

Unions in Twin Cities build a coalition, take on boss attacks

BY EDWIN FRUIT

MINNEAPOLIS — Five days of strikes and labor actions have culminated in a number of new contract agreements in the Twin Cities area, after a coalition of unions formed last October organized coordinated actions in March.

Workers who clean office buildings, members of Service Employees International Union Local 26, began a three-day strike March 4. They kicked things off by picketing office buildings and marching to a rally at the Ameriprise Financial building here.

“We want pensions for our retirement,” Biatrice Vasques, a striking member of SEIU Local 26, told the *Militant*. “Together we have more power. If there was just one person fighting, they would ignore us. When we stand together, they see us.” She works in the building where the rally took place.

Continued on page 3

Capitalist rivalry worldwide fuels war in Sudan, crisis for toilers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A civil war has exploded once again over the past 11 months in the North African country of Sudan, pitting the official armed forces against the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The clash for power has devastated the lives of millions of working people.

The war has deepened conflicts between competing capitalist governments in Washington, London and other imperialist powers, and Russia, Iran and other actors in the Mideast region. They take place as the imperialist “world order” that emerged from the U.S. rulers’ victory in World War II is fraying.

After months of massive protests and strikes succeeded in toppling the three-decade-long dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir in 2019, Sudan Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary’s Lt. Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagolo patched together a military-led transitional government with the blessing of Washington. They became the chairman

Continued on page 4

Rachele Fruit for president! The Socialist Workers Party campaign: the working-class alternative to Biden-Trump



Militant/Mary Martin

Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, speaks to press at Miami Holocaust Memorial protest Oct. 10 against Hamas pogrom in Israel three days earlier. She said, “Fight to end Jew-hatred will take working-class struggle for power, socialist revolution.”

Fruit campaign takes SWP program to working class

BY JANET POST AND VIVIAN SAHNER

Across the country, supporters of Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party 2024 candidate for president, are widely circulating the *Militant* carrying her working-class program. They’re discussing it with workers on their doorsteps, at plant gates, actions

Continued on page 4

Fight Jew-hatred! Defend Israel as refuge for Jews!

BY RACHELE FRUIT

My campaign as Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, alongside SWP candidates around the country, presents a working-class alternative to Biden, Trump, Kennedy and all the capitalist candidates. We’re becoming known as the socialists who act against Jew-hatred and in defense of Israel’s

Continued on page 5

Crowds in Russia mount election day protest against Putin, war on Ukraine



Moscow Times

Voters in St. Petersburg turn out for “Noon Against Putin” actions across Russia and around world March 17. Tens of thousands protested Russian President Putin, Moscow’s war in Ukraine.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Tens of thousands protested the regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his two-year-old war against Ukraine as part of a “Noon Against Putin” mass action on March 17, the last day of Russia’s three-day presidential election. Actions took place throughout the country and around the world. Moscow hoped to give a veneer of legitimacy to Putin’s “reelection” to a fifth term and to his brutal war aimed at crushing Ukraine’s independence and the spir-

ited resistance of its people.

In response to the call for the action, long lines suddenly formed at midday outside innumerable polling stations across 11 time zones in Russia. People, sometimes numbering in the thousands, lined up in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Chelyabinsk, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk and Yekaterinburg, as well as in smaller cities and towns. The widespread action had been first called by Alexei Navalny, Putin’s outspoken nemesis, before his

Continued on page 6

Democrats’ drive to destroy Trump deals blows to constitutional rights

BY TERRY EVANS

Recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings and scandals in a number of the court cases cooked up against Donald Trump have thrown Democrats into a furor,

Biden White House tells Israel: ‘Back off war against Hamas’

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Joseph Biden White House and Democratic Party, while claiming to “support” Israel, are stepping up pressure on the Israeli government to end its military operations to dismantle Hamas. Echoing open supporters of Hamas’ Oct. 7 pogrom, they falsely accuse Israel of being responsible for the humanitarian crisis and civilian deaths in Gaza.

They’re especially trying to prevent Israel from launching an offensive on Hamas and its underground bases in Rafah, the reactionary group’s last

Continued on page 6

with the timing of a number of the trials of the former president now up in the air.

Deeply concerned about the re-electability of President Joseph Biden, the Democrats’ election strategy relies on using the courts to either break Trump or throw him in jail before November. They couple this with a hysterical media campaign that paints Trump as a dangerous “insurrectionist” and his many working-class supporters as “MAGA fascists.”

This ultrafactional campaign by the Democrats, and a partisan response-in-kind by many Republicans, involves dangerous attacks on constitutional

Continued on page 9

Inside

Moves to silence J.K. Rowling are attacks on women’s rights 2

—On the picket line, p. 3—

Grocery workers in California launch fight for equal pay

School bus drivers make gains in Montreal-area strike

Moves to silence J.K. Rowling are attacks on women’s rights

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON — TV personality India Willoughby asked police in Northumbria to arrest author J.K. Rowling for alleged “transphobia,” claiming that her online remarks were a “hate crime.” At stake for working people is the defense of crucial free speech rights, as well as conquests won in the fight for women’s emancipation.

For years Rowling has spoken out against unscientific claims that “men” and “women” are subjective categories that can be changed at will. Her views have been met with vilification from layers in the woke middle class and calls for her books to be banned.

Willoughby’s accusations against Rowling began after an online exchange. On March 3 the *Harry Potter* author wrote, “When men — all men, however they identify — are banned from women’s spaces, those who disregard the ban can be challenged.” She pointed out that this protects women’s safety.

Rowling’s views were challenged by one person who wrote, “So you are saying this lady should use the men’s locker room?” before posting a video of Willoughby — who is a man who identifies as a woman — dancing. Rowling replied, “You’ve sent me the wrong video. There isn’t a lady in this one.” She added, “India didn’t become a woman. India is cosplaying a misogynistic male fantasy of what a woman is.”

Willoughby reacted hysterically, claiming that if he’s murdered, Rowling would be to blame. Rowling denies her comments were transphobic.

There are two sharply separate questions involved here. Individuals who

decide to live as someone whose sex is different than their biology determines should have a right to do so. But that should not include taking actions that threaten women, like men using women’s bathrooms, nor imposing unfair competition by men participating in women’s sports.

Northumbria cops dismissed the complaint against Rowling. Willoughby’s supporters then referred the complaint to cops in Scotland where Rowling lives. Police there said Rowling’s remarks would not be investigated, but only because she made them before April 1. That is the date when a new hate crime law comes into force in Scotland, making it illegal to “stir up hatred.” The thought-control statute threatens to jail people based solely on what they say.

Rowling vows to continue “calling a man a man” in defiance of the new law.

The campaign to silence Rowling goes back to her support for Maya Forstater, who won a case in 2021 against her former employer, the Center for Global Development. Bosses there fired Forstater for defending women’s rights after she said that sex is “real, important, immutable, and not to be conflated with gender identity.” An appeals court found that Forstater had a right to express her views, which in fact are based on science.

Willoughby “appears to have forgotten that the Forstater ruling established that gender-critical views can be protected in law as a philosophical belief,” Rowling wrote March 6. “No law compels anyone to pretend to believe that India is a woman.”

In February Rowling criticized Sky



Inset, Press Association via AP/Andrew Milligan; above, PA Protest at Scottish Parliament Feb. 9, 2023, over “transgender” men being put in women’s jail cells. Inset, J.K. Rowling faces “hate crime” charges over her support for ban on “all men — however they identify” in women’s spaces.

News and the *Guardian* for referring to Scarlet Blake — a man who identifies as a woman — as female, during his recent trial and conviction for murdering Jorge Martin Carrero in 2021.

“Crime statistics are rendered useless if violent and sexual attacks committed by men are recorded as female crimes,” Rowling said. Over the past four years, U.K. police have referred 260 “females” — in actual fact men — to the Crown

Prosecution Service to consider charging them with rape. They are referred to as women if the cases go to court.

In a related case, Isla Bryson declared he was transitioning from being a man to a woman while awaiting trial on a double rape charge in Scotland. After his conviction last year, Bryson was sentenced to eight years in a women’s jail, before a public outcry forced authorities to move him to a men’s prison.

Striking Teamsters, supporters rally against Molson Coors in Fort Worth

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

FORT WORTH, Texas — Over 300 workers joined a spirited Teamsters Local 997 rally outside the Molson Coors brewery here March 17, marking one month on strike by 420 union members. The rally was too big to hold on the picket line, so it took place in the parking lot of the Bimbo bakery next door, which is organized by Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 111.

Teamsters national President Sean O’Brien and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman joined the action. “I can’t think of a better place to be for St. Patrick’s Day,” O’Brien told the union crowd. “We have a great opportunity here. We have an opportunity to take on corporate America. Molson Coors picked a fight with the wrong

union. Think we can take on a schoolyard bully who does not respect us?”

The crowd yelled back, “Yes!”

“Teamsters across the country are asking Americans nationwide to join in boycotting Molson Coors until they do right by the people who make their products,” he said.

Molson Coors — which also brews Yuengling, Miller, Pabst, Simply Spiked and other brands — raked in record profits in 2023. But the pay package they offered workers was an insulting 99 cents an hour over a three-year contract.

Rick Miedema, secretary-treasurer of Local 997, said, “The company made a poor offer to the union and they have been on strike for 30 days. We need to keep pushing forward — one day stronger, one day longer! The labor move-

Continued on page 3

THE MILITANT

Bosses’ greed responsible for deadly Texas fires

Xcel Energy bosses admit its equipment helped start devastating wildfires in Texas in February that killed two people and over 10,000 head of cattle and destroyed 1 million acres of farmland. Unions need to fight to nationalize the energy monopolies and run them under workers control.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

\$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

\$10 for 12 weeks

\$20 for 6 months

\$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE E-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

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

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

The Militant

Vol. 88/No. 13

Closing news date: March 20, 2024

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galsinsky, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Vivian Sahner, Brian Williams.

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

Business Manager: Bob Bruce

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.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send A\$70 for one year to above address.

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.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Grocery workers in California launch fight for equal pay

BALDWIN PARK, Calif. — “We’re here fighting for a better wage and for equity with our brothers and sisters at other groceries,” Irma Vega, who has worked for Food 4 Less grocery for 24 years, told the *Militant* March 7. “We need a raise, prices are so high everywhere. And we need safer conditions.”

Vega was one of 300 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers and their supporters who rallied here, as contract negotiations are set to begin with the Kroger-owned Food 4 Less grocery chain. Their current contract, which covers 6,000 workers in Southern California, expires June 8.

Kroger promotes Food 4 Less as a lower-price alternative to other grocery chains. As a result, workers said, Kroger pays them less than other area grocery workers, including at Ralphs, another Kroger-owned chain. Their demand for equity aims to erase this difference.

“They don’t care about our health, mental or physical,” Erlene Molina said. “We would work 12-hour shifts during COVID. There are not big enough staffs in the stores now. The people I work with are exhausted.”

Members of the Service Employees International Union, Teamsters from UPS and other trade unionists joined the rally.

— Norton Sandler

School bus drivers make gains in Montreal-area strike

MONTREAL — Rejecting a “settlement” imposed by government and boss-backed compulsory arbitration, 350 school bus drivers for the Transco company voted March 7 to accept a conciliator’s proposal and end their four-month strike. The drivers are members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN).

Their strike began Oct. 31, affecting 15,000 students in both private and public schools in the Montreal area.

The new six-year contract, retroactive to July 1, 2022, will increase the weekly salary of the drivers from 634 Canadian dollars (\$470) to CA\$907

by July 1, 2027, a 43% boost.

“We also received an increase in our vacation scale to 10% after the 15th year of service, as well as a sixth sick day in 2025,” Carole Laplante, the drivers’ union president, told the media.

“On behalf of the CSN, I would like to congratulate the combativeness of the members of the Transco union, their tenacity, their determination and above all, their solidarity in this negotiation process marked by a difficult conflict,” said CSN President Caroline Senneville.

Strikers distributed a leaflet outside the schools explaining why they had to walk out, winning the support of many parents.

“I am glad they are back at work, and I am also happy they got a decent wage increase,” one parent told CTV News.

— John Steele



Militant/Norton Sandler

United Food and Commercial Workers union members at Food 4 Less grocery in Baldwin Park, California, and their supporters rally March 7 in fight for pay raise, safe working conditions.

Twin Cities unions build coalition, take on boss attacks

Continued from front page

CNN interviewed George Mullins, 66, who has been a janitor for 35 years. He said his pay of \$18.62 an hour is barely enough to get by. “There’s a lot of things you used to be able to do that you can’t do with the inflation that’s set in,” he said. “I want to retire, but the reason I’m still working now is there’s no pension.”

On March 9 the union announced they had reached a tentative agreement with the bosses. If voted up, SEIU Local 26 members will see wages rise to \$20 an hour for all workers, increased sick days, more workers on full time and lower health care costs.

Over 1,000 nursing home workers, members of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota and Iowa, went out on a one-day strike March 5. They picketed a number of facilities and rallied at the state Capitol in St. Paul.

In an interview with Minnesota Public Radio, Jared Mituga, a registered nurse at The Estates at St. Louis Park said, “They are disrespecting us because they don’t value us. So for us to be valued, we expect that they pay

us, protect us and give us better wages and better benefits.

“For us to give the patient the care they need, you have to have a better staffing ratio,” he said. The union is demanding a minimum wage of \$25 an hour.

The Minnesota Nurses Association, members of UFCW Local 663, and other unionists joined the rally.

Over 300 workers gathered at the Minneapolis/St. Paul airport March 6 to support the janitors, wheelchair pushers and aircraft cabin cleaners, members of SEIU Local 26, in their contract fight. They are demanding higher wages and a less expensive health care plan. A handful of marchers sat down in the road and got arrested. Many of the janitors, nursing home staff and airport workers are originally from Latin America, Africa and other countries.

An organizer from UNITE HERE Local 17 at the rally said their union is in contract discussions with a couple of restaurants and concession stands at the airport.

On March 7 the Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha, which sup-

ports workers seeking better working conditions and respect from area employers, sponsored a rally of over 100 in front of Solhem, a housing developer. Workers tried to deliver a letter protesting wage theft by the company.

More than 400 Minneapolis public works employees, members of Laborers Local 363, voted to accept a new contract that raises wages nearly 30% over the next three years, the *Minneapolis Reformer* reported.

Over 2,000 bus operators and Metro Transit workers who had authorized a strike ratified a new contract in February that will increase wages 13% by August 2025. The St. Paul Education Association reached a tentative agreement after voting to strike in mid-March.

Molson Coors

Continued from page 2

ment is alive and well in Fort Worth, Texas.”

“I am here to support the Teamsters against corporate greed and we need to all stand together for solidarity,” David Menefee, business agent of BCTGM Local 111, which organizes the four Bimbo plants and other facilities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, told the *Militant*. “Our local has brought water, donuts, chocolates and other goods to the Teamsters 997 pickets and will continue to do so.”

Other speakers included Brent Taylor, from Teamsters Joint Council 80 and Dallas Local 745; Robert Lopez, organizer of Teamsters Local 767 at UPS in Arlington; Katina Range and Margarite Rosas from American Postal Workers Union Local 732 in Dallas; local politicians; and 97-year-old civil rights fighter Opal Lee, who walked from Fort Worth to Washington, D.C., in 2016 as part of the successful fight to make Juneteenth a national holiday.

This is the first strike Teamsters Local 997 has mounted at Molson Coors. It’s not unusual, strikers told the *Militant*, for 100 of them to turn out on the picket line. This is facilitated by the Teamsters’ decision to boost their strike benefits to \$1,000 a week.

Books on workers’ struggles
pathfinderpress.com

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 5, 1999

NEW YORK CITY — The daily demonstrations here against the police killing of Amadou Diallo have provoked a crisis for the administration of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Tens of thousands of working people have taken part.

Picket lines have grown to 500 or more a day. Workers join in on their lunch break; others take a day off to participate. While demonstrators had been overwhelmingly Black in the earlier actions, the protests recently have become more multinational. For example, more than 200 people identifying themselves as Jewish joined the March 24 action — many carrying signs in Hebrew.

“The New York Socialist Workers Party,” reads a statement, “joins with the thousands who are protesting this brutal and racist killing. The determination to stand in solidarity with the Diallo family makes it harder for the city administration to cover up this crime.”



April 5, 1974

The Coalition of Labor Union Women conference in Chicago was a memorable event. Nothing quite like it has happened before. Three thousand two hundred union women came together to discuss the special problems they face.

The women came from all across the country, from many different unions and a wide range of experience. Some had been through the labor struggles of the ’30s and ’40s; others were recently out of college. There were women who barely made the minimum wage and others with high-paying jobs. Some came with their unions footing the bill. Others took up collections in their shops. Still others paid their own way.

The conference was composed in its majority of rank-and-file union women. The women were inspired by the conference, identify with its goals and are interested in ongoing activity. The challenge is to keep that momentum going.



April 4, 1949

NEW YORK — “The encroachments on civil rights are one of the most dangerous threats to the American people today,” said James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in a statement issued here.

He cited the continued mistreatment of the Negro people and the rejection by Congress of promised civil rights laws, purges among government employees, the firing of college professors, the persecution of conscientious objectors, the harassment of liberal-minded religious leaders, the attacks on the public school system, the thought-control trials of minority political parties, etc.

But the means must be found, he said, to bring together the defenders of civil liberties. “The need is for cooperation and coordination in a broad front of action. The SWP urges and would welcome such a development and give wholehearted support to it.”

Rachele Fruit for president!

Continued from front page
against Jew-hatred, in protests against Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine and at union strike picket lines and rallies.

“The future of humanity depends on building a leadership, a party, that can mobilize the working class in our millions to take state power away from the capitalist rulers and place it into our own hands, to start down the road to a socialist revolution,” Fruit says. “This will open the door to ending the exploitation and oppression inherent in capitalist rule worldwide.”

“The labor movement is made up of unions representing millions of workers today,” Fruit states in her campaign program. “The unions need to break from the political parties of the bosses — Democrats and Republicans alike — to build a labor party capable of fighting for our class interests in the political as well as the economic arena. To speak as a tribune for all those exploited and oppressed by capital.”

As Fruit says, “We are human beings who can take action to shape our future.”

This campaign goes hand in hand with the eight-week spring drive to win 1,350 new *Militant* subscribers. The paper is the voice of the SWP campaign and the best source anywhere for news on issues and battles in the interest of the working class. This *Militant* campaign is accompanied by selling 1,350 books by SWP leaders and other revolutionaries and raising \$165,000 for the continuing production of the paper.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign in New Jersey wrapped up the first part of the efforts to put Fruit and the New Jersey candidates — Joanne Kuniansky for U.S. Senate and Lea Sherman for Congress — on the ballot.

“We got well over double the signatures needed to put Sherman on the ballot,” Terry Evans told the *Militant* March 17. “On March 31 we’ll start talking to working people about Fruit’s challenge

to Biden and Trump and her working-class program. We aim to gather 1,700 signatures for Fruit and vice presidential candidate Margaret Trowe, and another 1,700 for Kuniansky, by April 21.”

This is the first of a number of ballot drives the SWP will carry out to put Fruit on the ballot across the country.

In Miami supporters of Fruit’s presidential campaign joined with 300 protesters at a March 10 “Rally for Education” action against the Florida state government’s attack on public-sector unions.

A new union-busting law known as SB256 will require the recertification of all school workers’ unions, which must show at least 60% of the employees want to be members, SWP campaigner Steve Warshell told the *Militant*. “This means more than 30,000 educators and staff in Miami are threatened with losing their union,” Karla Hernández-Mats, president of United Teachers of Dade, told the rally.

Fruit’s supporters introduced her campaign. One African American teacher stopped by and mentioned she had gotten and read *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

“I read it with a great deal of interest,” she said. “There were arguments



Pamela Holmes, right, Communist League parliamentary candidate for Tottenham, campaigns at March 17 protest by Russians in London against Vladimir Putin, his invasion of Ukraine.

in there that I’ve never heard before or since. Sadly, these ideas are not widely discussed among teachers these days.” She got a copy of the *Militant*.

Communist League candidates

Hundreds of Russian nationals living in the U.K. filled up a half-mile-long line in London at noon on March 17 to cast votes at the Russian Embassy against Vladimir Putin and his war against Ukraine, as thousands of other Russians had

done at home and around the world. Several carried Ukrainian flags and other signs of opposition to the Putin regime. Across the street hundreds more gathered for a rally.

Joining protesters was Pamela Holmes, Communist League candidate for Parliament in the Tottenham district. She addressed the rally and talked with those lining up to vote.

“As the world economic crisis and instability deepens, working people need

Continued on page 5

Capitalist rivalries fuel war in Sudan, crisis for toilers

Continued from front page
and deputy chairman of a new Transition Sovereign Government, promising eventual civilian rule, with elections scheduled for 2022.

Instead, they conspired to carry out a coup in October 2021, deposing appointed civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, suspending the 2019 transitional constitution, and brutally repressing protests by workers, herders and farmers.

Dagolo’s Rapid Support Forces had come together in 2013 from what had been the rural Arab-based Janjaweed militias created under the Bashir dictatorship. They had violently suppressed a rebellion by oppressed black African tribal forces in Darfur in western Sudan in 2003.

Washington had moved to gain a greater foothold in Sudan, given the country’s natural resources, including gold and oil, and its strategic location in the Horn of Africa and access to the Red Sea. In 2020 President Donald Trump removed Sudan from the list of “state sponsors of terrorism” after Khartoum normalized its relations with Israel.

The U.S. government attempted to pressure Sudan’s competing army and paramilitary to combine their forces into a single army. “The problem was that neither Burhan nor Hemeti [Hamdan Dagolo] wanted to give up the power that he’d accrued,” noted *Foreign Policy* magazine.

As fighting erupted last April 15, Joseph Biden’s

secretary of state, Antony Blinken, completely misread the unfolding war, telling the media, “This is a real opportunity to finally carry forward the civilian-led transition.”

Airstrikes and shelling targeting residential neighborhoods have claimed thousands of civilian lives in Khartoum, the capital, and the nearby cities of Omdurman and Bahri. The fighting has expanded throughout the country, which is nearly three times the size of Texas.

Over the past 11 months, the conflict has displaced over 8.1 million people — 15% of Sudan’s total population. Some 1.6 million have fled into neighboring Chad, South Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia. Hunger levels are the “highest ever recorded,” reports the World Health Organization, and 70% to 80% of health facilities in Sudan are no longer functioning.

Growing conflicts over Sudan

The reactionary regime in Iran offered its support to Sudan’s military government. After a seven-year break, diplomatic relations between the two countries were reestablished. Tehran is supplying Burhan’s Sudanese Armed Forces with combat drones. It asked for permission to build a permanent naval base on Sudan’s Red Sea coast and offered to provide a helicopter-carrying warship in return. So far, no agreement has been reached.

A naval base on the Red Sea would allow Tehran to tighten its grip on one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, where its proxy Yemen-based Houthis launch attacks on vessels headed for Israel. Tehran’s major regional rivals, Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, all have direct access to the waterway, and are seeking their own edge there.

Russia’s paramilitary Wagner Group, now controlled by Russian President Vladimir Putin, has an agreement with Rapid Support Forces leaders to

mine gold in areas it controls for export to help fund Moscow’s war against Ukraine. Wagner has also trained RSF fighters, who are proving more capable than Burhan’s forces, despite his control of the country’s air force.

When the civil war erupted, the Rapid Support Forces initially refused Wagner’s offer of heavy weapons, not wanting to cut all relations with Washington. But after military setbacks in April, the group got Wagner to bring in more combatants from the Central African Republic, who assisted the RSF in taking most of Khartoum.

The government of Ukraine, locked in a fierce battle to defend its independence from Putin’s invasion, sent sharpshooters to Sudan to target Wagner forces.

The United Arab Emirates is also supporting Dagolo, supplying the RSF with military equipment. Dubai is officially the biggest importer of Sudanese gold. In 2022 a UAE-based consortium signed a \$6 billion deal to build a new port facility on Sudan’s Red Sea coast.

The Egyptian government, on the other hand, backs the Sudanese Armed Forces, supplying it with drones.

Another big player is the regime in China. The Sudanese government owes over \$5 billion to Chinese businesses and another \$2.5 billion to China’s state oil company.

And, of course, the U.S. rulers have increased their forces in the Mideast since the Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel by Tehran-backed Hamas. It has two aircraft carrier groups in the Red Sea, numerous other vessels, and operates out of air bases in Jordan and elsewhere in the region.

All this maneuvering for allies, markets, military advantage and position by competing capitalist powers — in the midst of Putin’s war on Ukraine and Israel’s efforts to defend its right to exist as a refuge for Jews — threaten deeper military conflicts to come.

Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, fund

March 9-May 7 (week one)

Country	Sub quota	Subs sold	Books quota	Books sold	Fund quota	Fund received
UNITED STATES						
Atlanta	55	6	55	12	\$9,500	\$850
Chicago	100	16	100	18	\$14,000	\$0
Cincinnati	50	6	50	0	\$5,000	\$0
Dallas-Ft. Worth	60	13	60	9	\$5,000	\$5
Lincoln	15	1	15	2	\$500	\$150
Los Angeles	110	32	110	25	\$16,000	\$150
Miami	35	0	35	8	\$5,000	\$0
Minneapolis	70	11	70	13	\$5,500	\$0
N. New Jersey	75	13	75	10	\$7,500	\$1,250
New York	100	15	100	20	\$20,500	\$1,200
Oakland	80	22	80	20	\$15,500	\$500
Philadelphia	55	5	55	7	\$6,000	\$500
Pittsburgh	45	5	45	2	\$6,000	\$0
Seattle	70	10	70	10	\$14,500	\$0
Washington	60	7	60	8	\$5,000	\$0
Other	0	0	0	0	\$0	\$100
Total U.S.	980	162	980	164	\$135,500	\$4,705
Prisoners		18				
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	45	4	45	5	\$2,560	\$0
Manchester	35	5	35	5	\$1,200	\$0
Total U.K.	80	9	80	10	\$3,760	\$0
Canada	90	11	110	14	\$12,150	\$2,005
Australia	30	11	30	6	\$5,000	\$0
Total	1,180	211	1,200	194	\$156,410	\$6,710
SHOULD BE	1,350	169	1,350	169	\$165,000	\$20,625

Rachele Fruit: Fight Jew-hatred!

Continued from front page

right to exist as a refuge for Jews fleeing persecution.

The worldwide explosion of Jew-hatred since Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom in Israel shows the need for a refuge today is not an abstract question. Israel was founded because the imperialist rulers in London and Washington slammed shut their borders to those fleeing the rise of the Nazis, as well as during and after World War II, and because of the slaughter of 6 million Jews in the Holocaust.

Israel must have a right to defend itself from destruction, the stated aim of the Iranian regime and all of its proxies — Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis.

Since our founding as a party in the U.S. that supported and seeks to emulate the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution, the Socialist Workers Party has been in the forefront of the fight against Jew-hatred as an essential part of the fight to end all exploitation and oppression.

Throughout our history we have sought to advance a road to unite working people in the fight against our common oppressors. Our starting point is the class interests and solidarity of workers of whatever nationality or religious belief, whether they're in the Middle East — Palestinians, Jews, Arabs, Kurds or otherwise — or working people here and elsewhere around the world.

In the U.S. and other imperialist countries, organizations of middle-class radicals claiming to be socialists explicitly disavow any course to advance class solidarity among working people. They celebrate the murders, rapes and torture of Jews and others by Hamas on Oct. 7. They accept the Jew-hating course of the Iranian government and Hamas as if it was an expression of the national aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The war between Israel and Hamas is not about the Palestinian national struggle. Israel is not at war with the Palestinian people. It is fighting to eliminate Hamas whose leaders say openly their reason for being is to

kill Jews and destroy Israel.

There had been a cease-fire before Hamas shattered it in blood Oct. 7. That massacre shows once again that even in Israel the idea that a haven from Jew-hatred is possible is an illusion.

Hamas leaders say that they have no responsibility for the welfare of the Palestinian people. They've met protests by Palestinians in Gaza with repression. To speak out against Hamas has meant to take your life in your hands. There is no one claiming leadership among Palestinians who recognizes the right of Israel to exist or proposes a working-class road forward.

Hamas' Oct. 7 pogrom confirms that there is no "two-state solution" possible today. Under its rule it's impossible for a leadership worthy of the Palestinian people to develop. It will take the defeat of Hamas for a working-class leadership to be forged among Palestinians.

The capitalist government in Israel is committed to defeating Hamas because there is no other way to ensure the survival of the Jewish people. No other government on earth makes that commitment.

Washington and other "democratic" imperialist powers are backpedaling from defense of Israel and stepping up pressure on its government to stop the war, claiming they're concerned about the humanitarian disaster in Gaza *for their own class interests*. That crisis — a product of Hamas' rule — is all too real. But the imperialist powers care nothing for the Palestinians.

Where are the calls by capitalist governments and their mouthpieces at the United Nations on Hamas to release the hostages it seized? Or to demand its surrender? Or to use its riches to feed, clothe, house and provide medical care for the people of Gaza, instead of weapons to carry out their mission to eliminate the Jews?

It's a deadly illusion that Jews can be



Union Defense Guard of Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis in 1938, defended their picket lines and stood up to Jew-hatred — driving fascist goons brought in by the bosses out of town.

assimilated enough in the U.S. — or anywhere else under capitalism — to avoid persecution. As is the notion that imperialist governments, or either the Democratic or Republican parties, can be relied on for protection. But to understand this, we have to see whose class interests have been served by the scapegoating of Jews in the imperialist epoch.

Road to solve the Jewish question

The workings of dog-eat-dog capitalism ruin growing layers of the middle class. Reactionary demagogues like Hitler blame Jews for the crisis produced by the profit system. When the capitalist class decides its rule is threatened by rising struggles of the working class, it will back fascist thugs to try to crush our unions, murder vanguard workers and annihilate the Jewish people. That's the lesson of what happened in Germany in the 1930s.

Hamas' origins lie in ultra-reactionary forces among ruling classes in Arab countries that allied with Hitler's Nazi Party in the 1930s, based on a common desire to carry out the "Final Solution" — the slaughter of Jews worldwide.

These forces included Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Incipient fascist currents emerged in the U.S. at the same time, like Mayor Frank Hague in Jersey City, New Jersey, who unleashed thugs to crush unions there. In Minneapolis the Teamsters, led by militants from my party, led unions to organize a workers defense guard and drove the fascists out of town.

The labor movement must stand up to Jew-hatred today, a central question for unions worldwide.

Workers and our unions must organize and act against all moves to slander, scapegoat and attack Jews. The working class is the only force capable of taking on and defeating reactionary Jew-hating forces in the U.S. and worldwide. It's here in the U.S. — home to the rulers of the world's last empire — that the battle against Jew-hatred will be decisive.

As the world capitalist economic crisis brings devastation and war to millions, the fight over which class will rule is the central question for working people everywhere. Combating Jew-hatred has a special place in this fight.

'Roots of advances for Cuban women are in our revolution'

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK— "The tremendous advances for women in Cuba have their roots in the revolution that triumphed on Jan. 1, 1959," Osmayda Hernández said at a March 16 meeting here. Hernández, a member of the national leadership of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), was part of Cuba's delegation to the 68th session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.

She was speaking at a "Teach-in on Cuba" held at New York University's Law School, attended by some 70 people from the U.S. and Canada. It was an opportunity to hear directly from representatives of the FMC and other members of the Cuban women's delegation. The event was also livestreamed.

Two panel discussions were followed by a public rally that evening demanding Washington remove Cuba from its "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list, return Guantánamo to Cuba, and lift all U.S. economic and travel sanctions against Cuba. It featured Yuri Gala, Cuba's deputy permanent representative to the U.N., and Aylen Lesmes of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

Hernández described how women, along with working people as a whole, have made major advances through Cuba's socialist revolution, eliminating illiteracy, gaining free, universal

access to health care, the right to abortion and paid maternity leave. And, in contrast with the U.S. and other capitalist countries, women have a government that defends their interests.

The FMC, formed in 1960 at Fidel Castro's initiative, has helped "integrate Cuban women into all aspects of life — economic, political, and cultural," she said. Today women play a leading role in Cuba's government, trade unions and scientific and educational institutions.

The U.S. ruling families hate the example the Cuban Revolution has set for millions around the world. They've waged a relentless economic war for more than 65 years to try to strangle the Cuban people — sanctions the Biden administration continues to enforce.

"There is not a single woman, not a single family in Cuba, that doesn't feel the impact of the U.S. blockade," Hernández said.

Yamila González Ferrer, vice president of the National Union of Cuban Jurists, noted that "today we have problems even getting condoms and other contraceptives."

Leima Martínez, ICAP's director for North America, explained that by maintaining Cuba on its outrageous "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list, Washington penalizes international institutions that trade with Cuba, largely blocking its access to the world banking and credit sys-

tem. "This means we often can't import needed raw materials and fuel."

The panelists addressed other social questions that disaffect women. "Because of the embargo, we lack resources to build new child care centers. The ones we have cover only 19% of the demand," Hernández said. So the FMC and the Central Organization of Cuban Workers, she explained, have worked with government ministries to set up child care facilities, known as casitas infantiles (children's homes), in some state-run workplaces.

"These centers serve not only the families of those workers but the surrounding community," she noted.

To help bridge the gap, there are child care workers who offer private services in their homes. "But we do everything possible so children can receive their education and care in child care centers."

"Cuba's aging population means we need to train more people to care for the elderly," said Juanita Martínez of the National Union of Cuban Jurists.

"The damage caused by the U.S. blockade has cost Cuba \$4.8 billion a year," Ambassador Gala told the evening rally. "But we have demonstrated our will to resist and move forward in face of these obstacles. The Cuban Revolution has dignified Cuba and the Cuban people. And we will defend it to the last drop of our blood."

Fruit campaign

Continued from page 4

to rely on our own strength and independent organization to take power out of the hands of the war makers and exploiters and take political power into our own hands," she told the crowd.

Communist League members campaigned in Borehamwood, north of London March 17. "We certainly need a workers' party," David Lawless, a retired electrician told CL member Debra Jacobs. "We've got to relearn how to use the unions."

Lawless said his great-grandfather "came to the U.K. from Latvia. Like many he was driven out by pogroms. Now Jews are again facing attack." He was interested in the *Militant's* coverage of the fight against Jew-hatred and bought a subscription, as well as *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon.

Leon explains there is "no solution to the Jewish question under capitalism, just as there is no solution to the other problems before humanity."

To get involved in the Fruit campaign or campaigns of the Communist Leagues, contact the campaign office nearest you listed on page 8.

Biden to Israel: ‘Back off Gaza’

Continued from front page
stronghold in Gaza. Biden said he was drawing a “red line” against any move into Rafah, threatening to cut military supplies.

Biden was caught on a hot mic after his State of the Union address March 7 boasting that he was going to make Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have a “come to Jesus” moment and accede to U.S. demands.

Democratic Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer joined the chorus in a March 14 speech — given with Biden’s approval — blaming the Gaza crisis on Netanyahu. The Democratic Party leader demanded new elections in Israel to remove him from office. Schumer claims Netanyahu has pushed “support for Israel worldwide to historic lows. Israel cannot survive if it becomes a pariah.”

Netanyahu’s Likud Party fired back that “Israel is not a banana republic.”

But it’s *Hamas* — financed, trained and backed by the reactionary clerical regime in Iran — that is responsible for the crisis in Gaza, not Israel, including the civilian deaths, as well as shortages of food and medicine.

It was Hamas that began the war Oct. 7 by carrying out the largest massacre of Jews since the Nazi Holocaust. Death squads from Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the so-called Popular Resistance Committees killed 1,200 people, wounded more than 5,000, took 250 hostages, more than 100 still captive, and raped and mutilated women.

Hamas’ goal — unchanged since its founding covenant in 1988 — is to kill Jews and destroy Israel. It insists it will keep trying until it succeeds.

That’s why Israel’s national unity government has made it clear, whatever the factional disputes among its rival capitalist parties, that it will continue the war until Hamas is defeated or surrenders. That course has overwhelming support in Israel.

A leader of Hamas’ Al-Qassam Brigades boasted March 8 that “every home in Gaza” has the “great honor” of having a dead, wounded or imprisoned family member as a result of Israel’s counter-offensive. Deliberately putting civilians in harm’s way as human shields, hoping to gain sympathy and funds from U.N. agencies and others around the world, is at the heart of Hamas’ strategy.

Biden, Schumer and the bourgeois media, from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* to the *Wall Street Journal*, constantly feature front-page pictures of suffering in Gaza. While their goal isn’t to aid Hamas to destroy Israel, their coverage plays into the hands of the increasingly thuggish Hamas supporters marching through the streets of New York and other cities chanting “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.”

But the U.S. rulers don’t care about the lives of Jews or Palestinians. Their approach to Israel aims solely to advance U.S. imperialism’s own economic and political interests in the Middle East.

Hamas tells lie after lie: Denying its thugs raped and mutilated scores of women Oct. 7; calling hostages “guests” and claiming they are well-treated; and accusing Israel of causing mass starvation and genocide.

It’s lies — no matter how outlandish — are repeated worldwide by mid-

dle-class socialists and other radicals. Under the banner of “anti-Zionism” they promote Jew-hatred.

Brink of famine in Gaza?

The liberal press is filled with exaggerated claims from the Hamas-run health ministry or its allies in the U.N. that Gaza is on the “brink” of famine. But in the last few days alone pictures of bustling food markets in Rafah and Nuseirat in central Gaza are graphic proof that these reports are exaggerated.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees — notorious for facilitating Hamas activities — admitted March 17 that an average of 165 aid trucks are now entering Gaza every day. According to the Israeli government, this is some 50% *more* than before Oct. 7.

Of course, there are serious shortages of food and medicine, especially in Gaza City and other parts of northern Gaza. But that’s because of Hamas, which wants to maintain control over aid distribution, including stealing large amounts for its remaining combatants and selling much of it at sky-high prices beyond the reach of many in Gaza. What it can’t control it tries to disrupt.

Growing opposition to Hamas

When some local clan leaders and businessmen said they were willing to work with Israel to ensure that aid goes



COGAT
Food market in Nuseirat, central Gaza, March 18. Joseph Biden White House, liberal media echo exaggerations by Hamas apologists of widespread starvation in Gaza. Responsibility for crisis begins with Hamas Oct. 7 deadly pogrom, breaking years-long cease-fire with Israel.

to those who need it, Hamas threatened that any “direct collaboration with the occupation ... is a betrayal of the nation that we will not tolerate.” Ynet News reported that Hamas executed at least one clan leader.

Hamas’ actions are sparking increased opposition among Palestinians in Gaza. Even before the latest war, “Hamas’ popularity in the Gaza Strip was waning, due to its governance failures [and] misallocation of funds,” Rafaat Naim, a former member of the Palestine Chamber of Commerce, told the *Christian Science Monitor*.

“Hamas didn’t warn us or give any instructions to protect or help people”

after Oct. 7, aid worker Walid, who declined to use his full name, told the paper. “Hamas followed the same old war plan and left the people to the mercy of Israelis.”

“At least provide enough food for the people to not die of hunger,” he said. “Build shelters and safe places for the people to go.”

The more Israeli forces strike blows to Hamas, the greater the opportunities for working people in Gaza to organize independently for a different course. Decisively defeating Hamas is key to further advances, as well as to Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for the Jews.

ful since it gives people a feeling of strength and power.”

Voting in the Russian-occupied regions of Ukraine revealed the election’s fraudulent character. Election officials were accompanied house to house by armed soldiers forcing people to vote at gunpoint.

Protests draw wide support

Maria Andreeva, the wife of a mobilized soldier and one of the leaders of the rising movement of wives and relatives of soldiers known as The Way Home, also backed the noon protests. The group demands the return of their men from the war. The Kremlin warned Andreeva that her promotion of the polling place demonstrations registered “signs of extremist activity.” She wasn’t deterred. “I view this warning as interference and pressure on my electoral freedoms,” Andreeva told the Moscow Times.

The poll line protests revealed the regime’s vulnerability as working-class anger grows over the human costs of the war. Pro-Kremlin commentator Sergei Markov admitted as much. He said the protest showed “brilliant” tactics because it covered the whole country and all opposition groups had joined in.

Though the regime refrained from mass repression against the protesters, at least 65 people were detained at polling stations in 16 Russian cities that day, OVD-Info, a legal rights group, reported.

Highly visible “Noon for Putin” protests took place at Russian embassies in countries worldwide. From Armenia and Latvia to Kazakhstan and Kyr-

gyzstan, from Berlin to London, long lines formed, with many people carrying anti-war and anti-Putin placards and banners. In some places, supporters of Putin’s rule were there as well.

Hundreds gathered in front of the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. George Salia, who traveled from Philadelphia, held a sign in Russian denouncing the elections as “a farce.” He told the *Militant* Putin’s war is “a tragedy for Ukraine, and a catastrophe for Russia.” The “aggressive war,” he said, means “both sides have lost hundreds of thousands of soldiers’ lives.”

Book specials for Militant subscribers

The low point of labor resistance is behind us

\$5

Malcolm X Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power

\$10

Women in Cuba The making of a revolution within the revolution

\$12

Cuba and the COMING AMERICAN REVOLUTION

\$5

Also on special for subscribers

- Teamster Rebellion - \$10
- The Jewish Question - \$12
- Tribunes of the People & the Trade Unions - \$7
- New International no. 11: U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War - \$10
- New International no. 7: Opening Guns of World War III - \$10
- Are They Rich Because They're Smart? - \$5
- Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women - \$8
- Che Guevara on Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism - \$12
- The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party - \$8
- The Clintons' Anti-Working-Class Record - \$5
- Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity - \$7

20% OFF ALL OTHER PATHFINDER TITLES

See page 8 for distributor near you

Juan Almeida: Exemplary leader in Cuba’s socialist revolution

BY PHILIPPE TESSIER AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA — The life of Juan Almeida Bosque, a central leader of the Cuban Revolution for more than five decades, was highlighted at two events during the recent Havana International Book Fair here. They showed the revolutionary integrity, courage, discipline, and selflessness — the working-class political qualities — of the men and women who, under Fidel Castro’s leadership, carried out Cuba’s socialist revolution. Almeida, who died in 2009, was one of those outstanding leaders.

“I first met Fidel in 1952,” Almeida says in the documentary film “Conversando con el comandante Juan Almeida Bosque” (Conversation with Commander Juan Almeida Bosque), which was shown here Feb. 17. He explains that Fulgencio Batista had just carried out a military coup March 10, 1952, and many young people rushed to the University of Havana after hearing that opponents of the coup were organizing there.

Almeida met Fidel Castro there. He says he was surprised, but also interested, that Castro was carrying under his arm a book by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution.

“I was not a communist then,” Almeida tells filmmaker Estela Bravo in the 1996 documentary. He says he was concerned about the miserable conditions facing workers and peasants in capitalist Cuba, from joblessness to racial discrimination against black workers like himself.

“I only became a communist after the victory of the revolution” in 1959, Almeida says. Through the experiences he gained as a cadre and then a commander of the Rebel Army, “I embraced the cause of socialism — and I will die with that conviction. I have been a soldier of this revolution.”

The film showing was held at Casa de África, a museum and cultural center focused on Cuba’s African roots, founded in 1986 at the initiative of Almeida and Havana historian Eusebio Leal.

At the meeting, chaired by Casa de África Director Alberto Granado, Victor Dreke and Heriberto Feraudy gave a vivid picture of Almeida. Today presi-



Cuban Council of State Office of Historical Affairs
In front from left, Raúl Castro, Juan Almeida and Fidel Castro with other Moncada combatants freed from Isle of Pines prison, May 15, 1955, after nationwide campaign for amnesty.

dent of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Society, Dreke was a Rebel Army combatant during the revolutionary war. He was second in command to Ernesto Che Guevara in the 1965 Cuban volunteer mission backing anti-imperialist combatants in the Congo. Afterward he led the Cubans who fought alongside pro-independence forces in Guinea-Bissau.

When Almeida was president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, Dreke worked closely with him. The association organizes several generations of revolutionary fighters who educate young people about Cuba’s revolutionary history and why it’s important to know it.

Feraudy is a well-known writer on Afro-Cuban history, and has served as Cuba’s ambassador in several African countries.

Born into a black working-class family in Havana, Almeida worked as a bricklayer from age 11. When Castro recruited him to the revolutionary movement, the underground cell he joined was made up of several construction workers like himself. From that point on, Almeida was a leading participant in all the decisive moments of the Cuban Revolution.

Almeida won respect among the Cuban people for his many accomplishments, Feraudy said, not only as a political leader — including a fighter against racist prejudice — but as an author of books on the revolutionary struggle, and a composer of popular songs. “But first and foremost, Almeida was a disciplined revolutionary, a communist.”

This was also the theme of a Feb. 24 presentation of the book *Juan Almeida Bosque: Testimonios de un santiaguero 1970-2009* (Juan Almeida Bosque: Eyewitness Account of a Santiago Resident, 1970-2009), by Luis Estruch. As a government official in Santiago de Cuba, Estruch worked with Almeida over four decades.

Almeida was part of the July 26, 1953, attack on the dictatorship’s Moncada barracks in Santiago, Estruch said. Although that action failed, it launched the revolutionary struggle that opened the door to the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

During the Batista regime’s trial of the Moncada rebels, the prosecutor asked Almeida, “You surely must have wanted the revolution to be victorious so you could give the orders?”

No, “I wanted the revolution to be

victorious so it would be the people who give the orders,” Almeida replied. “Because up to now, others have given the orders, and things have not gone well.”

Almeida, Castro, and other rebel fighters were convicted and jailed until 1955, when they were released thanks to a mass campaign for amnesty.

In one of the first battles of the Rebel Army, in December 1956, Batista’s troops outnumbered the revolutionaries and yelled at them to surrender.

“No one surrenders here, damn it!” Almeida shouted back. That became a battle cry of the Rebel Army.

In February 1958 Almeida was promoted to commander, and Castro named him head of the newly formed Third Eastern Front in the Sierra Maestra mountains. After the revolutionary victory, Almeida served as head of the air force, vice minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and vice president of the Council of State. He was also a member of the Cuban Communist Party’s Political Bureau.

Castro: ‘A privilege to know him’

In a Sept. 13, 2009, tribute to Almeida after his death, Fidel Castro wrote, “I had the privilege of knowing him — a young black militant worker who would become, successively, the leader of his revolutionary cell; a combatant at Moncada; a fellow prisoner; a platoon captain at the time of the Granma



CSU Archives / Everett Collection
From left, Raúl Castro, Juan Almeida, Fidel Castro in Sierra Maestra during 1956-58 revolutionary war in Cuba. Fidel pointed to Almeida’s “exemplary conduct” over half a century.

Che: Cuba's socialist revolution shows way forward for humanity

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March is Che Guevara Speaks, first published within weeks of his death in combat at the hands of the CIA and U.S.-trained forces in Bolivia in 1967. Che joined the revolutionary movement led by Fidel Castro that brought Cuban workers and peasants to power in 1959, opening the socialist revolution in the Americas. This initiated a renewal of Marxism and inspired a new generation of revolutionary-minded youth worldwide. The excerpt is from "Socialism and Man in Cuba," Guevara's 1965 article on the road to mobilizing the working class to lead the transition from capitalism to socialism. Copyright © 2000 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

The new society in formation has to compete fiercely with the past. This past makes itself felt not only in the individual consciousness — in which the residue of an education systematically oriented toward isolating the individual still weighs heavily — but also through the very character of this transition period in which commodity relations still persist. The commodity is the economic cell of capitalist society. So long as it exists its effects will make themselves felt in the organization of production and,



Liborio Novak
Che Guevara, right, in voluntary labor at 1961 Cuban construction site. In 1987, Fidel Castro led revival of Che's ideas on transforming working people while deepening socialist revolution.

consequently, in consciousness.

Marx outlined the transition period as resulting from the explosive transformation of the capitalist system destroyed by its own contradictions. In historical reality, however, we have seen that some countries that were weak limbs on the tree of imperialism were torn off first — a phenomenon foreseen by Lenin.

In these countries capitalism had developed sufficiently to make its effects felt by the people in one way or another. But it was not capitalism's internal contradictions that, having exhausted all possibilities, caused the system to explode. The struggle for liberation from a foreign oppressor; the misery caused by external events such as war, whose consequences privileged classes place on the backs of the exploited; liberation movements aimed at overthrowing neo-colonial regimes — these are the usual factors in unleashing this kind of explosion. Conscious action does the rest.

A complete education for social labor has not yet taken place in these countries, and wealth is far from being within the reach of the masses through the simple process of appropriation. Underdevelopment, on the one hand, and the usual flight of capital, on the other, make a rapid transition without sacrifices impossible. There remains a long way to go in constructing the economic base, and the temptation is very great to follow the beaten track of material interest as the lever with

which to accelerate development.

There is the danger that the forest will not be seen for the trees. The pipe dream that socialism can be achieved with the help of the dull instruments left to us by capitalism (the commodity as the economic cell, profitability, individual material interest as a lever, etc.) can lead into a blind alley. And you wind up there after having traveled a long distance with many crossroads, and it is hard to figure out just where you took the wrong turn. Meanwhile, the economic foundation that has been laid has done its work of undermining the development of consciousness. To build communism it is necessary, simultaneous with the new material foundations, to build the new man.

That is why it is very important to choose the right instrument for mobilizing the masses. Basically, this instrument must be moral in character, without neglecting, however, a correct use of the material incentive — especially of a social character.

As I have already said, in moments of great peril it is easy to muster a powerful response to moral incentives. Retaining their effect, however, requires the development of a consciousness in which there is a new scale of values. Society as a whole must be converted into a gigantic school. ...

Aside from those whose lack of education makes them take the solitary road toward satisfying their own per-

sonal ambitions, there are those — even within this new panorama of a unified march forward — who have a tendency to walk separate from the masses accompanying them. What is important, however, is that each day men are acquiring ever more consciousness of the need for their incorporation into society and, at the same time, of their importance as the motor of that society.

They no longer travel completely alone over lost roads toward distant aspirations. They follow their vanguard, consisting of the party, the advanced workers, the advanced men who walk in unity with the masses and in close communion with them. The vanguards have their eyes fixed on the future and its reward, but it is not a vision of something for the individual. The prize is the new society in which men will have different characteristics: the society of communist man. ...

This will be translated concretely into the reconquering of his true nature through liberated labor, and the expression of his own human condition through culture and art.

In order for him to develop in the first way, work must acquire a new status. Man-as-a-commodity ceases to exist, and a system is installed that establishes a quota for the fulfillment of his social duty. The means of production belong to society, and the machine is merely the trench where duty is fulfilled.

Man begins to free his thinking of the annoying fact that he needs to work to satisfy his animal needs. He starts to see himself reflected in his work and to understand his full stature as a human being through the object created, through the work accomplished. Work no longer entails surrendering a part of his being in the form of labor power sold, which no longer belongs to him, but represents an emanation of himself, a contribution to the common life in which he is reflected, the fulfillment of his social duty.

We are doing everything possible to give work this new status of social duty and to link it on the one side with the development of technology, which will create the conditions for greater freedom, and on the other side with voluntary work based on the Marxist appreciation that man truly reaches his full human condition when he produces without being compelled by physical necessity to sell himself as a commodity.

March

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder Readers Club Specials

30% DISCOUNT



Che Guevara Speaks

Part of central leadership of Cuba's socialist revolution under Fidel Castro, Che sought to imbue working people with confidence in their capacity to transform the world and themselves.

\$15. Special price \$10.50

Speeches for Socialism

JAMES P. CANNON

\$20. Special price \$14

Woman's Evolution

EVELYN REED

\$25. Special price \$17.50

Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!

Proceedings and Documents of 2nd Congress of Communist International, 1920, Vol. 2

\$25. Special price \$17.50

The Lesser Evil

JACK BARNES

\$12. Special price \$8.50

L'émancipation des femmes et la lutte de libération de l'Afrique

(Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle)

THOMAS SANKARA

\$5. Special price \$3.50

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

ORDER ONLINE AT

PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

OFFER GOOD UNTIL April 10

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: oaklandswp@gmail.com. **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 5711 NW 7th Ave. Unit B. Zip: 33127. 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) 792-6160. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **Minneapolis:** 2401 1/2 Central Ave. NE, Unit B. Zip: 55418. Tel: (612) 271-1930. Email: swpminneapolis@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811.

Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincoln@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

OHIO: **Cincinnati:** 2300 Montana Ave., Suite 230. Tel: Zip: 45211. (513) 837-1038. Email: swpcincinnati@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 313. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: **Dallas-Fort Worth:** 6815 Manhattan Blvd., Suite 108 Fort Worth. Zip: 76120. Tel: (817) 899-6720. Email: dfswp@gmail.com

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

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 650 S. Orcas St., #120 Zip: 98108. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 2, First floor, 275 George St., Liverpool. Postal Address: P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (61) 435-995-604. Email: clydsydney@outlook.com

CANADA

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

FRANCE

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

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

8 The Militant April 1, 2024

For a labor party, based on the unions

For decades the ruling capitalist families have governed through a two-party shell game, keeping workers tied to voting for the “lesser evil” between the bosses’ parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

A working-class alternative needs to be built. It begins with workers joining together to fight for better wages and conditions, and unions advancing demands for protection from the ravages of inflation, and fighting for health care, child care and other necessities that make family life possible. But that’s not enough.

Just as workers need unions to defend us on the job, we need our own voice in the political arena. That requires a decisive break from the Democratic and Republican parties, to independent working-class political action. The intense factional conflict between Joseph Biden and Donald Trump today is *not* the fundamental political division in the U.S. All political questions are an expression of the irreconcilable class conflicts between the capitalists and working people.

We need to build a labor party, based on the unions, that advances the broad political and social interests of the working class as a whole. In thousands of ways, the capitalist rulers tell us we aren’t capable, aren’t smart enough, to run society. This is a lie. The working class makes *everything*, we are the only productive class.

As our class-struggle battles deepen, we see more clearly that we can draw on the experiences of all sections of the working class to act on workers’ capacities

to unite and fight to change the conditions dog-eat-dog capitalist exploitation imposes on us, transforming the world and ourselves in the process.

There is no motion towards building a labor party today. But backing Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, is the road in 2024 to advance independent working-class political action.

The SWP campaign explains that without a political party of our own, gains that workers make in union struggles are more vulnerable to assault from the bosses and their government, which use tools like the notorious anti-labor Railway Labor Act. A labor party would generalize workers’ struggles beyond our fights with bosses in one industry, to an overall struggle against the capitalist class as a whole. It would fight for a working-class foreign policy based on our shared interests and solidarity with workers worldwide. It would mount opposition to the U.S. rulers’ predatory foreign policy and their imperialist wars. And to all expressions of Jew-hatred — a deadly threat to the working class.

Establishing a labor party would mark a powerful step forward in forging the class independence and working-class leadership needed for the revolutionary battles to come. Workers in our tens of millions will have the chance to take power into our own hands.

Join the Socialist Workers Party fighting for this perspective!

Democrats’ drive against Trump attacks rights

Continued from front page
freedoms that workers need.

The coarsening of capitalist politics has been underway for decades, but was accelerated sharply by the Democrats, starting with the 2016 election. Hillary Clinton derided Trump’s supporters as “a basket of deplorables,” while her party unleashed the FBI against him, fabricating the Russia/Trump collusion hoax. Over the next four years they used more FBI dirty tricks, impeachment attempts and relentless attacks in the media to try to bring him down, deepening the crisis of the capitalist two-party system.

After winning a close election, Biden quickly made clear he wanted his attorney general, Merrick Garland, to go after Trump. Since then, Democrats have fabricated case after case against him. But each one has run into delays, and the political character of the prosecutions gets clearer for tens of millions to see.

The Justice Department appointed Jack Smith as its special counsel, tasked with stopping Trump. Since then he’s filed two federal prosecutions aimed at doing just that. One includes accusations of espionage for doing something every modern-day president has done, holding onto allegedly classified documents when they left office.

But recent congressional testimony by another special counsel, Robert Hur, shows that Smith’s charges are a partisan setup. Revelations showed that Biden also “mishandled” secret documents after stepping down as vice president in 2017 and keeping them in several locations. Attempting to appear “nonpartisan,” Garland appointed Hur to look into Biden’s actions.

Hur showed Biden had in fact held onto such material and shared it with his ghostwriter, but said he wouldn’t be charged, while Smith hit Trump with a 40-count indictment for the same thing.

Prosecutor ‘withholds evidence’

The trial of Trump for concealing hush money payments to Stephanie Clifford — better known as Stormy Daniels — during the 2016 election campaign was set to start in New York March 25. But days before, prosecutors announced they had come up with 100,000 pages of new evidence, leading Judge Juan Merchan to postpone the trial until at least mid-April.

Trump’s lawyers are asking for more time to wade through the massive drop of material, and urge Merchan to sanction the prosecution for withholding evidence. The Sixth Amendment to the Constitution mandates that the accused has the right to be fully and timely informed of the evidence against them.

Democratic District Attorney Alvin Bragg is pressing Judge Merchan to gag Trump, while liberal media rant daily about the need for the courts to pillory him. On March 18, one week before jury selection was due, the Peacock channel released a salacious documentary titled “Stormy,” featuring Clifford.

Another trial Trump faces, on racketeering charges in Georgia, has been delayed by salacious revelations. In this case, they concern the previously hidden relationship between District Attorney Fani Willis and Nathan Wade, the lead prosecutor she hired and paid handsomely. Judge Scott McAfee ruled that because their relationship had at least the “appearance of impropriety,” either Willis or Wade had to step down from the case. Wade quit.

Trump’s lawyers say they intend to appeal McAfee’s ruling that Willis can continue to prosecute the case. Any trial date is up in the air.

Start dates in each of the four criminal trials against Trump have been pushed back or have not been set, infuriating liberals, who think that friendly courts, not voters, should determine the election.

Jay Bratt, who works on Smith’s prosecution team in the government’s classified documents case, told Judge Aileen Cannon that putting the Republican candidate for president on trial just days before the November vote wouldn’t violate Justice Department policy. It’s hard to imagine a more blatant case of “election interference,” the very crime Smith accuses Trump of!

Democrats drive to silence Kennedy

Democrats are also making a concerted effort to keep third capitalist parties — or anyone else, including the Socialist Workers Party’s presidential candidate Rachele Fruit — off the ballot, fearing they may take votes away from Biden.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a scion of the wealthy Kennedy clan, is running for president and Democrats are livid. They’ve filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission accusing him of violating campaign finance laws in petitioning for ballot status.

Liberal commentators are perplexed that Biden’s poll ratings are in the doldrums even though there’s an uptick in the U.S. capitalist economy, with relatively low unemployment. But the capitalist class and workers see this differently. Bosses seek to use the upturn to squeeze even more profits from workers’ backs, while workers feel more confident and look to use the unions to fight for the things we need.

In these struggles, safeguarding constitutional freedoms that protect workers and our organizations from government attack is indispensable.

Quebec public workers vote new contracts up

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

MONTREAL — Common Front Quebec union federations representing 420,000 public sector employees, including hospital, education workers and teachers, announced Feb. 23 that union members had voted by 75% to accept a new contract with a wage increase of 17.4% over five years, nearly twice the government’s original offer. Retroactive to April 2023, wages will go up 6% the first year.

The 66,000-member Autonomous Federation of Education (FAE) narrowly accepted an agreement as well. The last FAE local’s yes vote came in at 50.58%.

This ends a fight that saw 11 days of province-wide strike action last November and December involving up to 600,000 union members. FAE teachers struck for 22 straight days.

The Interprofessional Health Federation of Quebec (FIQ), representing over 80,000 public workers, mainly nurses, is still negotiating. The government refuses to address their concerns on working conditions and forced overtime.

“This is not a blank cheque for the government,” said Common Front union representatives. “There’s still a lot of work to do to improve the accessibility and quality of public services.” The votes on job-specific agreements on working conditions were substantially closer than those approving the wage offer.

Several teachers met with this *Militant* reporter to discuss the strike and its outcome. They stressed the fight strengthened unity and union pride, as they look to future battles.

Teachers won widespread support from parents and other workers as they fought to change conditions that degrade learning conditions, demanding more teachers in each classroom and more help with special needs students.

“They’re going to pay us more to increase our workload. But I don’t want overtime, I want resources to do my job,” FAE pre-school special education teacher Rosaline Meunier said, reflecting workers’ concerns that the contract fell short in these areas.

“The whole public sector faced a hermetically sealed government,” primary school teacher Lola Fredj told the *Militant*. “We wanted a plan,” said another, “something tangible, like by 2030 there will be fewer students per class.” But the agreements on working conditions are stated as intentions, or conditional on availability of personnel. “Yet we planted seeds,” said Fredj. “We didn’t strike for nothing.”

Union members have gained confidence. “There were teachers who didn’t see themselves as unionists, but picketed three or four times a week because ‘things have to change,’” said primary school teacher Rachel Hyppolite. “We got to know each other,” explained Meunier. “We’ve created solid teams.”

Hyppolite described joint action between unions, like picket lines on all four corners uniting FAE teachers with Common Front hospital union members in noisy joint rallies.

Broad support from parents, labor

“I’ve been a teacher for three rounds of negotiations over the past decade, and this is the first time I’ve seen such support,” Hyppolite said. “It was thrilling.”

“Parents asked how they could help, they were angry for us!” said Fredj.

“Shoppers gave me the thumbs up, and store owners waved payment for coffee and muffins,” said primary school teacher Jennifer Alvarez Nadeau.

“The Steelworkers union gave money and joined us. That’s opened the door, we’ll do the same for them,” said Meunier, underlining the importance of solidarity from industrial unions. Unifor and the Public Service Alliance of Canada, the federal government workers’ unions, were among those that gave financial as well as political support.

“The government is asking us to choose between better pay and quality care for the population. It is shameful to frame the issues in this way,” the nurses’ federation declared Feb. 18. The real problem “is the network’s inability to provide access to safe, quality care to the entire Quebec population.”

The FIQ has called a solidarity rally in Quebec City, March 16. Their banner is, “Our working conditions are your care conditions.”