

## 'Cuba's socialist revolution sets an example for working people'

BY SETH GALINSKY

Halfway through the Jan. 1 to Feb. 15 international *Militant* renewal drive, more than 200 readers have renewed their subscriptions. Members of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S. and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, as well as other *Militant* partisans have been visiting subscribers to exchange views on the way forward for the working class today.

"I worked in hospitals for decades," *Militant* reader Jannie Jackson told SWP members Kaitlin Estill and Jacquie Henderson when they stopped by her home in Cincinnati Jan. 18. "Then the one I was working at closed down a few years ago and threw us all out of work."

Jackson followed the *Militant's* coverage of the 10-month-long strike by nurses at St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts, which ended in victory. The strike "made me think about what a different outlook on life these hospitals have," she said. "Those of us who work there think about the well-being of the pa-

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## US, Russian rulers step up confrontation over Ukraine

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Talks between the U.S. and Russian governments over Moscow's continuing troop buildup near its border with Ukraine ended without agreement Jan. 21. Washington opposes Moscow's threats to Ukraine, claiming to stand against an assault on Ukrainian sover-

## US, NATO OUT OF EASTERN EUROPE!

— Editorial page 9

eighty. In fact, the U.S. capitalist rulers seek to defend their own economic and strategic interests in the region.

The U.S. rulers have expanded NATO across Eastern Europe over decades, bringing these troops ever closer to Russia's borders.

To bolster its own interests and dominate what it calls its "near abroad," Moscow has mobilized its forces in the area and is stepping up its persecution of opponents of its occupation of Crimea, which it seized from Ukraine in 2014.

Days after talks ended, President Joseph Biden's administration said it

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## Texas refinery workers fight ExxonMobil union busting



Reuters/Sabrina Valle

Dec. 6, 2021, protest in Houston by ExxonMobil workers. Bosses locked them out May 1, pushed move to decertify union when workers refused to accept dangerous cutbacks.

## After 10-day strike, Colorado grocery workers make gains

BY VALERIE JOHNSON  
AND KAREN RAY

DENVER — After a solid and lively 10-day strike against King Soopers grocery-store bosses by 8,400 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7 members from Boulder to Parker, Colorado, and the greater metro area here, a majority voted in big union meetings to approve a new three-year contract Jan. 24.

It will also be presented to thousands more union members at King Soopers in Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Grand Junction and northern Colorado whose contracts run out over the next couple weeks.

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## Locked-out oil workers fight to defend safety, their union

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

FORT WORTH, Texas — For nine months now 650 members of United Steelworkers Local 13-243 have fought oil giant ExxonMobil bosses' attempts to break their union. The company marched the workers out of the giant refinery and oil blending facility in Beau-

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## Socialist Workers Party conference launches 2022 California campaign



Militant/Bernie Senter

Ellie García (right), Socialist Workers Party 2022 candidate for U.S. Senate in California, meets copper miner Mike Sepulveda to discuss Steelworkers strike against Asarco in 2019.

BY BETSEY STONE

LOS ANGELES — Socialist Workers Party members in California met in a statewide convention here Jan. 23 and voted to run Eleanor García, a retired aerospace worker and party leader with long experience in working-class struggles, for U.S. Senate and Joel Britton, a longtime SWP campaigner, unionist,

and member of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 125, for governor.

As part of the party's bold national campaign in 2022, the candidates will present the need for the working class to fight today's attacks by the bosses and their political parties, and to chart

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## Crisis in affordable, available child care challenges workers, women's rights

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Erin Turner recently started working 12-hour shifts in Iowa to cover the \$1,520 a month she spends on child care for her two young children, more than twice her rent. "We're already living within our means. We don't have anywhere else to cut back," she told the *Wall Street Journal* in a Jan. 17 article.

Brittany Graham, another Iowa worker, spent more than four months looking for child care for her 1-and-one-half-year-old daughter. Hoping to have a second child, Graham is already looking at her options. One center told her she was the 120th on the

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## Attack on Texas synagogue shows danger posed by Jew-hatred today

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a highly publicized antisemitic attack, Malik Faisal Akram took four hostages at gunpoint during a livestream service at the Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, Jan. 15. He held the hostages, including Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker, for 11 hours, to place demands on the U.S. government. "I know President Biden will do things

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- Manchester pallet workers stay strong, extend support



# Kentucky prosecutors, court use ‘double jeopardy’ to attack rights

BY JANET POST

Former Republican Gov. Matt Bevin of Kentucky pardoned 670 prisoners who had been convicted by state courts there as he left office at the end of 2019. Over two years later U.S. District Court Judge Claria Horn Boom sentenced one of them, Patrick Baker, to 42 years in prison for exactly the *same* crime, sending him back to prison.

Boom’s Jan. 18 ruling openly flouts protections in the Bill of Rights against double jeopardy that are crucial for the defense of working people, our unions and our struggles. The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution says no person may “be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb.” It was adopted in 1791 as a result of protests by workers and artisans demanding greater protections against government persecution.

In his executive order pardoning Baker, Bevin wrote that evidence supporting his conviction was “sketchy at best.”

But liberal politicians who had hounded Bevin throughout his term in office were determined to undermine his pardons. They seized on the Baker case, claiming his family had “bought” the pardon. They say it was granted because the family organized a fundraiser that raised \$21,500 to help Bevin pay off his campaign debt.

In 2014, Baker was addicted to oxycodeone and, along with a friend, attempted to rob a well-known drug dealer at his home. They dressed up as U.S. marshals. In the course of the robbery, Donald Mills, the dealer, was shot and killed. Baker maintains his innocence.

In 2017 a Knox County Circuit Court

jury found Baker guilty of reckless homicide, robbery, impersonating a peace officer and tampering with physical evidence. Reckless homicide is the least serious charge in Kentucky that can be brought when someone is killed during another crime. It is similar to the “felony murder” charge on the books in many other states. Because of the number of charges he was convicted of, Baker was sentenced to 19 years in prison.

Despite Baker receiving the pardon, federal prosecutors organized a grand jury after Bevin left office that indicted Baker last May for the very same crime. This time he was convicted of a more weighty federal charge, “murder committed during a drug trafficking crime,” and he was given a 42-year sentence. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jenna Reed argued for a tougher sentence than the one he received in 2017, claiming that this would deter future drug-related crime. Baker’s new sentence was more than twice as long as his original conviction.

When Baker was pardoned in 2019, his attorney, Elliot Slosar, said he “is free today because DNA evidence clears him from committing murder,” and “because eyewitness descriptions have never matched him.” Slosar pointed out that the two cops who led the investigation are being sued for false statements in other trials. State authorities erased data on Baker’s cellphone that he had wanted to present to the jury in his defense.

### ‘Dual sovereignty’ doctrine

To throw out protection against double jeopardy, more prosecutors and judges in recent years claim state and federal governments have “dual sovereignty.”

## Sacramento protest says, ‘Free Carlos Harris!’



Photo courtesy of Hampton family

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Three dozen people rallied in a Martin Luther King Day protest Jan. 17 across the street from the state Capitol building here demanding that Carlos Harris and other unjustly incarcerated prisoners be released. “My cousin Carlos has served 17 years of a 28-year-and-four-month sentence for a crime he did not commit,” said protest organizer Aisha Hampton. Harris was framed up and jailed in 2005 for the attempted murder of Robert Carr, and other charges.

Harris protested that he had inadequate counsel and was railroaded to prison for a crime committed by others when he wasn’t even present. “He was denied his right to face his accuser at his trial and had a public defender who called no witnesses,” Hampton said. “Incarcerated lives matter too,” she said, noting the importance of using the King Day commemorations to point to present-day injustices and demand an end to them.

Hampton told the *Militant* that last October Harris applied for clemency from Gov. Gavin Newsom but hasn’t gotten a response. She said more than 5,700 people have signed an online petition at [change.org](https://change.org) to support his fight.

— JOEL BRITTON

They say they are two separate jurisdictions and an identical offense tried in a state court can also be tried again in federal court, or vice versa.

In 2019 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld dual sovereignty in a 7-to-2 ruling in *Gamble v. the United States*. In 2015 Terance Gamble, a freed felon, was caught with a firearm in his car, which is illegal in Alabama. He was sentenced to a year in prison. But after being released, he was arrested and convicted again for the same offense in federal court and sent back to prison.

Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Neil Gorsuch filed opinions sharply disagreeing with the ruling. Ginsburg said the Bill of Rights’ disallowance of double jeopardy should be upheld. She wrote that the U.S. and its constituent states “compose one people, bound by an overriding Federal Constitution.

Within that ‘WHOLE,’ the Federal and State Governments should be disabled from accomplishing together ‘what neither government [could] do alone — prosecute an ordinary citizen twice for the same offence.’”

The use of “dual sovereignty” to trample on constitutional protections gives the rulers another weapon to target and frame up workers. It allows them to prosecute defendants until they can find a court to give them a guilty verdict.

Every time the rulers weaken constitutional protections — no matter who is on trial or for what crime — they deal a blow to rights working people need. Under capitalism workers are always potential defendants in the rulers’ criminal “justice” system and we need to jealously guard every one of these protections.

Baker is now appealing the federal district court’s sentence.

## THE MILITANT

### Deadly building fires caused by capitalist greed

*The greed of landlords and government officials under the capitalist system led to the death of 29 people in horrific fires in New York and Philadelphia in January. The ‘Militant’ explains why workers must fight for safe housing under control of workers and tenants.*



Reuters/Jeenah Moon

Funeral Jan. 16 for 15 victims of Bronx, New York, deadly apartment building fire.

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# ‘Cuban revolution an example’

**Continued from front page**  
tients and everybody. All the companies care about is how they can make more and more money from our hard work.

“They don’t care if you have a family or anything else,” she said. “If you get hurt on the job and don’t have a union to go to, you’re on your own. It’s your problem.”

“That’s the outlook of their governments, too,” Estill said. “The capitalist class offers working people nothing but exploitation and oppression. Working people can realize our own worth, as Malcolm X explained, as we gain confidence through our struggles and organize to take power out of the capitalists’ hands.” She pointed Jackson to *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, the SWP’s national secretary. Jackson had previously bought the book and loaned it to her granddaughter.

“I need to get that book back,” Jackson said. “She read it before I was finished and gave it to her friends to read.”

Jackson renewed her subscription and said she looks forward to attending the weekly Militant Labor Forum series starting up there.

### What Cuban Revolution shows

When SWP member Samir Hazboun told Yolanda Alvarado, a factory worker in Cincinnati, that he is studying Spanish in preparation for participating in the Havana International Book Fair later this year Alvarado had some questions.

“In Cuba there are food shortages,” she said, adding that Cuban-born workers she knows have told her about mounting difficulties working people face on the island. Some blame the Cuban government.

Hazboun agreed that working people there face increasing challenges.

“But the revolution is alive,” he said, “because Cuba’s workers and farmers overthrew a U.S.-backed dictatorship in 1959 and opened the road to a socialist revolution. They have been building a society based on human solidarity, not on the dog-eat-dog values of capitalism.”

The U.S. economic war on Cuba makes everything more difficult, from importing fertilizer and machinery, to getting food and medical supplies. Despite that “Cuba developed its own vaccines against COVID-19,” Hazboun pointed out. As of Jan. 25, nearly 90% of the population is fully vaccinated. That’s just one example of what is possible when working people have a government of our own.

“I want to hear about your experience in Cuba when you return,” she told Hazboun.

Alvarado renewed her subscription and bought *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* by Fidel Castro to learn more. Castro’s two speeches, given in 1960 and 1962, explain what made a socialist revolution possible. They describe the program of the revolution and reaffirm the determination of millions of working people to defend their conquests arms in hand.

### Just two sexes?

In Minneapolis, Socialist Workers Party members Helen Meyers and Edwin Fruit met up with subscriber Laryssa Marquardt in a coffee shop in Hudson, Wisconsin, Jan. 20. Marquardt, a Walmart worker, first subscribed to the *Militant* at a rally in support of women’s right to family planning, including access to safe and secure abortion.

“I didn’t know anything about the John Deere strike until I saw it in the *Militant*,” she said, referring to the strike by United Auto Workers members at the agricultural machinery company last year.



Militant/Jacquie Henderson  
Kaitlin Estill, left, talks with hospital worker Jannie Jackson in Cincinnati Jan. 18. “All the companies care about is how they can make more money from our hard work,” said Jackson.

Marquardt said one thing she didn’t agree with in the *Militant* were articles that explain there are two sexes — male and female — with distinct biological differences. “I think there is a whole range of what is defined as sexes and not just two,” Marquardt said.

The SWP explains recognizing this biological reality is essential to understanding the oppression of women under class society and building the fight to advance women’s emancipation and working-class solidarity.

Reducing “men” and “women” to categories that can be changed at will, the *Militant* explains, blurs the reality of the oppression of women, a key lynchpin of capitalist rule. One example is in women’s sports, where men who call themselves transgender women use their genetic differences and greater physical strength to beat biological women they compete against.

These are important questions. “No revolution can be made in this country without uniting the large majority of the working class,” Fruit said.

Fighting for women’s emancipation is a central part of that struggle.

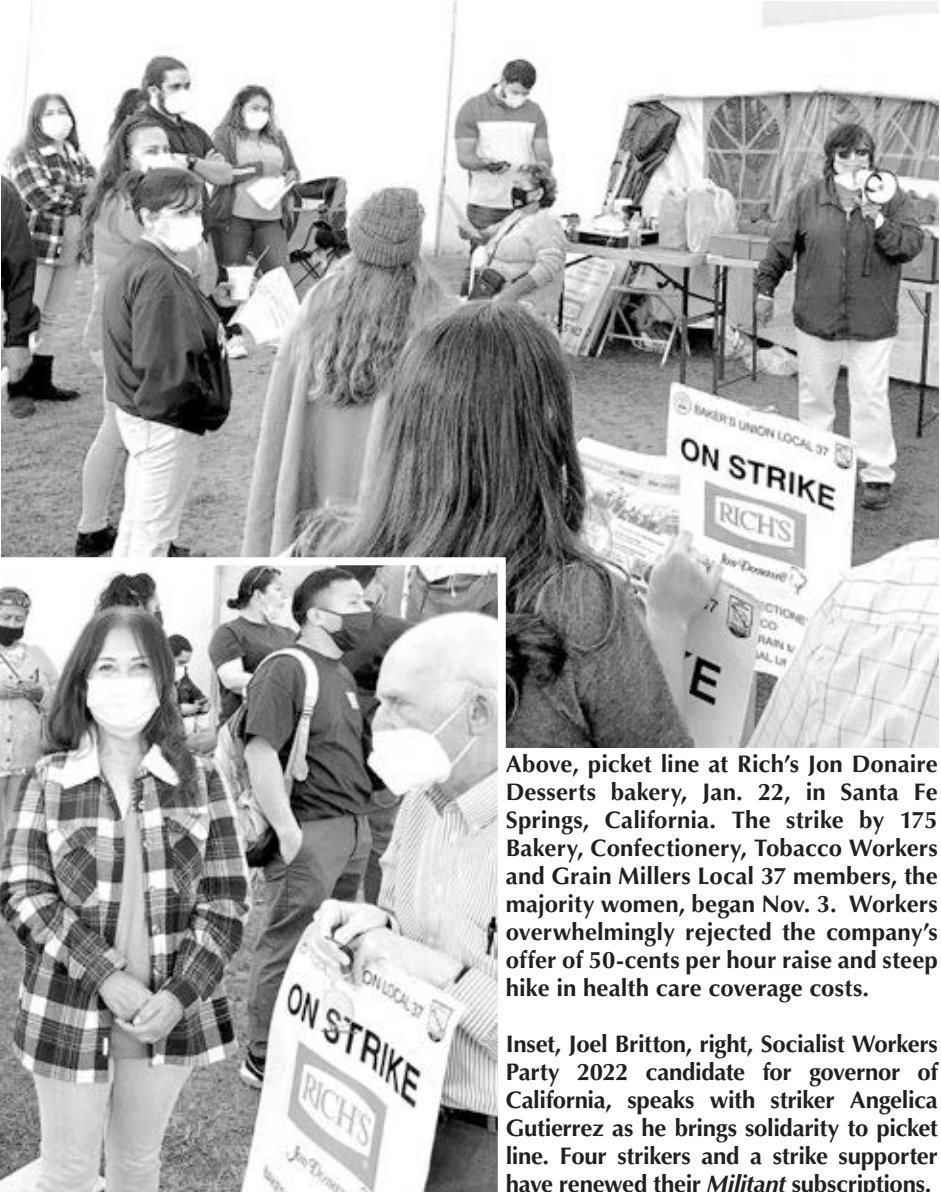
Marquardt renewed and bought *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Barnes. “This book may help me see what your party is all about,” she said.

*Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity: The Long View of History* has just come off the press and will interest *Militant* readers. The book is an aid to all those looking for a scientific view of history and a road forward to put an end to the class exploitation that warps every aspect of social relations and moral values.

The launch of the Socialist Workers Party’s 2022 campaign all across the country over the next several weeks will also boost the renewal drive. Many *Militant* readers will be interested in finding out about the SWP candidates, the party’s working-class program and help spread the word. Key to doing that will be expanding the paper’s readership.

Want to introduce friends, co-workers, neighbors and relatives to the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party? See page 8 to contact the party branch nearest you, or contact themilitant@mac.com.

‘Militant’ Renewal Drive		
Jan. 1 - Feb. 15, week 3		
Country	Quota	Sold
UNITED STATES		
Albany*	20	10
Atlanta	16	11
Chicago	25	18
Cincinnati	10	7
Dallas-Fort Worth*	15	9
Lincoln*	4	3
Los Angeles	17	10
Miami	7	6
Minneapolis	12	9
N. New Jersey	16	11
New York	25	13
Oakland	18	13
Philadelphia	10	8
Pittsburgh	12	7
Seattle	13	5
Washington, DC	11	9
Total U.S.	231	149
Prisoners*	20	16
UNITED KINGDOM		
London	10	9
Manchester	8	5
Total U.K.	18	14
Canada	30	15
New Zealand	5	4
Australia	10	4
Total	314	202
SHOULD BE	300	150
*Raised Goal		



Militant photos: Freedy Hunt/Inset, Norton Sandler  
Above, picket line at Rich’s Jon Donaire Desserts bakery, Jan. 22, in Santa Fe Springs, California. The strike by 175 Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 37 members, the majority women, began Nov. 3. Workers overwhelmingly rejected the company’s offer of 50-cents per hour raise and steep hike in health care coverage costs.

Inset, Joel Britton, right, Socialist Workers Party 2022 candidate for governor of California, speaks with striker Angelica Gutierrez as he brings solidarity to picket line. Four strikers and a strike supporter have renewed their *Militant* subscriptions.

## Join Cuba Solidarity Caravans

### Sun., Jan. 30

**Halt Washington’s economic war on Cuba!**  
**End travel restrictions!**  
**U.S. out of Guantánamo!**

### Miami

9 a.m. — assemble at Miami City Hall, 3500 Pan American Drive. Depart 11 a.m. for José Martí memorial.

### Minneapolis

1 p.m. — assemble, South High School parking lot, 3131 19th Ave. S.

### New York City

1 p.m. — assemble, State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. Car caravan 1.30 p.m., returns 2 p.m. for rally.

### Seattle

11 a.m. — picket, Hec Edmonson Pavilion, University of Washington.

**Information on other actions at [www.nnoc.info](http://www.nnoc.info)**



# Attack on Texas synagogue

Continued from front page

for the Jews,” he said, adding, “America only cares about Jewish lives.”

Nonetheless, after the hostages escaped and Akram was shot dead by the FBI, Matthew DeSarno, who heads the Dallas FBI field office, tried to explain this away. He told the press the attacker was “singularly focused on one issue, and it was not specifically related to the Jewish community.” Many media in the U.S. carried that line.

After Jewish leaders and others reacted in anger, the FBI had to walk back this claim. They issued a new statement the next day calling it “a terrorism-related matter, in which the Jewish community was targeted.”

Akram, a British citizen of Pakistani descent, chose the synagogue because it is just 23 miles southwest of the federal prison in Fort Worth where Aafia Siddiqui is serving an 86-year sentence. Siddiqui, a Pakistani woman who went to college in the U.S., was found guilty in a trial in New York in 2010 of trying to kill U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan in 2008. She is portrayed as a political prisoner by the government of Pakistan and many Islamist groups around the world.

One thing that is certain is that Siddiqui is a promoter of Jew-hatred. At her trial she demanded the judge submit every juror to genetic testing and bar them if they were Jewish.

Akram repeatedly said he had taken the hostages to win Siddiqui’s release. He spoke twice with Angela Buchdahl, a rabbi at Central Synagogue in New York, acting as if she was a leader of all Jews in the U.S. and had the power to instruct the U.S. government to free Siddiqui.

Cops from several North Texas police departments, SWAT squads, the FBI’s national hostage rescue group and other cop agencies descended on the area after the hostages were taken.

Gulbar Akram, the hostage-taker’s brother who lives in Blackburn, England, tried to get him to lay down his weapons and to surrender during a phone call. “These guys you’ve got there are innocent people,” Gulbar Akram told him. “You don’t need to do this.”

Malik Akram replied that he planned to release them, but added, “I’m coming back home in a body bag.” He had let one hostage go earlier in the day.

When his brother said that there was no way the hostage taking would end in the release of Siddiqui, Akram replied that it didn’t matter. “I’m opening the doors for every youngster to come to America and f-k with them.”

Cytron-Walker told the press he used security training he received following the 2018 massacre at Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life synagogue to keep himself and the others calm, and to look for ways to get out. Working together the hostages inched their way closer to the exit over the course of the day.

According to one of them, Jeffery Cohen, Akram ordered the three to kneel toward the end. When they did not, Akram turned around and put his gun down to pour some soda, Cohen told the *Washington Post*. That’s when Cytron-Walker threw a chair at Akram and all three ran out of the synagogue.

Moments later FBI agents burst in and killed Akram. He had claimed he had bombs, but there were none.

## Jew-hatred conspiracy theories

Akram’s family says he had mental health issues. That may be the case. But the fact he took Jews hostage and espoused Jew-hating conspiracy theories is an indication that antisemitism is growing amid the heightened class tensions of today’s capitalist crisis.

A central element of Jew-hatred is the assertion that Jews secretly control governments, banks, corporations and economic life around the world. This takes the blame off the real source of the exploitation and oppression working people face — the normal functioning of capitalism and the rulers’ drive to maximize profits. Such conspiracy theories have been the stock-in-trade of ultra-rightist and fascist forces — mortal enemies of the working class and its allies — as well as growing numbers of antisemites on the left.

Noting the FBI and most of the press initially refused to call the attack for what it was, Bret Stephens, in the *New York Times*, pointed out this was “not just a matter of a journalistic lapse,” but “profoundly worrisome.” Many Jews in the U.S. think they are doing well, Stephens noted. But “anyone with a long view of Jewish history should know” how quickly that “can

## Protest in Tunisia demands jobs, political rights



Chedly Ben Ibrahim/NurPhoto via AP

Defying a government ban on indoor and outdoor gatherings, more than 1,000 demonstrators took to the streets in Tunisia’s capital, Tunis, Jan. 14 to protest rising joblessness, inflation and attacks on political rights. The date marks the 11th anniversary since massive protests succeeded in overthrowing the rule of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, prompting uprisings across North Africa and the Mideast.

Some protesters chanted, “Down with the coup!” referring to the rule by decree by Tunisia’s current president, Kais Saied, who shut down parliament and suspended the constitution last July.

“This people, which toppled a 23-year dictatorship, is not going to let another dictator take its place,” Sihem Bensedrine, a journalist who headed the now-defunct Truth and Dignity Commission, told Agence France-Presse at the action.

Tunisian police used water cannons, tear gas and batons to disperse protesters. At least one person was beaten to death and dozens arrested. Cops attacked a number of reporters covering the action.

The ouster of Ben Ali in 2011, under the impact of the deepening worldwide capitalist crisis, sparked a wave of uprisings against intolerable conditions and tyrannical regimes, including in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain. In some cases governments were brought down, but nowhere were working people able to forge a revolutionary leadership capable of leading millions to take power into their own hands and establish workers and farmers governments.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

turn to political and personal ruin even — or especially — in countries where it might seem unthinkable.” He noted that the singling out of Israel under the banner of anti-Zionism has come “a more acceptable way” of promoting antisemitism.

“Working people and our unions must speak out against Jew-hatred, wherever it comes from the left or from the right,” said Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party spokesperson in Texas. “The insidious lies that Jews control the government or are responsible for the evils bred by capitalism must be answered.

“This is a question of life or death for the union movement and the working class. No major section of the ruling class is financing antisemitic groups today,” Kennedy said. “But that will change when the crisis heats up, struggles by workers and farmers accelerate and sections of the ruling class come to fear that

growing numbers of working people will seek ways to end capitalist rule. Workers and our unions will have to combat Jew-hatred on the road to bringing to power a government of workers and farmers.”

## New from Pathfinder: Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity The Long View of History

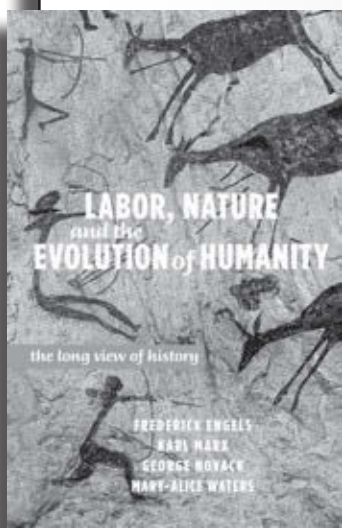
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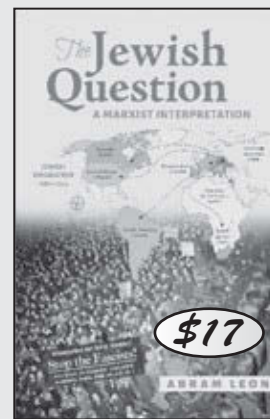


## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

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Capitalist Rulers Face Political Crisis:  
What’s at Stake for Working People?  
Speakers: Socialist Workers Party 2022  
California candidates. Sat., Feb. 5, 7 p.m.  
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## The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation by Abram Leon



Why is Jew-hatred still raising its ugly head? What are its class roots? Why is there no solution to the Jewish question without revolutionary struggles that transform working people as we fight to transform our world?

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# —ON THE PICKET LINE—

## Manchester pallet workers stay strong, extend support

MANCHESTER, England — “The support for our strike has opened my mind,” Garry Walker, a worker at CHEP pallet company, told a solidarity meeting organized by Manchester Trades Union Council Jan. 12. The workers, organized by Unite, went on strike here Dec. 17, demanding a 5% pay raise.

Striking workers “are leading the way,” James Coffield, a GMB union shop steward at the company’s Pontefract depot in Yorkshire, told the meeting. “I’m getting asked every day — how is the Manchester strike going?”

At the picket line, striker Alan Kirwan told the *Militant* the strikers have been able to turn away some of the drivers delivering to the plant. “Those who are union members understand about our fight,” he said.

“There’s been a sea change in the confidence of the lads,” Walker said at the Jan. 12 meeting. “Workers now see we have a voice and can do something.”

Walker and striker Andy Aspinall came to the Manchester South Rail Maritime and Transport union branch meeting to win support Jan. 10. Days later branch secretary Clayton Clive and three other RMT members joined the CHEP workers’ picket line with 40 other trades unionists. Clive addressed the striking workers.

“Sometimes we get demoralized,” he said, “but to hear about others fighting was an inspiration.” The RMT branch donated 300 pounds (\$408) to the strike fund.

Four strikers joined the picket line of train cleaners working for Atalian Servest at Manchester Piccadilly station Jan. 21. The cleaners struck for two days to demand better pay.

To send messages to CHEP strikers, email [ian.mccluskey@unitetheunion.org](mailto:ian.mccluskey@unitetheunion.org). Donations to Unity Bank NW/1 Strike Fund. Account 20217873. Sort code 60-83-01.

Visit their pickets 24 hours a day on weekdays at Village Way, Trafford Park, M17 1HR.

— Pete Clifford

## Workers strike UK warehouse for better pay, win solidarity

WORKSOP, England — “We want a wage that allows us to pay our bills, feed and take care of our families and live,” Kelly Donnelly, a striker at the Wincanton warehouse, told the *Militant* on the spirited picket line here Jan. 14.

At the beginning of the year some 450 Unite members struck the plant, which supplies products for the home goods chain B&Q. They had rejected a below inflation 4% pay offer and organized week-long work stoppages previously.

“The support we’ve been getting has been great,” said Donnelly, the first woman at the site to operate a forklift reach truck. As a result of the strike, “I’ve gotten to know other workmates and the kind of problems they face.”

“Kingfisher, the company that owns B&Q, made huge profits last year during the pandemic,” pointed out Paddy McGrath, senior Unite steward at the warehouse.

Fellow Unite members — scaffolders who are on strike at Actavo at the British Steel plant in Scunthorpe — visited the warehouse workers’ picket Jan. 12. “It’s very important we support each other,” scaffolder Dave Birchall said in a video posted online. “If we all stand together we can achieve anything we want.”

The North Nottinghamshire branch of Unite also donated 5,000



Militant/Ólof Andra Proppé

Unite union members on strike in Manchester, England, against CHEP pallet company meet, listen to transport union officer bringing solidarity Jan. 14. Strikers are demanding 5% pay raise.

pounds (\$6,780) to the Wincanton workers’ strike fund.

— Andrés Mendoza and Tony Hunt

## Quebec cement workers fight bosses’ seven-month lockout

JOLIETTE, Quebec — Locked out since last May, some 110 workers at Ash Grove’s cement plant here unanimously voted down the employers’ latest offer Jan. 6.

“The union has asked for nothing except to maintain established rights,” Renaud Gagne, Unifor’s Quebec director, told the press after the vote. In 2020, Ash Grove bosses announced the closure of two of the four ovens at the Joliette plant. Confronted with 50 or more job losses, members of Unifor

Local 177 demanded bosses maintain seniority rights and limit the use of subcontractors. Bosses have gotten a court injunction to limit pickets at the plant entrance to 14.

Two support rallies, drawing unions from throughout the region, have been held. The locked-out workers’ strike fund is regularly boosted by donations, not only from Unifor locals, but from Steelworkers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Canadian Union of Public Employees and others.

To visit the line, contact Michael Tessier at (450) 803-7754. Send financial contributions to: Unifor 177, Martin Roy, 1994, boul. Base de Roc, Joliette, QC J6E 0L2.

— Katy LeRougetel

# Black farmers in Illinois fight for improved conditions

BY NAOMI CRAINE

HOPKINS PARK, Ill. — “Black farmers in rural Pembroke Township protest Nicor plan to build gas pipeline through their community,” read a headline in the Dec. 7 *Chicago Tribune*. It reported on a rally in downtown Chicago opposing the installation of natural gas service lines here, 65 miles south of the city.

But most Black farmers favor the chance to get natural gas, which can make their working and living conditions better. “The farmers aren’t against

the gas line. We’ve been fighting for it for 30 years,” Pam Basu told the *Militant*. Her family owns the organic Basu Natural Farms. “We don’t have natural gas, we don’t have broadband access, we need these resources here.”

The village of Hopkins Park and surrounding Pembroke Township are overwhelmingly African American. Black farmers in the area have a history of fighting to defend their land and livelihoods, including opposing the construction of a prison there in the early 2000s. Basu raises herbs, apples,

grapes, strawberries and various plants in the farm’s sandy soil that they mix up into natural medicine tinctures.

There are more than 70,000 farms in Illinois, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but less than 200 are owned by African Americans.

Basu said the propane tanks they use for heat “cost nearly \$200 and last just a week. They’re not regulated, so they can charge whatever they want.”

When the schools went “virtual” in 2020, area residents had to drive their kids to sit in the car outside McDonald’s in Kankakee, 15 miles away, to get an internet connection. “The people protesting are mostly in Chicago,” Basu said. “They benefit from access to gas.”

Her family moved to Pembroke Township in 1959. “At first we didn’t even have electricity. With the gas, they’ll start putting the lines in Hopkins Park and then spread from there. Not everyone will get it right away, but you have to start.”

Nicor says its planned gas lines will run along the roads and not take any farmland. Those opposing the pipeline have made clear their objection is to any use of fossil fuels, as opposed to “renewable energy,” regardless of where the lines are.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party visited Hopkins Park in December to learn more about what residents face. Many of the houses and trailers in the small town are run down. Most have propane tanks in the back for heat; some residents rely on wood stoves. A construction worker who’s lived in Pembroke Township his whole life told this correspondent that he also supports the planned natural gas line. He hopes it will bring down heating costs and attract much-needed jobs to the area.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 10, 1997

The decision by New York state officials to release a list of 17 names, addresses, photos, and descriptions of people who were convicted of sex crimes marks an attack on the democratic rights of working people. It goes hand-in-hand with the reinstitution of chain gangs, and other types of punishment designed to degrade working people and portray them as non-human.

These moves are part of the offensive by the employing class and its government against the working class. The capitalist rulers seek to force working people to accept the notion that there are certain people who are less than fully human, who don’t deserve the same rights as others.

The New York measures strike directly at the right to presumption of innocence, an important conquest working people have won. These are safeguards that the working class needs to defend.



February 11, 1972

A general strike of Catholic workers has spread throughout Northern Ireland in the wake of the British army’s attack on a peaceful mass demonstration in Derry. A wave of anti-British protests is also occurring in the Republic of Ireland to the south. Thirteen civilians were left dead and at least 16 wounded when British paratroopers opened fire with automatic weapons on a demonstration of between 15,000 and 20,000.

The protesters were demanding an end to the government’s policy of internment under which some 755 Catholics have been imprisoned without charge or trial.

The attack in Derry, now referred to as “Bloody Sunday,” has been compared to the 1960 Sharpeville massacre in which 72 Blacks were shot dead by South African police and soldiers during an unarmed and peaceful demonstration against that country’s pass laws.



February 8, 1947

Nine and one half hours before the beginning of a general strike which was sure to paralyze all of Japan, U.S. General MacArthur issued an order prohibiting the strike. The unions refused to withdraw the strike threat until MacArthur alerted U. S. occupation troops to see that the order was obeyed.

MacArthur’s anti-labor action is a good example of the kind of “democracy” which the U. S. government is exporting to Japan. The strike was aimed above all at the government, because of its opposition to the unions’ demands for a 300 percent wage increase for 2,500,000 workers, and because of its stubborn refusal to adopt a program of social legislation demanded by the entire labor movement.

MacArthur’s strikebreaking intervention will have the result of increasing mass resentment against the occupation forces as well as the government.



# US, Russian confrontation

Continued from front page

may deploy up to 8,500 more troops to Eastern Europe, while Washington has carefully limited its direct military aid to Ukraine. NATO announced it was sending more ships to the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean seas Jan. 24, as well as fighter jets to Lithuania and Bulgaria.

More than 70,000 U.S. troops are stationed in Europe, roughly 6,000 of them in Eastern Europe. Other imperialist powers also have thousands of troops on rotating deployments in NATO's eastern zone.

At the talks in Geneva, Secretary of State Antony Blinken threatened Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that any Russian "aggression" against Ukraine would be "met with a severe and united response."

However, Biden told the press Jan. 19 that a "minor incursion" into Ukraine by Moscow's forces would be met with only a limited reaction from Washington. The next day, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky angrily replied, saying there were "no minor incursions" on small nations that don't carry dangerous consequences.

The exchange underscores the fact that the U.S. rulers have no intention of being drawn into a military conflict with Moscow over Ukraine. At the same time, they want to act in such a way that they don't lose credibility in a regime they hope to maintain their interests in. They also face growing differences with allied governments in Europe over how to respond to Moscow's threats.

## 2014 popular uprising in Ukraine

In 2014 a popular uprising in Ukraine overthrew the pro-Moscow government of Viktor Yanukovych. Without a revolutionary working-class leadership, power fell to Ukrainian capitalists wanting to shift relations to imperialist powers in the West.

Washington is trying to win its allies to join in threatening financial sanctions if Moscow invades. French President Emmanuel Macron proposed Paris lead

a European Union delegation to hold separate talks with Moscow. Despite their NATO membership, governments in the EU took no part in recent Washington-led NATO talks.

Moscow's military strength on the Russia-Ukraine and Belarus-Ukraine borders has now reached 120,000 troops. The Russian government denies it plans to invade Ukraine, while insisting Washington rule out ever admitting Ukraine into NATO. Moscow calls on NATO to remove all its forces from Romania, Bulgaria and other ex-Soviet bloc states in Eastern Europe. Washington rejects all of Moscow's demands.

The Russian rulers want to reassert their domination over what they call "historical Russia," including nations that became independent after the collapse of Stalinist regimes in the former Soviet Union in 1991.

After the 2014 Maidan uprising in Ukraine, the Kremlin intervened to arm pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine who took control over areas of Donbas and Luhansk bordering Russia. The smoldering conflict has displaced over 2 million Ukrainians and killed more than 14,000 people.

## Tatars fight Russia's occupation

As part of the 2014 uprising that brought down the Yanukovych regime and opened up political space for working people, over 10,000 people in the Crimean Peninsula demonstrated their support for Ukrainian unity and Crimean autonomy. But in a blow to Ukrainian sovereignty, Moscow used its military to take over and occupy Crimea, home of the Tatar people. It has been persecuting them ever since.

Moscow banned the Mejlis, the Crimean Tatar assembly. The Federal Security Service (FSB), Russia's political police, raided homes, mosques and schools.

Among five Crimean Tatars arrested for alleged "sabotage" in September 2021 was Nariman Dzhelyal, the first deputy head of the Mejlis. He

## German rulers pulled between Washington and Moscow



Markus Scholz

As Washington presses to defend its interests in eastern Europe, claiming to act in defense of Ukrainian sovereignty, deeper divisions have become clear among the rival capitalist rulers in NATO. The head of Germany's navy, Kay-Achim Schonbach, was forced to resign Jan. 22 after saying Russian President Vladimir Putin's mobilization of military forces around Ukraine was just to gain "respect" as an "equal" and that the Crimean Peninsula, occupied by Russian forces since 2014, is "gone and will never come back" to Ukraine.

Germany's rulers control the dominant capitalist power in Europe, profiting off the unequal relations in the European Union. But its military forces are exceptionally weak, incapable of defending itself against any serious threat. The small German fleet of five submarines, like the one above, are often unseaworthy.

Berlin is forced to vacillate between looking to Washington or Moscow when their interests are threatened. Today, they complain in public about Moscow's threats over Ukraine, but refuse to become involved.

The new Social Democrat-led coalition government, which bans weapons deliveries to "conflict zones," hasn't joined Washington and London in sending arms to Kyiv. And so far it has refused to agree to back off opening the newly completed natural gas pipeline between Russia and Germany, a pipeline deal that threatens to cut Ukraine's supplies off.

Berlin says it hopes to "de-escalate the situation." But the day before resigning, Schonbach during a visit to India said respecting Putin would be "low cost, even no cost" to the German rulers.

— ROY LANDERSEN

had just returned to Crimea after participating in the inaugural meeting of Crimea Platform in Ukraine. It seeks international backing for an end to Moscow's intervention.

"If we wish to live in freedom," said Dzhelyal in a statement issued through his lawyers Nov. 8, "and determine our fate, there is no other choice than to fight."

The Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group in Ukraine reported Jan. 18 that Russian prosecutors are also seeking sentences of up to 18 years in prison for five Tatars arrested last year on trumped-up terrorism charges.

In 2020 Refat Chubarov, head of the Mejlis, was tried in absentia. Having opposed Russian occupation, he was forced into exile. Longtime Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev was also tried in absentia in 2014.

Crimea was conquered by the Russian czars in 1783. After the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution brought to power a workers and farmers government in 1917, Tatars established an autonomous republic, as did Ukrainians. National pride grew and culture flourished.

But a bloody counterrevolution carried out by a bureaucratic caste headed by Joseph Stalin drove working people from political power in the late 1920s. It reversed the course fought for by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin of championing the rights of oppressed nations to self-determination.

In 1944 Stalin ordered the mass deportation of Crimea's Tatar people, a Muslim ethnic minority, to central Asia and Siberia. Many died along

the way. Stalin falsely claimed they supported Nazi Germany in its war against the Soviet Union. They were prevented from returning to their homeland until the 1990s.

Today the Vladimir Putin regime in Russia is determined to quash any opposition to its course in Crimea, Kazakhstan and at home. It fears broader working-class resistance to its military adventures and to the impact of economic stagnation millions face at home.

## Continued from front page

mont May 1, locking them out of their jobs, because the union refused to give up long-standing seniority rights and had issued a strike notice.

Union members have maintained picket lines 24/7. They've organized a well-stocked food bank and won solidarity from USW locals at other refineries and workers throughout the U.S.

The USW members overwhelmingly rejected a second offer by ExxonMobil Oct. 20 where bosses would have the right to move workers to any position, at any time, regardless of seniority and would eliminate job bidding. Workers reject bosses' moves to cut the A-operator job, which ensures every crew has an experienced member who can lead in bringing down and starting up production. Unionists say this is key for safety for workers and nearby communities.

In the first talks in months Jan. 6, the union modified its demands on holiday pay and proposed conditions at the plant

# SWP state conference launches 2022 California campaign

Continued from front page

a course to take political power into our own hands.

"The capitalist rulers and their parties are in deep crisis today," Norton Sandler, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, said in the political report opening the convention. "There is no stable layer of either party that can speak and act confidently on behalf of the ruling class."

"All politics today by necessity reflects the society we live in, dominated by the capitalist rulers and their parties," Sandler said. "Issues related to the crisis of imperialism and their parties will dominate the 2022 elections. We have to explain both the source of this crisis and the way forward for the working class."

"The root cause of the crisis is the worldwide stagnation of production and trade, alongside soaring prices," Sandler said. "With competition intensifying between U.S. capitalists and their rivals, they respond by protecting their own markets and profits, attacking workers' wages and conditions of work and life."

Every political question gets factionalized, from the response to COVID, to education, science, and culture, all to the great detriment of the working class. Having no solutions to this deepening crisis, the leaders of the Democrats and Republicans turn to factionalism against each other and to divisions within their own ranks. This includes efforts to criminalize their rivals, said Sandler.

"When they tar each other as criminals, whether it's Trump pointing at Hillary Clinton and chanting 'Lock her up' or the Democrats' relentless efforts — going on for six years — to impeach or jail Trump, his associates and family, they open the way for criminalizing working-class parties like the SWP. It's dangerous," said Sandler.

"Both of the rulers' parties are wracked with divisions that threaten to shatter the two-party system the bosses have used for decades to ensnare working people," he said. "The whole picture means the rulers face a future with no stable order."

## Workers need our own party

"We explain the way forward is for working people to organize ourselves,



Militant/Laura Anderson

Marlena Pellegrino, a nurse who helped lead successful 10-month strike against St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts, speaks at expanded picket line Sept. 25. The strike "was not about us, it was about all the fights" of the labor movement, she said as the strike ended.

independent of the capitalists and their parties," Sandler said. "Strengthening the unions, and getting on a course to build a labor party that can challenge the rule of the capitalists."

Convention delegates drew attention to the growing numbers of young workers who are living at home, unable to afford starting families of their own and looking forward to a secure future. This reality helps explain the recent strikes that focused on the need for higher wages, cost-of-living clauses to blunt the effects of inflation, an end to two-tier divisions, better health care and more livable work schedules.

SWP campaigners will raise the need for a government-funded public works program to provide jobs at union-scale wages to build affordable housing, child care centers, hospitals and other things needed for working-class families to survive. And to fight for workers control of production, to defend themselves and those who live nearby, and to assure products are made that are safe and really meet the needs of working people.

"Given economic stagnation today there is no reason to assume a strike wave is imminent," Sandler said. "For that there has to be hiring and an upturn. But the strikes that do occur set an example."

The day before the conference, Britton and other party members joined the picket line of workers on strike at the Jon Donaire Desserts factory in Santa Fe Springs. "The workers greeted us warmly," Sandler said. "The Militant is appreciated by these and other workers who go out on strike. In many cases, it's the only place workers can learn about these battles."

Eleanor García noted the importance of the victory by nurses at St. Vincent Hospital after a 10-month strike in Worcester, Massachusetts. She described how nurse Marlena Pellegrino told the Militant the strikers grew in character and fortitude in the long battle.

Delegates took up the increase in homelessness, the mental health crisis and the growth in the number of suicides today, all reflections of the economic and social crisis of capitalism that will not begin to be resolved without a mobilization of the working class to end the rule of the bosses and their dog-eat-dog profit-driven system.

## Socialist revolution

"What is the program of the Socialist Workers Party? It's socialist revolution," national SWP campaign chair John Studer said in the discussion. "Everything we do today is to convince vanguard workers that they should join in advancing that course."

Studer was the featured speaker at a public forum the night before the convention. He served as a fraternal delegate, along with party leaders from Texas, Minnesota, Washington state and New Mexico.

Studer said the working class needs its own foreign policy, independent of the capitalists, who defend their interests at the expense of workers here and abroad, up to and including its wars abroad.

"While the Socialist Workers Party backs the right of Ukraine to be independent from domination by Moscow, we make clear that U.S. imperialism is also responsible for the crisis there," he said.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the U.S. rulers thought they had won the Cold War and could act with impunity in the world. They were sorely mistaken. They and their NATO allies moved missiles, troops and weaponry throughout Eastern Europe, aimed at Russia, said Studer, helping advance the instability and threat of conflict.

Though U.S. imperialism remains the

world's strongest military and economic power, their mistaken judgment led to the failure of their wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, making them weaker.

"The agitation of the Democrats over their so-called voting rights bill is a sham. Their sole aim is to use their majority in Congress to federalize the control of elections — a blow to constitutional rights — to give themselves a leg up in the elections," he said. "It would take a massive counterrevolution against the working class to reimpose Jim Crow today."

While shouting about preserving "democracy," the Democrats do everything they can to keep the Socialist Workers Party or other new parties off the ballot. The Republicans do the same to parties they think might take votes from them.

In Democratic Party-dominated California, the election law makes it more and more difficult for working people to run for office. There are high filing fees — it will take the SWP \$3,480 to run for Senate, and they're barred from listing their party name. Only the two candidates who get the most votes in the June primary can be on the ballot in the general election, all the others are eliminated and can't even get their votes counted as write-ins.

Joel Britton told forum-goers that Jake Eshom, a Sacramento retail worker who found out about the party from the voters' guide in the last California election, was the first to contribute to the 2022 SWP campaign.

Gabrielle Prosser, the SWP's candidate for governor in Minnesota, also spoke. She explained that she is advancing her fluency in Spanish, part of preparing to participate in the Havana International Book Fair, where she will discuss the U.S. class struggle with workers in Cuba and bring the lessons of Cuba's socialist revolution and its Marxist leadership back to workers here.

A literature table at the meeting featured the new Pathfinder book, *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity* that will be presented at the book fair along with *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

Garcia, who chaired the forum, called attention to the crisis of small farmers and ranchers who are being driven out of business in California. "The SWP's campaigners will be discussing with workers and family farmers what they are facing and what can be done."

Garcia read from a message to the meeting from Vincent Auger, who, along with supporters of the Socialist Workers Party in Denver, recently joined strike picket lines that made gains against King Soopers grocery bosses.

"I think it is crucial that a vanguard party like the Socialist Workers Party is able to connect with workers; that it provides a campaign program," he wrote to the meeting. "I look forward to campaigning with the party!"

The SWP conference voted to raise the money and collect the required signatures to put Garcia on the ballot. Anyone who wants to volunteer to help should contact the SWP in Los Angeles and Oakland, whose addresses are listed on page 8.

Enthusiastic participants in the forum donated over \$5,000 toward Garcia's filing fee and to help get the Socialist Workers Party campaign up and running.

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# Malcolm X: ‘We’re living at a time of worldwide revolution’

Malcolm X: The Last Speeches is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for February. Malcolm X emerged as an outstanding leader of the popular struggle for Black liberation. An intransigent opponent of the U.S. government and its imperialist policies, he was attracted to the workers and farmers governments that came to power in Algeria and Cuba. As his political evolution accelerated, he spoke with increasing clarity as a powerful spokesperson for the working class as a whole. Below are excerpts from his speech “There’s a Worldwide Revolution Going On,” given Feb. 15, 1965, six days before his assassination. Copyright © 1989. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

I have never said or done anything in my life that I wasn’t prepared to suffer the consequences for. [Applause]

Now, what does this have to do with France, England, the United States? You and I are living at a time when there’s a revolution going on. A worldwide revolution. It goes beyond Mississippi. It goes beyond Alabama. It goes beyond Harlem. There’s a worldwide revolution going on. And it’s in two phases.

Number one, what is it revolting



Malcolm X, right, talks to Fidel Castro at Hotel Theresa in Harlem, New York, Sept. 19, 1960. Malcolm organized housing there for the Cuban U.N. delegation when it was denied accomodation elsewhere. The Cuban Revolution “overturned the system,” Malcolm explained in 1963.

against? The power structure. The American power structure? No. The French power structure? No. The English power structure? No. Then what power structure? An international Western power structure. An international power structure consisting of American interests, French interests, English interests, Belgian interests, European interests. These countries that formerly colonized the dark man formed into a giant international combine. A structure, a house that has ruled the world up until now. And in recent times there has been a revolution taking place in Asia and in Africa, whacking away at the strength or at the foundation of the power structure.

Now, the man was shook up enough when Africa was in revolt and when Asia was in revolt. All of this revolt was actually taking place on the outside of his house, on the outside of his base, or on the outside of his headquarters. But now he’s faced with something new. Just as the French and the British and the — the French, and the British, and the Americans formed one huge home or house or power structure, those brothers in Africa and Asia, although they are fighting against it, they also have some brothers on the inside of the house.

And as fast as the brothers in Africa and Asia get their independence, get freedom, get strength, begin to rise up, begin to change their image from neg-

ative to positive — this African image that has jumped from negative to positive affects the image that the Black man in the Western Hemisphere has of himself. Whereas in the West Indies and in Latin American countries and in the United States, you or I used to be ashamed of ourselves, used to look down upon ourselves, used to have no tendency whatsoever or desire whatsoever to stick together. As the African nations become independent and mold a new image — a positive image, a militant image, an upright image, the image of a man, not a boy — how has this affected the Black man in the Western Hemisphere? ...

Now, up to now there have been Black people in France, divided. Black people in England, divided. Black people here in America, divided. What divided us? Our lack of pride. Our lack of racial identity. Our lack of racial pride. Our lack of cultural roots. We had nothing in common. But as the African nation got its independence and changed its image we became proud of it. And to the same degree that we became proud of it we began to have something in common to that same degree. So, whereas formerly it was difficult to unite Black people, today it is easier to unite Black people. Where formerly Black people didn’t want to come together with Black people, but only with white people, today you find Black people want to come together with Black people. All they

need is someone to start the ball rolling. ... [Applause]

So this is what you have to understand. And as the brothers on the African continent lead the way, it has an effect and an impact upon the brothers here, upon the brothers here in the Western Hemisphere. So that when you find the Afro-American community in France uniting not only with itself, but for the first time beginning to unite and work in conjunction with the African community, this frightens old de Gaulle to death, because he sees some new problems in front of him.

And when the Afro — and when the West Indian community, which is an Afro-American community in England, begins to unite and then unite also with the African community in England and reach out and get the Asian community, it’s trouble for old John Bull. Trouble that he never foresaw before. And this is something that he has to face up to.

Likewise, here in America, with you and me. For the first time in our history here you find we have a tendency to want to come together. For the first time we have a tendency to want to work together. And, up to now, no organization on the American continent has tried to unite you and me with our brothers and sisters back home. ...

As soon as we established our religious authenticity with the Muslim world, we set up the Organization of Afro-American Unity and took immediate steps to make certain that we would be in direct contact with our African brothers on the African continent. ...

And this frightened many power — many interests in this country. Many people in this country who want to see us the minority and who don’t want to see us taking too militant or too uncompromising a stand are absolutely against the successful regrouping or organizing of any faction in this country whose thought and whose thinking patterns is international, rather than national. Whose thought patterns, whose hopes and aspirations are worldly rather than just within the context of the United States border or the borderline of the United States.

So this has been the purpose of the OAAU and also the Muslim Mosque — to give us direct links, direct contact, direct communication and cooperation with our brothers and sisters all over the earth.

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# US, NATO out of Eastern Europe!

President Joseph Biden says his threats to sanction and punish Russia, and the deployment of more warships and bombers by NATO to eastern Europe, are to defend “American interests” against Moscow’s threats to Ukraine.

What the government calls “American interests” is in fact defense of the predatory interests of the ruling capitalist class. They extend abroad their profit-driven assaults on workers at home, attacks that have forced a series of hard-fought strikes recently. Washington’s appeals to “our” interests — under whatever pretext — are aimed at chaining working people to the ruling class that grows wealthy off our exploitation, and to get us to see working people abroad as “our” enemy.

But in fact, workers have no common interests of any kind, on any question, with the bosses and their imperialist government. Workers worldwide are our allies against capitalist exploitation and oppression.

Everything Washington does is aimed at maximizing the U.S. rulers’ profits and defending their class power. It acts to shore up their domination of the splintering capitalist world order, deal blows to their rivals, seize markets, and put down rebellions by working people. That is why they stockpile nuclear weapons and constantly expand their military might. That is why they inflict punishing sanctions on the peoples of Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela. It is the reason the U.S. rulers expanded NATO’s presence across Eastern Europe in recent decades, bringing their troops ever closer to Russia’s borders.

Working people need our own foreign policy, inde-

pendent of the capitalist rulers, just as we fight against them at home — for the jobs, wages and conditions we need. A working-class foreign policy starts from the interests we share in common with working people worldwide, and advancing our class’ fighting capacities, its self-confidence and political independence from the exploiters.

We should stand shoulder to shoulder with working people in Ukraine facing Moscow’s threats. We demand the Russian rulers get out of Crimea, and support the fight to free Crimean Tatar leaders Moscow has framed up and tortured. These struggles aren’t advanced by appealing to Washington for intervention. The more we can stay the hand of the U.S. imperialist rulers around the world the better.

The capitalist rulers will never act to aid working people — at home or abroad. The only road forward is to mobilize workers and farmers and fight to take political power into our own hands — in Ukraine, Russia and the U.S.

Ukrainian workers and farmers have already shown their fighting capacity and power in the 2014 Maidan battles that overturned the Moscow-backed government of Viktor Yanukovich. They just lacked the leadership needed to go all the way.

Workers worldwide can learn from working people and their Marxist leadership in Cuba, who rose up and overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1959. They carried out a thoroughgoing socialist revolution, and have extended the hand of solidarity to fighting toilers around the world ever since.

## Child care crisis challenges workers, women’s rights

Continued from front page

waiting list. “By the time you give me a call, my child won’t be an infant anymore,” she said.

What Turner and Graham describe are just two examples of the challenges confronting millions of young workers who hope to start a family — a prospect the crisis of capitalism is making harder and harder.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic more than 3 million women in the U.S. have lost their jobs. Many had to choose between showing up for work or caring for their kids when child care centers and schools closed. At the same time, the cost of child care has risen nearly 50% since the start of the pandemic. Families depending on two incomes are left scrambling.

Some workers are fighting for a solution. Last-minute demands by bosses for overtime is one of the issues that led 175 members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 37, the majority women, to strike against Jon Donaire bakery in Santa Fe Springs, California. Workers on the picket line say they are not told about overtime until the end of their shift, thus making arrangements for child care nearly impossible.

Under capitalism, obtaining what workers need is an uphill fight. Bosses see us as a set of hands they can use to turn a profit. If they can’t, they’ll move on to others. Children and the elderly have no value to them. One reflection of that is the measly median pay for child care workers — \$12 an hour.

Bosses are intrinsically opposed to equal treatment, and look for any opportunity to roll back or slow down the fight for women’s rights. They prize the opportunity to pay women less in order to drive down all workers’ wages. Integral to capitalist rule is their push to keep divisions between men and women in place.

Under capitalism, the emancipation of women — the right to fully participate in society, including when you have children — becomes ever more challenging. Opening the road to the battle to end women’s oppression requires the working class taking power.

Following the Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution, advances were made that set an example for women and working people today. Laws were quickly passed granting women the right to vote and the right of divorce. Nurseries were organized for the children of factory workers.

“There can be no socialist revolution,” Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin said, “unless very many working women take a big part in it.” By setting up “public

catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens,” he said, we have the everyday means “which can *really emancipate women*.” Under capitalism, he noted, these steps are a rarity and run as profit-making enterprises.

Cuba’s socialist revolution offers another example. After workers and farmers took power, they overturned capitalist property relations. Led by their revolutionary government, they changed their conditions, taking over running the factories, fields and banks.

Establishing child care centers was one of the responsibilities taken up by the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). Throughout 1960 and 1961, it collected money for them.

“We asked people to pay 3 cents more for each cup of coffee. The extra money was a donation for the children’s circles,” Vilma Espín, a leader of the revolution and head of the FMC explained. From the beginning, “we had a clear concept of how important it was to take good care of children — to look after their health, and nutrition, to keep them from getting sick and to give them love.” Significant gains were made in the revolutionary state organizing to take responsibility for children’s needs.

In 1986, buoyed by the participation of thousands of Cuban internationalists in revolutionary struggles in Angola and elsewhere, the Cuban government organized working people to take the lead in confronting challenges in meeting basic social needs, such as housing, child care and health clinics. Volunteer construction brigades were organized — part of a broader political battle waged by the revolution’s leadership to improve conditions and to combat bureaucratic privilege and corruption.

What became known as “rectification” in Cuba took on the character of a growing social movement. One result was a rise in capacity of child care centers from 96,000 to 149,000 children in just six years. Today close to a million children under age 6 in Cuba attend a learning facility and, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund, the country is leading the way on early childhood development.

This fight was part of opening the door to women’s ability to lead in advancing the revolution, including access to contraception, free and available health care and the decriminalization of abortion. In this case, the example points the way for workers and farmers in the U.S. and worldwide to chart a course to take political power into our own hands.

## Colorado grocery strike

Continued from front page

King Soopers is owned by Kroger, the country’s largest grocery store chain.

While all the details of the contract haven’t yet been made public, and there was some opposition, workers won hourly wage hikes ranging from \$2 to \$5, and long-overdue improvement to working conditions. There were also gains in health care and retirement benefits, and bosses agreed that within 90 days at least 500 part-time positions would be made full time.

While this was a short strike, strikers won a lot of support from other unions and the community. Few workers crossed the boisterous picket lines, and passing drivers honked their horns in support. There were large picket lines every day until the company got a compliant judge to impose an injunction that limited the union to just 10 pickets per store.

United Food and Commercial Workers had released a report, “Hungry at the Table,” showing how far workers’ conditions had been pushed down in the last two decades. “The data demonstrates that workers’ financial distress, housing insecurity and food insecurity are not resulting from their personal failures but rather, from Kroger’s companywide policies for cutting costs and increasing profits,” the report said.

Local 7 is also in negotiations with Albertsons, which has 7,000 union members at Safeway and Albertsons groceries in Colorado and Wyoming.

“This [contract] would not have been possible without the support of our allies throughout Colorado and across the country,” Local 7 President Kim Cordova said. “Strikes absolutely work. It shows the company they can’t run without workers.”



Militant/Karen Ray

UFCW members strike King Soopers, Federal Heights, Colorado, Jan. 17. Workers won pay raise, better conditions.

## LETTERS

### NATO, US troops out now!

Norway shares a northern border with Russia and has a long coastline that is vital to Russia’s naval access to the Atlantic. Russia sends heavy bombers along the coast on a regular basis to assert its power. The capitalist rulers here ally themselves with U.S. imperialism and are slavish supporters of U.S. foreign policy. The government has recently given U.S. forces unlimited access to three to four airports, opened a naval base to U.S. atomic-powered submarines, and conducted exercises with U.S. long-range B-1 heavy bombers.

Working people must condemn Russian government threats and any aggression against the Ukraine or any country they seek to control. At the same time, we should demand NATO and Washington withdraw their troops, military hardware, and bases. Charting such a course will put working people internationally in the best position to strengthen our own class in face of the growing conflicts between big powers in the world and assaults at home. That is the kind of solidarity working people in the Ukraine need today.

Greg McCartan

Oslo, Norway

#### ‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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