrett. Williams bought the book and one other, along with a *Militant* subscription.

Kennedy and Jarrett also spoke at a Militant Labor Forum Feb. 29. "Cubans are very honest about the problems and

'Workers need to rely on themselves in fight for safety'

BY BETSEY STONE

OAKLAND, Calif. — Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the 13th District here, campaigned Feb. 29 in West Oakland, where trichloroethylene, an industrial solvent linked to increased cancer risk, has been found in the groundwater under McClymonds High School.

Several other contaminated sites discovered earlier within blocks of the school, which has been closed temporarily, are in the process of being cleaned up.

"I'm not satisfied with the answers we've been given," former firefighter Bruce Johnson told Britton outside his home near the school. Johnson described a town hall meeting he had attended, saying it was just "politicians and agencies, skirting around the issues, where you couldn't tell who was responsible and accountable."

Authorities say that the chemical has not been found in the school's drinking water. But residents are concerned about the fact that contamination has been in the neighborhood for



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Pedro Albarran (with hard hat), Farmer John worker and union leader there, introduces SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy to co-workers during plant gate campaigning Feb. 28. He told them that Kennedy and running mate Malcolm Jarrett "are workers like you and me."

challenges they face," Jarrett said, coming back to his experiences in Cuba. "They have blackouts sometimes and a shortage of gasoline, results of the U.S. rulers' economic war on Cuba.

"But you see a determination to defend their revolution," Jarrett said. "One soldier told me, 'We've faced this embargo for 60 years. We've had to ride bicycles in the past because of lack of gas. They're not going to beat us.'

"The Cuban Revolution is an example for working people in the U.S. to emulate," he said.

Those at the meeting kicked in \$2,381 toward the \$25,000 campaign fund.

Deborah Liatos contributed to this article.

Help fund SWP 2020 campaign!

The Socialist Workers Party National Campaign Committee has launched a month-long \$25,000 fund drive from Feb. 24 to March 22. Send your contribution today! Any donation of \$200 or more will be reported in filings with the Federal Election Commission.

Make checks out to: Socialist Workers National Campaign. Mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

years and they didn't know.

"The first thing is the immediate protection of the community, demanding that contaminated soil be removed," said Britton, a former oil refinery worker familiar with these types of contaminants. "Industries releasing dangerous chemicals unreported into the environment are inherent to the capitalist system. What is profitable for the business owners is their priority."

Protection of workers and communities in the vicinity of industries can never be left to the capitalist bosses, Britton said. "Workers and our unions need to fight for control of all aspects of production, including the safe handling of dangerous chemicals."

"What they were doing with the town hall meeting was just having people let off steam," Johnson said. "It's like with the homeless. More and more tents every day. They just put a band aid on it and go on."

"The only way this will change is if workers begin to rely on our own strength, make our unions stronger and break from reliance and support for the capitalist rulers, their state and their parties — Republican and Democratic — and build a labor party," Britton said. "We need a movement of millions that can fight to take the power out of the hands of the capitalists."

The growing coronavirus outbreak is another example of the disasters created

by the profit system, Britton said. "Here in the Bay Area where we need more hospitals, they have closed one in San Pablo and threaten to close others because they aren't profitable, they say."

Britton showed Johnson a copy of a *Militant* article on the Cuban Revolution. Workers and farmers took power out of the hands of the capitalist class there in 1959, he said. The revolution put an end to health care as a commodity that is bought and sold, and instead organized to make it a basic human right. To find out more, Johnson subscribed to the *Militant* and got a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Joel Britton, left, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress, talks with former firefighter Bruce Johnson about fight against industrial contamination in West Oakland neighborhood.

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

SWP candidates tell Asarco strikers, 'We'll tell your story'

BY LESLIE DORK

HAYDEN, Ariz. — During a solidarity trip Feb. 23-25, Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, discussed politics and the labor movement today with striking copper miners. She learned more about their fight against Asarco's union-busting to share with other workers as she tours around the country. Some 1,700 workers have been on strike since Oct. 13.

Kennedy, a Walmart worker and former coal miner, joined picket lines at the Mission Mine in Sahuarita, south of Tucson; at the smelter here; at the nearby Ray Mine north of Kearny; and a strike rally in Phoenix. She also spoke with four Asarco refinery strikers from Amarillo, Texas, who drove 10 hours to join fellow strikers in Arizona at the rally.

"The company absolutely hates that we have a say in things at the mine with a union: 'No, you should just do what we tell you to do,'" striker and Teamsters Local 104 assistant chief steward Chris Antone told Kennedy at the Mission Mine picket line and dinner Feb. 23. United Steelworkers Local 937 had put news of her visit on their Facebook page.

Many strikers have taken other jobs, mostly lower paid and with conditions worse than at Asarco. Having to work in nonunion conditions has strengthened their resolve to stand up to Asarco.

"At one construction job the owner didn't provide safety equipment and made us work when it stormed," Antone said. "I quit after trying to use a fiberglass ladder. The rungs cracked under my feet and my hands got splinters."

Antone told her he thought "the biggest problem with Bernie Sanders and the other presidential candidates is that they never held a job and don't know the struggles of American workers."

"Sanders, like all the rest, defends the interests of the ruling class," Kennedy said. "That's why the Socialist Workers Party calls for breaking with both capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, to build a labor party based on the unions, to fight in the interests of all

the exploited and oppressed.

"Workers today need to begin by standing up and fighting to defend ourselves like you are doing," she said.

At the strike rally in Phoenix the next day, Raul Duarte, a Steelworkers Local 886 member and brick mason at the Hayden smelter, invited Kennedy to join his picket the next day. Dennis Richter, SWP Congressional candidate for the 37th District in California, accompanied her. Duarte met the Amarillo strikers at the rally. "I told them if there's a chance for me to go there, I will!" Duarte said.

When Kennedy and Richter got to the Hayden picket line, Duarte asked them, "Why did they make this state 'right to work'? It makes things harder. The law weakened the unions. I don't know if it was the Democrats or Republicans."

Lessons from Co-Op miners' battle

Many strikers listened attentively when Kennedy spoke about having been in a hard-fought three-year strike herself from 2003 to 2005 at the Co-Op coal mine in Utah, another right-to-work state. It was one of the most important labor battles in the U.S. at that time.

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



Militant/Elle Garcia

From left, Asarco strikers Reuben Barragan, Raul Duarte; SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, Leslie Dork, SWP candidate Dennis Richter at Hayden, Arizona, picket line, compare Asarco fight with 2003-05 strike that Kennedy participated in at the Co-Op coal mine in Utah.

"The miners, mostly Mexican immigrants, wanted to fight. The company paid us as little as \$5 an hour," she said. "We went to Price to meet the United Mine Workers about getting the union."

When the company fired them all for joining the union they went out on strike, reached out broadly and won support from Navajo miners, San Francisco longshore workers, community groups and many others across the country.

They tried to convince workers crossing the picket line to join the strike, a challenge Asarco strikers also face. "We had a sign at the Co-Op Mine that said in Spanish: 'If you are crossing this line because you are afraid to lose your house or car, keep in mind you are about to lose something bigger — your soul.'"

"Everywhere I go, I talk about the need to support your strike," Kennedy told all Asarco strikers she met.

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 The bosses and their government lie to working people about their production costs and profits, while they insist they can't afford to pay higher wages. Demand they open their books for inspection by workers and consumers. To prevent capitalist collusion and thievery — and their production of shoddy and dangerous goods like the Boeing 737 MAX — workers in their millions will need to fight for control of production, a step towards taking political power and a school for running the economy for ourselves in the interests of all.

"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!

Puerto Rico independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda

The longtime independence fighter passed away March 2. Activities celebrating his life of struggle will take place across the island leading up to his funeral March 8. The *Militant* will run an article in an upcoming issue.

Vote Socialist Workers Party in 2020

Alyson Kennedy for president

Malcolm Jarrett for vice president

SWP candidates coast to coast:

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
Anthony Dutrow, 27th CD, Miami

See directory on page 10 to contact party campaign office nearest you.

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
Rebecca Williamson, 9th CD, Seattle
Gerardo Sánchez, US Senate, Texas
Joel Britton, 13th CD, Oakland
Dennis Richter, 37th CD, Los Angeles
Deborah Liatos, 40th CD, Los Angeles

Socialist Workers Party campaign button



Available from campaign offices listed on page 10

For-profit 'health care' threat

Continued from front page
ments and working people around the world. The only good news is that the mortality rate so far is relatively low.

In the biggest slump since the 2008 financial crisis, world stock markets dropped steadily for a week. Finance ministers and central bankers rushed to assure wealthy investors they were readying new "stimulus" measures. But since interest rates remain near zero from previous stimulus efforts, there's little room for anything significant.

Despite attempts by Beijing to restart production after the biggest quarantine in history, factory production there remains crippled. The extent of the industrial shutdown in China and its effect on production elsewhere is a sharp reminder of the limits of "globalization."

Authorities in Iran have reported the second highest number of deaths, 77, and 2,336 coronavirus cases, but working people there think these numbers are significantly undercounted. Trying to deflect public attention from the government's responsibility for the quick spread of the disease there and to the surrounding region, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani claimed fears about the virus are the result of "the enemy's plots."

But one in 10 Iranian members of parliament have tested positive and one has already died. Public trust in the Iranian regime has been further shaken after the earlier brutal repression of protests by workers and youth against the Iranian rulers' wars abroad and economic crisis at home, as well as the government's effort to cover up the Revolutionary Guard shutdown of a Ukrainian jetliner.

Opposition to rulers in Iran, Iraq

"We have a very negligent government," Hamid Bahmani in Sanandaj, Iran, told the Kurdish publication Rudaw.

"Now is the time for the state and all the other media outlets to heavily focus on the coronavirus," Sanandaj pharmacist Dr. Ramin Hussein said. "One more reason why the virus spread so fast was that the virus was hidden from the people after some people who had returned to Iran from China turned out to be infected with the virus. It was never announced."

In Iraq, where people frequently visit back and forth with Iran, coronavirus cases are beginning to turn up. The government responded by shutting down all schools, universities and other public spots through March 7. They thought this would also mean the end of widespread protests against the government that have rocked the country for months. The opposite happened. Many of the students headed straight to protest centers in Baghdad and Diwaniya.

"The real virus is Iraqi politicians," 18-year-old Fatima, a medical student from Baghdad, told Rudaw.

Outraged by the government's refusal to prepare for the virus, the protesters began transforming the medical facilities they had set up to deal with assaults by the cops and Tehran-backed thugs into centers to deal with COVID-19.

They've distributed leaflets and organized lectures on coronavirus prevention, while volunteers have handed out free medical masks. They're dispensing gloves and sanitizer. And volunteers in biohazard suits are lining up protesters and taking their temperatures.

"Even in normal times our health care

system is totally run down," Fatima said. "Now, on top of everything, we have a coronavirus outbreak."

In the U.S. the government at every level is far from prepared as cases are beginning to spread. The capitalist rulers see public health expenditures as a drain on profits. They know *they* can afford whatever health care they may need. This is true whether Democrats or Republicans are in power.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar called for Congress to back the government's proposal for \$2.5 billion to fight the disease, including funding for developing a vaccine. But at a Congressional budget hearing Feb. 26 he flatly opposed the suggestion that such vaccines be made affordable and accessible to everyone.

"We can't control that price because we need the private sector to invest," said Azar, a former lobbyist for the Eli Lilly drug development outfit.

The U.S. rulers have one special problem that flows from their position as top imperialist dog. Washington has over 100,000 troops stationed where the outbreak is spreading, including in South Korea, Japan, Italy and Bahrain.

As the disease spreads in South Korea, the U.S. military has placed all its bases there — home to 28,500 troops — in lockdown. The U.S. and South Korean high commands have also shut down all joint military exercises "until further notice."

'Nobody should be turned away'

"Nobody should be turned away from medical help or hospitalization because they don't have health insurance or money or the proper immigration papers," Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, told the *Militant* March 3. "We demand government-provided health care at no cost for everyone.

"If workers won control over production — a fight that will come in the future as millions join to fight the effects of the capitalist rulers attacks on our class — the production of drugs and equipment

Muslims in India protest attacks on citizenship rights



PTI photo

Opponents of the rights of Muslims organized a series of assaults against protesters and others in predominantly Muslim areas of northeast New Delhi Feb. 23-25. They set fire to shops, a mosque, cars, buses and makeshift dwellings. Using rocks, metal bars and gunfire, they killed at least 38 people and injured over 200 in the worst sectarian violence in India's capital in decades.

Since December, hundreds of thousands of Muslims and others have been protesting passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act, pushed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party. This law makes religion the criterion for who will be offered Indian citizenship and discriminates against Muslims. Modi's government is also trying to impose a new National Register of Citizens, aimed against Muslims.

Modi's forces have suffered some setbacks. In elections for the municipal government in New Delhi the Bharatiya Janata Party got only eight of the 70 seats. Voters rejected its virulent anti-Muslim campaign.

Over 500 women have camped out at Shaheen Bagh, above, a working-class neighborhood in Delhi, for over two months, calling for an end to the two anti-Muslim measures. People have come from around the country to express their solidarity. The attacks in the city's northeast came after hundreds of women moved to set up another camp in Jaffrabad, which the thugs succeeded in disbanding.

The women at Shaheen Bagh remain determined. "Let them bring their police, their goons, their truckloads of stones," 32-year-old Fatima Khatun told ThePrint news agency. "We are not going anywhere till CAA and NRC are rolled back."

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

needed to treat and ultimately vaccinate against the virus would be made a priority, regardless of profit," said Kennedy. "Under a workers and farmers government — like they have in Cuba — the government would organize a crash course to mobilize working people to accomplish these goals and make the results available to people worldwide."

Kennedy pointed to the inspiring example of internationalist solidarity given by 256 volunteer Cuban doctors and nurses in leading the fight against the Ebola epidemic, the opposite of the profit-driven priorities of the U.S. rulers. This story is told in the new book by Pathfinder Press, *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*.

Join 2020 May Day international brigade to Cuba

BY JANET POST

This year's May Day International Brigade of Voluntary Work and Solidarity with Cuba — an opportunity for workers, farmers and youth to see Cuba's revolution for themselves — has added a new program to its April 26 to May 10 schedule. Already planned by the sponsoring Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) is voluntary work on a farm; meeting with representatives of Cuba's revolutionary youth organization, women's federation and other mass organizations; and participation in the million-strong mobilization in Havana May 1.

The new feature is a three-day International Solidarity Meeting from April 30 to May 2, sponsored by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers and ICAP. This will include visiting the "Evelio Prieto Guillama" Bus Production Company and meeting with workers there; attending a panel presentation by workers describing the effects of Washington's decadeslong economic war against the island's people; and participating in a May 2 International Conference of Solidarity with Cuba.

Prieto Guillama was killed as a participant in the March 13, 1957, assault

against the presidential palace of Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista, led by the Revolutionary Directorate.

The 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution — led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement — overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Cuba's workers and farmers took power, opening the door for the socialist revolution in the Americas. Brigade participants will be able to learn firsthand about that revolution and its living reality today.

The U.S. rulers are stepping up their economic and political war against the revolution, seeking to isolate Cuba and punish the Cuban people.

As part of their attack on Cuba, the rulers have launched a worldwide smear campaign against over 50,000 Cuban internationalist medical volunteers, who serve in more than 60 countries around the world. Washington slanders them as "slave labor," while claiming they foment social unrest wherever they go.

A new book from Pathfinder — *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* — tells the inspiring story of the more than 250 Cuban medical personnel who helped lead the fight to stem that epidemic in 2014-15. Brigade members will meet with some of

Cuba's medical internationalists. This is an invaluable opportunity in the midst of today's health crisis — deepened by the for-profit medical industry that predominates in the capitalist world — as the coronavirus spreads worldwide.

The brigade is also a real opportunity for participants to describe to Cubans the reality of the class struggle in the U.S., Canada and other capitalist countries, and the political activities they have been part of.

The U.S. brigade is being coordinated by the National Network on Cuba and travel arrangements are being organized to meet U.S. guidelines by Marazul Tours. Applications are due by March 27. Total cost, not including airfare to Cuba, is \$725. For the forms and more information go to www.nnoc.info or email iCanGoToCuba@nnoc.info.

Corrections

In *Militant* no. 9 the front page photo caption should have identified Lamont Anthony as being seated behind podium. The caption on page 9 should have said Didye Ruiz went to Equatorial Guinea as part of Cuban health care team.

Indigenous people debate building Canada pipeline

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — A Feb. 24 raid by dozens of armed Ontario Provincial police on a 18-day-long Tyendinaga Mohawk First Nation camp blocking the Canadian National Railway line near Belleville, between Montreal and Toronto, resulted in a new round of demonstrations and blockades of rail lines and roads around the country.

“The Communist League calls on the trade unions and all supporters of democratic rights to condemn the police raids and arrests, and demands that the police withdraw from the Indigenous people’s territory,” said Pierre-Luc Filion, who along with this worker-correspondent, was one of the two Communist League candidates in the 2019 federal elections. “The RCMP and other police along with the Canadian army have been central to maintaining the oppression of Indigenous people and denying their sovereignty over their land, resources and ability to control their own lives.”

The blockade was set up Feb. 6 in solidarity with a small group of Wet’suwet’en Indigenous people arrested by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in northwestern British Columbia earlier that day. They had set up a camp blocking a service road, part of an effort to stop the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline from Alberta to Kitimat on the west coast in British Columbia where an 18 billion Canadian dollar refinery (\$13.5 billion) is being built to process natural gas for transport to Asia.

Canadian National freight rail and Via passenger rail bosses responded to the blockade by shutting down most of their eastern freight and passenger transportation systems. This resulted in the layoff of hundreds of workers and the piling up of freight in rail yards and ports, creating a serious crisis for the Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The rail bosses also obtained court injunctions to press the government to shut the blockades down.

The unfolding protests have revealed deep divisions among Indigenous people over the development of resources like oil and gas on their territories. Many elected tribal leaderships have signed agreements with pipeline companies and other bosses in exchange for preference in jobs. The actions have also provoked a discussion among both First Nations and other working people on the way forward in the decadeslong fight against the oppression of Canada’s 1.7 million Indigenous people.

Wet’suwet’en people divided

The Wet’suwet’en are a First Nations people in northwestern British Columbia. Like many First Nations they are both ruled by hereditary chiefs and elected band councils. These two bodies are sharply divided over the construction of the pipeline.

All but one of the nine currently serving hereditary chiefs oppose the pipeline. There are four vacant chief positions. Three of those had been filled by women, who supported the pipeline and were stripped of their hereditary titles by the other chiefs.

The Wet’suwet’en Nation hereditary chiefs, and their supporters, maintain they have jurisdiction and authority over 8,500 square miles of traditional territory that sits in the middle of the

pipeline’s path. They oppose its construction because they oppose the development and use of fossil fuels.

These chiefs are supported by radical environmentalists such as Extinction Rebellion, anarchists and other middle-class radicals who have been the majority of protesters across the country.

The pipeline and increase in gas exports are vital to Canada’s capitalist class. The total investment is estimated at CA\$40 billion, which, according to Ottawa, would be the biggest private investment in Canadian history.

The working class also has an interest in its development, for different class reasons.

All 20 of the elected band councils along the pipeline route support its construction. They have signed agreements with Coastal GasLink to ensure Indigenous people are hired to construct it.

Chief Judy Gerow of the Kitselas band said most of its 700 members support the agreement.

“You can’t ignore the fact that there’s this industry in our backyard, and to not capitalize on it would be a mistake,” Gerow said. “We’ve seen the logging industry die around us. We’ve seen the fishing industry die around us, and our people were typically employed in those industries. It was really hard on the communities and on the families when these jobs disappear.”

At a meeting in Houston, one of the larger towns in the region, some 200 people came out to discuss the pipeline project. According to Canadian Broadcasting Corp., Wet’suwet’en people who came to the meeting said that “they want to see the natural gas pipeline built. They say the project will create well-paid jobs that will bring economic opportunities to their communities.”

The Communist League candidates said in a 2019 election statement that imposing a halt to the development and use of all fossil fuels today is against the interests of the world’s oppressed and exploited. It “amounts to condemning the 1½ billion people without electricity in underdeveloped countries to live without it. Access to electricity is essential



CBC

Construction of Coastal GasLink pipeline to connect Alberta natural gas to port in British Columbia. Most Indigenous people on the route support project to take jobs that it will create.

for the development of modern industry, agriculture, sanitation, and health care.

“It’s also a precondition for the advance of culture and education,” the CL candidates said. “And the development of an international working-class movement that can lead the fight against imperialist oppression [and] capitalist exploitation.”

The Communist League also calls for workers control of production, including control over CO₂ emissions, to protect those on the job and those living near the pipeline, and for widespread development of nuclear-powered electrical generators. The fight to win this would put workers in a better position to utilize all the advances in science to tackle pollution, something that is impossible under capitalist rule.

Jobs: Key question for Native people

One in four Indigenous people in Canada live below the official poverty line, almost double the rate of the rest of the population. The average earnings for First Nations people is almost 40% less than other workers.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Filion said, “Preferential hiring for Indigenous people is a central demand that the labor movement should fight for to combat the racist discrimination they face. It would draw larger numbers of Natives into the working class and our unions. This would greatly strengthen the unity of working people, strengthen

our unions and our fighting capacity.

“The fight for preferential hiring needs to be tied to demanding a massive federally funded public works program, at union-scale wages,” Filion said, “to build the houses, medical clinics, modern water and sanitation systems that Indigenous people — especially those living on reserves — desperately need.”

The blockades and other protests organized in support of the traditional chiefs have said nothing about the burning need for jobs.

Pamela Gabriel-Ferland, a member of the Mohawk First Nation and a social worker, told this worker-correspondent in a discussion in her home in Kanasketake that “after four years’ experience it’s clear that [Trudeau’s call for] ‘reconciliation’ with Indigenous people is just a buzzword. It’s meaningless.”

Pointing to the government’s use of force to dismantle the blockades, she said, “Is this what Trudeau means by reconciliation?”

“Today, there is no party that really has the interests of working people in mind,” she added.

I explained the Communist League’s perspective of working people building a labor party that would champion the needs of all the oppressed and exploited, including those who are Indigenous, and fight to establish a government of workers and farmers.

“It would be great to have a party of our own,” she responded.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 20, 1995

MINNEAPOLIS — “Socialism is directly connected to the survival of our country,” said Cuban youth leader Rogelio Polanco to 40 students at the University of Minnesota here March 7. Polanco, along with Kenia Serrano, had arrived to begin a six-week speaking tour to 13 regions in the United States.

Following their first campus meeting, the two youth leaders toured the Ford truck plant in St. Paul and met with workers there. Polanco and Serrano were introduced to dozens of workers entering or leaving at a shift change. They then toured the plant for more than an hour, giving them the opportunity to see the truck assembly line and to speak with some workers.

In welcoming them, one worker said that the U.S. rulers “wished that Cuba never existed. It’s the only country with a successful revolution.”



March 20, 1970

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Negotiations ordered by the government to settle the nationwide rail dispute were boycotted by the key union involved, the Sheet Metal Workers. Railroad shopmen walked off the job in at least two major cities when it was announced that Congress had acted to freeze wages and working conditions.

Here in St. Paul 200 shopcraft workers at Burlington Northern Railway’s Dale Street maintenance shop went out, called early morning meetings Friday, March 6, and again Saturday in their hall two blocks away from the shop to discuss the action of Congress.

There is a general feeling throughout the railroad industry that the workers have no choice but to strike. The problem is how. The lack of any support from the top union officials makes it difficult to coordinate the actions and strike together.



March 17, 1945

The Bonomi government tottered last week as thousands of Italian workers demonstrated in Rome. They marched to the government headquarters to present a written demand to Bonomi to resign. The cause of the demonstration and the resulting political crisis was the “escape” of the fascist General Mario Roatta from a military hospital. Roatta was one of Mussolini’s most trusted henchmen. Italian workers know him as one of their bitterest enemies.

He was apprehended by the antifascists in November 1944.

The entire ruling class of Italy is besmirched and compromised after twenty years of direct collaboration with Mussolini and his thugs. Very few Italian capitalists, least of all the royalty, could escape with their lives if a half-serious attempt were undertaken to weed out the criminal crew.

'A US working-class party that is serious about socialist revolution'

At book fair, union events, Cuban workers discuss Socialist Workers Party political course, US class struggle

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA — “These books are important for understanding that in the most powerful capitalist country in the world, there are people explaining the need for a socialist revolution, a radical change in the system,” said Silvio Jova, representing the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) at a Feb. 13 meeting here. “It’s not the same as looking at the United States from afar. They are right there. And what happens in the U.S. matters a great deal to us in Cuba.”

Jova, a member of the editorial board of *CTC*, the magazine of the Cuban union federation, was speaking at a presentation of three books published in both English and Spanish by Pathfinder Press. The meeting was part of the Feb. 6-16 Havana International Book Fair, and following the fair, two more meetings featuring these titles were organized by the CTC.

These three books together “give us an opportunity to introduce the Socialist Workers Party to you,” said Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the SWP and president of Pathfinder. “They present our communist continuity and course of action within the class struggle in the U.S. and the world. We’ve never before had such an important opportunity to do that here in Cuba.” (The talk by Waters will be printed in a coming issue of the *Militant*.)

The three books were *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party; *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*, with writings by communist leaders from Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky to Farrell Dobbs and Jack Barnes; and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, also by Barnes.

About 30 people attended each of the three presentations. The event at the book fair drew people who had visited the Pathfinder booth and wanted to learn more about the communist movement in the U.S. and internationally. Also present were a number of people who for years have known and worked with members of the SWP and its sister



Meeting at Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Feb. 20. From left: Pathfinder editor Martín Koppel; Socialist Workers Party leader Mary-Alice Waters; Pathfinder editor Róger Calero; Silvio Jova, CTC magazine editorial board; and Caridad Cabrera, CTC's Americas Department. Inset, Ismael Drullet, CTC international relations secretary. “In the most powerful capitalist country in the world, there are people explaining the need for a socialist revolution,” said Jova.

parties in other countries.

The two union-organized gatherings were held Feb. 20, one at the CTC’s national headquarters and the other at its nearby administrative center. Those attending included young union staffers as well as national leaders and longtime cadres of the CTC. Milexys Guizado and Caridad Cabrera from the CTC’s Americas Department introduced the guest speakers, and International Relations Secretary Ismael Drullet addressed the first meeting. At the second, the speakers were welcomed by Belkis Batista, union secretary for workers in the administrative building.

Waters was the main speaker, joined by Jova at two of the events. Martín Koppel, a Pathfinder editor, spoke about another title presented at the Havana book fair — *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa* by Enrique Ubieta — and its importance in telling the truth about the example of the Cuban Revolution. Róger Calero, also a Pathfinder editor, chaired.

Continuity of communist movement

All three events were lively exchanges. A thread running throughout the discussions was a remark made by more than one person: “I used to think of you as Pathfinder Press, with your books on revolutionary politics. But now I see better who the people behind those books are — that you’re members of a party, doing political work as communists in the United States.”

At the book fair event, Jova told the audience that in reading *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* he learned new things about the continuity of the revolutionary workers movement.

“In that book, the article by Marx on the trade unions is brief, but amazingly relevant to us in the 21st century,” he said. And the pieces by SWP leaders Farrell

Dobbs and Jack Barnes “have maintained the same political course.” Many Cubans are surprised to learn there is a party acting on a communist course inside the U.S. working class, he noted, but these books “are not works of science fiction. It’s for real!”

Likewise, *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* “was a pleasant surprise to me,” he said. It describes the concrete political work of “a party in the United States whose goal is for working people to take power.”

In *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, Jova said, “I found many things I didn’t know about.” He was impressed by what he learned about the power and resilience of a century and a half of struggles by African Americans, from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to Malcolm X to today.

He highlighted the importance of Malcolm X. In Cuba, he noted, “we often pay tribute to Black leaders such as Martin Luther King, who was a courageous man. But King didn’t claim to be a revolutionary. Malcolm X was.”

“I was also glad the book mentions Robert Williams,” he said. As a high school student, Jova had personally met the Black rights fighter in 1962, during a period when Williams lived in Cuba. “He gave a talk at the Havana Institute, where I was going to school.”

This book is relevant to Cuba as well, Jova remarked at one of the CTC-sponsored meetings. The fight to uproot the legacy of racist oppression “is a question that, as President [Miguel] Díaz-Canel has said, we have to continue to work on.” He was referring to a newly established government commission, headed by the president, to oversee a National Program Against Racism and Racial Discrimination.

Jova also urged the audience to read the article by Russian communist leader Leon Trotsky, “Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay,” which appears in *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions*. For some among the older generations in Cuba, he said, “Trotsky’s greatest sin — and that’s why we couldn’t read his writings — was saying that if the Soviet Union continued along the course it was on, it would return to capitalism. But it seems he was right! We have to read Trotsky, and this is one of the few books we have where we can read what Trotsky actually said.”

From the mid-1920s until his 1940 assassination by agents of the counterrevolutionary Stalinist leadership in the Soviet Union, Trotsky led the fight to continue Lenin’s internationalist course.

What turn to industry made possible

Waters began by taking up *The Turn to Industry and the Trade Unions*. “Without the turn to industry carried out by the cadres of the Socialist Workers Party beginning in the mid-1970s, the line of march that is also presented in the other two books would not have been possible,” she said. Building a party that is not only working-class in program and action, but composed in its big majority of workers in factories, rail yards, mines and refineries, is what “forged the SWP — and the political clarity of its cadres — today.”

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions explains “why organizing to strengthen and transform the unions is not only essential to the fighting unity and political striking power of the working class. It’s central to building a revolutionary party as well,” Waters said.

But our work neither begins nor ends there, she continued. A proletarian party “uses every manifestation of capitalist oppression to explain why it’s workers and our allies who can and will discover our own capacities, our own worth” and begin to break from dependence on the capitalist rulers’ government and their political parties.

Waters noted that *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* brings to the fore the vanguard role of workers who are Black in the struggles of working people in the U.S., from the Civil War to today. It explains

“why it is only the revolutionary conquest of power by the working class that will make possible the final battle for Black freedom — as you demonstrated here in Cuba — and open the road to a world based not on exploitation, violence and racism, but on human solidarity. A socialist world.”

Why the working class

At the book fair meeting, an audience member asked Waters why she focused on the working class in the fight to transform society. “What about doctors and scientists?” he asked.

Waters pointed to how in Cuba, working people have played the decisive role in the socialist revolution. “What was the composition of the Rebel Army led by Fidel [Castro]? Overwhelmingly workers and peasants. It was working people who mobilized to take possession of the factories, plantations and other capitalist properties, and in 1961 defeated Washington’s mercenaries at Playa Girón. At the same time, half the doctors abandoned Cuba after the 1959 victory. It’s the working-class that has been decisive in defending and advancing the revolution here at every decisive moment right up to today.”

She said that in the U.S. and other imperialist countries, “it’s only by having a party whose membership is overwhelmingly working class that we will be able to maintain the proletarian revolutionary course that is necessary to lead a socialist revolution.”

Jova remarked that he had read U.S. President Donald Trump’s State of the Union speech, “and I was struck by how many times he talked about workers, jobs, wages, even unions.”

Waters replied that “the reason Trump talks about those real questions is that he’s trying to win votes from working people.” He gets a hearing “because conditions under Clinton, Bush and Obama were devastating for the working class,” and he claims his administration is doing something about it. “But neither Trump nor any other Democratic or Republican administration will do anything other than defend the interests of the capitalist class.”

Cuban workers resist US attacks

At one of the CTC-sponsored meetings International Relations Secretary Ismael Drullet said, “These books are very useful to us in the Cuban union movement” to learn about the experiences of working people in the U.S. He commented on how in Cuba today workers are resisting Washington’s stepped-up economic sanctions, which have brought shortages of fuel and other necessities.

Elena Chagues, CTC secretary for education and information, said what Washington hates about Cuba is that “here the working class is in power. The U.S. ruling class wants to force us to return to them the industries that we nationalized. But

Cuban workers are defending the gains we’ve won.”

Referring to *Red Zone: Cuba and the Battle Against Ebola in West Africa*, Chagues said it was important to answer Washington’s attacks on Cuba’s internationalist medical volunteers. “Our doctors bring solidarity to people around the world, no matter what the obstacles. This is one of the things that strengthen our revolution.”

Ernesto Rodríguez, head of the CTC’s international relations work with Africa, noted that the Obama administration’s policies toward Cuba, including looser restrictions on U.S. travel to the island, were designed “to influence the Cuban people and get us to renounce our principles. But that wasn’t going to happen.” That’s why the current administration returned to harsher measures to try to strangle the Cuban economy, he said.

Rodríguez asked how workers in the U.S. can defend their interests in face of the capitalist offensive. “You said union membership in the private sector is down to the lowest level in a century,” he said. “That’s because workers in the U.S. don’t believe in their leaders. Why don’t they elect a new, alternative leadership?”

Róger Calero said, “The U.S. rulers’ attacks on the working class go back decades. There aren’t big struggles right now, but workers are looking for ways to use their collective power to defend their interests.”

“They’re responding to immediate problems like attacks on their wages and benefits,” Calero said. But in the course of struggles, “many workers begin to draw broader conclusions. It’s through these battles, over time, that a new leadership in the unions will develop. And a communist party that is part of those struggles is a necessary part of that process.”

Carlos Martí, who works in the CTC’s administrative building, asked, “I know the Democratic and Republican parties are similar, in fact, almost the same thing. But what do you think about Bernie Sanders’ campaign to be the Democratic presidential candidate? Do you share any part of his platform?”

“We share nothing with Sanders,” Waters replied. “We support no capitalist candidate or party. Ever. Sanders isn’t a socialist. He belongs to one of the two major imperialist parties in the U.S. His program is to reform capitalism, and he points to ‘Scandinavian socialism’ as his model.”

Solidarity with Cuban Revolution

Lázaro Calderín, head of the Cuban Communist Party committee among workers in the CTC’s administrative complex, told of his exchanges with members of visiting U.S. groups that consider themselves friends of Cuba. “On one occasion I was asked, ‘When will Cuba change? When will you have multiple parties instead of one? When will Fidel no longer be in the leadership of the party?’”

“That made me mad,” Calderín said. “I told them, ‘When will you change the ruling party in your country?’ There’s really only a single party in the U.S. I don’t see a difference between the Republicans and Democrats.”

Caridad Cabrera said that, in face



Teamsters join Oct. 3, 2018, protest at Los Angeles detention center in support of port truck drivers and others threatened by deportation. Participating in struggles like these is part of building a party that is not only working-class in program and action, but composed in its big majority of workers in factories, rail yards, mines, giant retail stores and refineries.

of Washington’s economic squeeze on the Cuban people, “the solidarity we receive from around the world is very important. What more can the solidarity movement do to get the U.S. blockade against Cuba lifted?”

Waters replied, “What impressed us during this visit to Cuba was the tone and spirit of determination of working people to resist the stepped-up imperialist pressures. It’s more evident today than during the Obama years, when there were a lot of illusions here that the Obama administration represented a real change, that it wanted to help the Cuban people.”

Within the U.S. ruling class, she said, there are two basic views of how to destroy the Cuban Revolution. “Obama said Washington had not succeeded in achieving that goal through decades of economic warfare, and that it was time to try a different policy” by expanding tourism and exposing Cuba more to the pressures of the world capitalist market. “Then came the Trump administration, saying, ‘No, that won’t work, we must strangle the Cuban people.’”

“It would be a lie to say this situation will change in the short term,” Waters said. “The solidarity movement isn’t strong enough anywhere in the world today to change it. Conditions will only change when there is a strong rise in working-class struggles in the U.S. and

other countries. When there are revolutionary struggles in Latin America, Africa and other parts of the world. Since Cuba, there has been no victorious socialist revolution, and today there are no advancing revolutionary struggles anywhere. That reality weighs heavily on working people — on you in Cuba and on us in the U.S.”

What can we do today? “Stay the course. For the working class to keep fighting — both here and in the U.S. — for what we know is the only way forward: the road toward a socialist world,” she said.

“Cuba is surrounded by capitalism, it comes in through all the doors and windows. We know these are difficult conditions. But what’s decisive is what you’ve done for more than 60 years — fighting to maintain your revolutionary course. That’s what drives the imperialist powers crazy. That’s where their hatred of Fidel and their violence against the Cuban people come from.”

In the United States, Waters concluded, “the most important thing we can do today is to join the social and political struggles of working people, as we explain the truth about the Cuban Revolution’s example for us. To build a vanguard among working people that, as the class struggle develops, can lead a socialist revolution in the United States.”

Three books to be read as one ...

Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions

Special Offer!
All three \$30

Malcolm X, Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power

\$20

THE TURN TO INDUSTRY: Forging a proletarian party
Jack Barnes

\$15

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



Unionists at CTC-sponsored meeting pick up books on working-class struggles in U.S. and around the world.

International Conference for the Normalization of US-Cuba Relations

March 21-22
Fordham School of Law, 150 W. 62nd Street
NEW YORK CITY

Friday, March 20 - 6 pm reception Cuban Mission
Saturday, March 21 - registration at 8:30 a.m.
Evening of Solidarity, Music and Dance 7 p.m. Riverside Church
Sunday, March 22 - 10 am closing plenary

For more information call: 917-887-8710
www.US-CubaNormalization.org

As capitalist crisis deepens, workers need control of production

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working Class Politics and the Trade Unions by Jack Barnes is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March. Since the mid-1970s, Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, has led the political course of the SWP and its sister organizations worldwide to build communist parties — proletarian in program, composition and leadership — that can lead the working class and its allies to take political power. The excerpt is from the 1975 SWP resolution "Prospects for Socialism in America." Copyright © 1981 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

The starting point of workers struggles is the defense of their standard of living and conditions of work. ...

The trade unions and other mass organizations of the workers and oppressed must take responsibility for organizing workers with jobs, those without jobs, and those with only "part-time" jobs. They should prevent the employers from creating a pariah category of unemployed whom the employed do not regard as fellow workers. Those out of work must be viewed as part of "us," not as "them." ...

On the job the workers must protect themselves from the attempts of the bosses to extract a higher rate of



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

As part of carrying out their revolution, Cuban workers took control of production in the factories and on the land. Above, workers at Havana dairy factory meet in 1994, joining the national debate over how to reorganize production to address shortages in Cuban economy.

surplus value through speedup, automation, chipping away at health and safety standards, and all the other ways of making the workers pay for the capitalists' growing problems.

Struggles will grow for protection against speedup and layoffs, for safety and health conditions, regulation of and veto power over work rules, and health codes to protect workers against industrial hazards — asbestos fibers, coal dust, and chemical or radiation poisoning.

The workers must have veto power on questions of safety. They should insist that production be shut down at once on demand of the workers and at no loss in pay whenever safety of personnel is at stake. All safety controls and the speed of the production line must be set by the workers themselves. Acceptable levels of chemical pollution, control over purification of waste products, and similar standards must be established by the workers after full access to technical information and consultation with experts of their own choice.

Workers committees must be empowered to decide directly, in consultation with citizens committees responsible to the community, on projects to establish plants or use industrial processes that may adversely affect the environment of cities and regions. Such decisions have to be made on the basis of full and accurate information about the ecological and health effects involved, and with

no concern for profits such as motivates the lobbyists and government representatives of big business. Only labor can fight to put science to work as the liberator of humanity, not its destroyer. ...

"Open the books for inspection by the workers" is a necessary provision to protect the public against the shortages, sudden breakdowns, and rampant inflation endemic in the decline of capitalism and to counter any claims of the bosses that they cannot satisfy the needs of the workers, either as employees or consumers.

The claimed "right to business secrecy" is used by the employers' bankers and their politicians in a drive to cut back on wages, working conditions, and public services in every city, county, state, and federal jurisdiction they control through their two-party system. When monopolies like the utilities, the postal service, the agri-businesses, the railroads, and the aerospace industries cry "bankruptcy," charge exorbitant rates or prices, or refuse services to those who cannot pay, they should be nationalized and run under control of the workers and worker-consumer committees.

In order to make their decisions on a sound basis, the workers committees will have to proceed in cooperation with similar committees throughout their industry on a national scale, and other industries in their region. The facts must be shared nationally and internationally, and the public kept fully informed.

To acquire the needed information and resources of credit and planning, the entire banking system — now the accounting and credit system of the capitalist class — will have to be expropriated and opened up to the committees of workers and placed under their control as well. Only by winning that struggle can the workers begin planning and organizing the economy so as to prevent breakdowns, chaos, and the lowering of the standard of living of the entire working class and its allies. And along this line of march, beginning with individual industry and sectors, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie will be posed.

Even partial steps along this course, imposed by a rising mass movement that is rapidly gaining in social and political consciousness and led by a growing class-struggle wing of organized labor, will meet with stiff resistance from the bosses. To them it is a sacrosanct prerogative to run their business as they see fit — to keep the details of their operations secret from those they exploit, to throw thousands onto the unemployment lines, to charge extortionate prices, to move "their" factories to where the workers are less organized and less experienced in fighting for their rights, to slash the educational system and social services the workers have fought for, to destroy the earth's ecosystem if this will assure high profits today, to use legislatures and "public" agencies to advance their schemes to make a fast buck.

An increase in class polarization will go hand in hand with deepening class struggle. Fascism, along with war, was the ultimate "solution" imposed by the ruling class to the last world capitalist crisis.

To protect their struggles and gains against murderous attacks by goons, cops, and fascist bands, the workers will have to organize and train their own forces and use them in the most effective way. Starting with defense of picket lines and the right to strike, the protection of their demonstrations or those of their allies, and proceeding to workers defense guards, workers militias, and the requisite arming of the working class, the working masses will learn from their own experiences what measures to take. The lessons of history, incorporated into the general strategy of the workers movement, will prove invaluable on this life-and-death question.

March BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

30%
DISCOUNT

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics
Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes
How millions of workers, will revolutionize themselves, their unions and all of society.
\$23. **Special price: \$16**

The First and Second Declarations of Havana
Manifestos of revolutionary struggle in the Americas adopted by the Cuban people
\$10. **Special price: \$7**

The First Ten Years of American Communism
Report of a Participant
by James P. Cannon
Stalinism worked mightily to obliterate the honorable record of American communism in its pioneer days.
\$17. **Special price: \$12**

Military Writings
by Leon Trotsky
\$15. **Special price: \$10.50**

Woman's Evolution
From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family
by Evelyn Reed
\$25. **Special price: \$17.50**

Los cosméticos, las modas y la explotación de la mujer
(Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women)
by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters
\$12. **Special price: \$8.50**

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

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL MARCH 31

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

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

UNITED STATES

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

FLORIDA: Miami: 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: swplincolin@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

‘Only working class can protect humanity’

No capitalist government on earth, including Washington, has made the preparations necessary to deal effectively with the spread of coronavirus. The capitalist class — and the parties and governments that protect their class rule and their “right” to wrest profits from our labor power — always consider it a waste to put resources toward the care of working people.

The government’s own 2005 report on preparing for a sizable outbreak urged stockpiling 740,000 ventilators, but today they stock less than 10% of that number. Health care is available only to those who can afford it.

Our unions should demand the government allocate the funds needed to provide ventilators and other diagnostic and medical equipment needed to treat those with the virus, at no cost. Medical workers should be organized to service more rural areas and working-class neighborhoods where for-profit hospitals have been closing. Guarantee that health checks for *all* who need them are widely and freely available along with treatment for those diagnosed with the disease.

But no capitalist government looks to the voluntary and disciplined mobilization of the working class to solve pressing social problems and advance the protection of humanity, whether in response to the impact of hurricanes or the outbreak of new diseases.

There is a government that does — revolutionary Cuba. Today the Cuban government has mobilized the resources necessary to offer medical attention to any-

one who gets the disease. Everyone entering the country, visitor or resident, is asked if they have symptoms of the virus on arrival, and they’re contacted by health care providers wherever they’re staying.

The mosquito-born Zika virus struck Cuba in 2016. The revolutionary government mobilized soldiers, health workers and student volunteers to educate people on their doorsteps and convince them to do what was necessary to prevent the disease. It prepares beforehand for the impact of hurricanes that hit the island, sets aside sufficient reserve materials and then mobilizes volunteers to rebuild what has been destroyed. And when the Cuban government asked for volunteer medical workers to go to West Africa in 2014 to fight the spread of Ebola, 12,000 stepped forward.

Such measures are possible because workers and farmers are in power in Cuba, with a different set of values than the capitalist exploiters who rule in the U.S., for whom the only morality is the dollar.

There have been tremendous scientific and medical advances since influenza killed over 50 million people worldwide in 1918. The question is whether working people have a government that will use them for all.

A course of revolutionary struggle to bring workers and farmers to power is presented by the Socialist Workers Party. Join the SWP campaigning for Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett in 2020!

Say no to US gov’t slander of Cuban Revolution

Continued from front page

thrown, but Sanders was roundly criticized for saying the literacy drive had been positive.

Washington has increased sanctions on companies shipping oil to Cuba, tightened travel restrictions to the island and limited remittances that Cuban Americans can send back to their families. Last April it activated a section of the Helms-Burton Act to encourage U.S. citizens to sue individuals and companies that do business with Cuba using property that was nationalized after the revolution. In October the U.S. rulers banned Cuba from purchasing goods that contain more than 10% U.S.-made components.

“The U.S. blockade against Cuba constitutes the most unjust, severe and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures ever applied against any country,” said Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez on Feb. 3, the 58th anniversary of Kennedy’s imposition of the punishing embargo.

The U.S. capitalist class has never forgiven Cuba’s workers and farmers for making a revolution. Under the leadership of Fidel Castro, they overthrew the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship, established a workers and farmers government and put an end to capitalist ownership of the country’s factories, land and banks. And they transformed themselves in the process and took command of running society.

Castro described the program of the revolution in a Sept. 2, 1960, speech to over a million Cubans that is known as the First Declaration of Havana.

He said the Cuban people proclaim: “The right of peasants to the land; the right of workers to the fruit of their labor; the right of children to education; the right of the sick to medical and hospital care; the right of the young to a job; the right of students to free education that is both practical and scientific; the right of Blacks and Indians to ‘full human dignity’; the right of women to civil, social, and political equality; the right of the elderly to a secure old age; the right of intellectuals, artists, and scientists to use their work to fight for a better world; the right of states to nationalize the imperialist monopolies,” and more.

And Cuban working people went forward and acted on this program — one that would be attractive to working people in the U.S. and around the world.

Cuba’s literacy drive

The *Wall Street Journal* responded to Sanders’ comments on the 1961 literacy drive by claiming that campaign wasn’t a big deal. They said almost 80% of the population were literate before the revolution.

But the literacy drive wasn’t aimed at the capital-

ists or middle-class in Cuba who could read, many of whom had packed their bags and fled to the United States. It was aimed at drawing the workers and peasants — whose literacy rate was qualitatively lower — more deeply into taking command of their revolution.

Some 250,000 young volunteers mobilized to teach 700,000 fellow toilers, mostly workers, Afro-Cubans and peasants, to read and write. As they led the fight to wipe out illiteracy, the volunteers and their students alike gained growing confidence in their own capacities and the deepening revolution.

“Illiteracy is a tool in the hands of the exploiters. If you are ignorant, if you don’t know how to read or write, you’re not free,” explained Asela de los Santos, a leader of the revolution, in the book *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. De los Santos was in charge of organizing schools during the revolutionary war in 1958, which helped lay the foundations for the literacy campaign.

The liberal NPR brought Cuba “scholar” Andy Gomez on a Feb. 26 talk show to “explain” why Castro wanted people to be literate. “To indoctrinate the children to a Marxist ideology,” the “scholar” opined.

The U.S. rulers use these slanders to try and persuade those attracted to the liberating example of the Cuban Revolution that far from presenting a road to end the many forms of oppression engendered under capitalism, it offers only the suppression of individual freedom. Sanders’ labeling the Cuban government “a dictatorship” fits into their efforts.

The Cuban Revolution was a popular uprising that led workers and farmers to expropriate millions of acres of the largest landed estates. Some 100,000 peasants won title to land of their own. The government nationalized the big factories, plantations and utilities, whose bosses either fled or resisted the revolution, and reorganized them under workers control.

In contrast to the big-business press and all the Republican and Democratic presidential hopefuls, the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket — Alyson Kennedy for president and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president — point to the class interests working people in the U.S. have in defending the Cuban Revolution. And they explain what workers can do today to organize to fight the attacks of the bosses and their government. As we do so we advance our self-confidence, fighting capacities and win allies in struggle among all the oppressed and exploited.

This is the road towards building a movement of millions that can emulate the Cuban Revolution and take power out of the hands of the capitalists — the class enemy of working people both here and in Cuba.

War widens in Syria

Continued from front page

deploy their military in Syria to advance their own interests, all with deadly consequences for working people. Close to 1 million people have fled the regime’s merciless pounding and are pinned near the Turkish border, while the government in Ankara won’t allow them to cross.

Some 33 Turkish soldiers were killed Feb. 27 when Assad’s forces unleashed airstrikes in an ongoing offensive. The Turkish government recently doubled to 10,000 the number of troops it has in northwest Syria as well as amassing 30,000 more along the border.

The Turkish rulers fund, arm and command the National Liberation Front, one of several opposition groups operating in Idlib. The best armed of Assad’s opponents is the reactionary jihadi outfit Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which runs the civilian administration of the province and has about 15,000 fighters. Some 40% of the 3 million residents now in Idlib fled there to escape earlier assaults by Assad and his allies.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had signed a deal with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, that allowed Syrian rebels to settle in Idlib under Ankara’s protection. Assad tossed that aside to launch his offensive, backed by Putin’s air power, and troops from Hezbollah and other Tehran-backed militias.

Ankara retaliated against the killing of Turkish soldiers. Airstrikes on Assad’s troops killed 26 on Feb. 29, including 10 from Hezbollah and four from other Tehran-organized militias, as well as an officer from the Iranian rulers’ Revolutionary Guard. The next day Turkish warplanes shot down two Syrian aircraft and launched airstrikes on a military airport in Aleppo. The Ankara-controlled media claims the Turkish forces have “neutralized” hundreds of Syrian troops.

The Iranian rulers and their allied militias have helped prop up the Syrian regime, while creating bases there and routes for shipping missiles to Hezbollah in Lebanon within range of Israel. Opposition to Tehran’s military actions and interference in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East was a target of protests by workers and youth across Iran last November.

Erdogan and Putin have met several times since Ankara used its military to intervene in the fighting in Idlib, but continue to sharply disagree. So far they haven’t targeted each other’s forces. In addition to their air power, the Russian rulers also have special forces, military advisers and mercenary groups aiding Assad.

Washington deploys 500 troops in the Kurdish-held area of northeastern Syria and wields vast firepower across the Middle East. It seeks to use the current conflict to draw the Turkish government away from Moscow and back into its orbit.

Ankara’s deal for a Russian-made S-400 missile defense system angered the U.S. rulers, who suspended selling F-35 fighter jets to the Turkish government. Ankara has requested Washington send them the rival U.S.-made Patriot system, but it’s on hold.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham pressed Washington to intervene, using its clout to establish a no-fly zone over Idlib together with U.S. allies, and to push “back against Iran, Russia and Assad.”

U.S., all foreign troops out of Syria!

“Working people here can offer solidarity to fellow workers in Syria by demanding the U.S. and the other intervening forces get out of the country,” Socialist Workers Party vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett told the *Militant*. “Working people in Syria need space and time to organize to fight for their own interests, free of foreign military intervention.”

A powerful uprising for political rights and for the overthrow of the Assad regime, involving millions of working people, unfolded in 2011, but was brutally repressed. In the civil war that ensued, Assad lost control of much of the country. Moscow’s intervention with its air power in 2015 changed the relationship of forces, and the regime began to retake territory.

To pressure governments in Europe to support Turkish military intervention in Syria, Erdogan opened the borders with Europe to allow refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere to head there. The government in Greece responded by massing troops and cops on the border and attacked thousands of immigrants attempting to cross into the country March 2.