

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuba's aid to Africa liberation fight is theme of Havana book fair

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 89/NO. 9 MARCH 10, 2025

Hamis savagery shows need to defend Israel as refuge for Jews

BY SETH GALINSKY

Hamis' use of cruelly choreographed hostage release ceremonies — where hostages who have been tortured and starved for over a year are forced to thank their captors for their "good treatment" — show the Jew-hating, anti-working-class character of the Nazi-like group. It's using the releases to promote the myth that it is broadly supported by the people of Gaza.

On Feb. 20 Hamas handed over the bodies of four of those it kidnapped after parading their caskets on stage. Then the bodies of Shiri Bibas, and her two children — Kfir, less than 9 months old when he was grabbed, and Ariel, only 4 years old at the time — and 83-year-old Oded Lifshitz were handed to the Red Cross.

Two days later Hamas released six living hostages, including Avera Mengistu, an Israeli Jew of Ethiopian descent, and Hisham al-Sayed, a Bedouin Arab citizen of Israel, who have been held by Hamas for over 10 years. The others were kidnapped Oct. 7, 2023, during the Hamas-led pogrom that slaughtered 1,200 people in Israel.

In a sick message, Hamas put labels
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Paul Mailhot, SWP candidate for mayor of NY:

'Workers need our own party, a party of labor'



Militant photos: above, Roy Landersen; inset, Róger Calero
New York protest Feb. 24 backing fight to defend Ukrainian sovereignty after third year of Moscow's invasion. Inset, Paul Mailhot, left, SWP candidate for mayor of New York, at the rally.

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK — At a spirited meeting here Feb. 23, the Socialist Workers Party launched its campaign for mayor, announcing Paul Mailhot as its candidate. Mailhot is the organizer of the SWP's New York City branch.

The launching capped a week in

which Mailhot and campaign supporters joined activities and presented the party's program to postal workers rallying for a decent contract, visitors of the Anne Frank exhibition of the Holocaust

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Protests: 'End Moscow's war, back Ukraine sovereignty!'

BY KAITLIN ESTILL AND SAMIR HAZBOUN

WASHINGTON — Some 3,000 defenders of Ukraine's sovereignty rallied here two days before the third anniversary of Moscow's Feb. 24, 2022, bloody invasion and attempt to conquer Ukraine. Similar events were held around the world, including in Russia.

Participants came to show solidarity with the Ukrainian people's courageous resistance to Moscow and to discuss where this struggle fits in today's deepening conflicts and trade disputes between the world's rival capitalist powers.

Protesters came from the Washington area, New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and beyond. The vast majority were of Ukrainian descent, but Russians, Belarusians, Georgians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Kazakhs also took part.

The rally was organized by United Help Ukraine, US Ukrainian Activists, Razom for Ukraine, Ukraine House and the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, in cooperation with the Ukrainian Embassy in the U.S.

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Teamster drivers go out on strike against 10 Roads Express bosses



Teamsters union

Teamsters Local 727 members picket 10 Roads Express in Park Ridge, Illinois, Feb. 23. More than 500 truck drivers in eight states are on strike against company's demand for wage cuts.

BY TONY LANE

WARRENDALE, Pa. — More than 500 Teamster truck drivers in eight states went on strike against 10 Roads Express Feb. 18 in a fight against boss demands for wage cuts. The freight trucking company, which employs some 2,600 drivers, is the second-largest contractor for the United States Postal Service.

"Our members have had enough.

They are on strike because 10 Roads Express refuses to offer a contract that recognizes our hard work and the essential service we provide," John A. Murphy, director of the Teamsters Freight Division, said in a press release.

Some 25 of these drivers, members of Teamsters Local 249, are on strike here. They told the *Militant* the company

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Workers are looking for an independent road forward, not another 'lesser evil'

BY TERRY EVANS

In response to recent steps by Donald Trump's administration at home and abroad, Democrats and the middle-class left have launched new attacks on the president. All political issues get reduced to "for or against Trump," ensuring that the fundamental class division in society that shapes all politics — between the tens of millions of workers on

one side and the capitalist ruling families on the other — is obscured.

As a result, the "lesser-evil" choices presented by the capitalist rulers' Democratic and Republican parties are made to appear as the only alternatives working people have to choose from.

Debate among Democrats about what went wrong for them in 2024 has largely been set aside, replaced by hysteria about the team Trump has assembled and the steps they've taken. Illinois Gov. Jay Robert Pritzker declared the president and his supporters "Nazis" Feb. 19.

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Fight prison ban on 'Militant' in Florida, Phoenix

BY JANET POST

Two *Militant* subscribers who are prisoners at the Santa Rosa Correctional Institution in Milton, Florida, notified the *Militant* that issue no. 2, dated Jan. 20, 2025, has been impounded there. But a closer read of the impoundment notice shows prison authorities impounded the issue because it had been banned at "another institution," which it does not identify. Florida Department of Corrections authorities' policy is that when one prison bars a publication, it is

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Quebec gov't files anti-labor bill attacking workers' right to strike

Oregon nurses approve contracts, end 6-week strike

Landlords say 'era of falling rents' is now over, watch out!

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

"The era of falling apartment rents looks to be nearly over," a *Wall Street Journal* article announced Feb. 14, saying that "a landlord-friendly era" is about to open. But there has been no "era of falling rents" for working people, the landlord's take just goes up and up. So what is this article talking about?

Yes, as the *Journal* explains with delight, corporate landlords are preparing ever bigger rent raises to boost their profits. This comes amid continuing rising prices in a wide gamut of things workers need — from eggs to coffee, electric rates, health care, used cars and much more.

Since 2000, the average rent workers face has increased by a whopping 130%, six times faster than median household income. In 2023, half of all renters spent 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities, while more than a quarter of renters spent 50% or more.

The *Journal* claimed "a historic apartment construction boom in 2023 and 2024" led to an oversupply of housing units resulting in falling rents. But they fail to distinguish between rents for fellow Wall Street dabblers and those heaped on the backs of the great majority of working people. The "construction boom" they call "historic" was overwhelmingly aimed at building housing for the rich and their upper-middle-class hangers-on.

The overbuilding frenzy by profit-driven construction bosses was focused on "luxury" apartments. This produced a vacancy rate nationwide of over 11% in this market, and real estate companies have offered lower rent deals for these high-priced clients. This is the "era of falling rents" the *Journal* refers to.

For workers, there is a shortage of affordable housing. An average of nine prospective renters competed with each other for every available apartment last year.

Amber Melhouse, who had rented her apartment for years in Brooklyn, tried to get another apartment after her landlord raised the rent last year on her two-bedroom unit from \$4,250 a month to \$5,600. After months of trying she gave up, and rented out her second bedroom



AP photo/Kirk Sides

Renters lined up outside Harris County Courthouse in Houston, Jan. 7, where 759 eviction cases were scheduled to be heard that day by one judge. Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Fort Worth, calls for a moratorium on evictions, cut the rents!

to make up the higher rent. "It's just a sport I don't have an appetite for anymore," she told the *Journal*.

Average monthly rent across the U.S. is \$1,968, according to Zillow, but in many larger cities it's way higher — \$3,000 or above in San Diego, Miami, San Francisco, Boston and New York.

In fact, this month the average rent in New York is \$3,893, Apartments.com reports.

Bigger and bigger conglomerates

Landlords' drive to raise profits today is being led by large real estate companies that buy up apartment complexes and then jack up the rent. Equity Residential, for example, owns or has investments in 312 such properties with over 84,000 apartment units nationwide, including in Boston, New York, Denver, Atlanta, Dallas, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. Recently they paid more than \$274 million to expand their operations in Atlanta and Denver.

Blackstone, the nation's largest landlord, owns some 350,000 units of rental housing in the U.S., and more around the world. Its assets total \$1 trillion.

High mortgage rates now hover around 7%, double what it was a few years ago. And record home prices are another obstacle, forcing workers, especially younger workers, to put off

leaving their parents' place to live on their own and raise a family. Home sales in the U.S. fell last year to the lowest level since 1995.

On Feb. 15 the *Journal* wrote about another market where they see growing profits in, "Why There Is No Relief Ahead for High Used-Car Prices." The average price of a three-year-old used car was nearly \$28,000 in early February, up 45% from 2020. And the average price of a new car is now \$48,600.

The cost of getting a used car is pushed higher by high interest rates and auto-insurance premiums. Many workers who had leased a car from a dealer for a few years with the intention of turning it in when the lease runs out, are now deciding to just buy it instead. Monthly payments for getting another vehicle — new or used — would be more than covering repairs on the old model.

The low point of labor resistance is behind us

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Fight against solitary confinement in California

At its high point some 30,000 workers behind bars in California joined a successful prisoner-led hunger strike against long-term solitary confinement in 2013. "The Strike," airing on PBS, shows how workers, including those behind bars, can unite and make history.

Militant/Betsy Stone
Protest backing prisoners' fight against solitary confinement, Sacramento, Calif., 2013.

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‘Workers need our own party’

Continued from front page

at the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan, and to hundreds at a rally to demand Moscow get out of Ukraine and in defense of its national sovereignty.

“All parties try to attract workers to vote for their candidates during election times,” Mailhot said at the campaign launch, “but none except for the Socialist Workers Party present the class-versus-class character of all politics and the place of the working class in determining the future for humanity.”

The Socialist Workers Party “has an unbroken record over the past 75 years of putting forward candidates for U.S. president and other offices who provide a voice, the only voice, in the interests of working people,” he said.

The SWP will be running candidates in a number of municipal elections this year, including Atlanta; Cincinnati; Fort Worth, Texas; Los Angeles; Miami; Minneapolis; Oakland, California; and now in New York. And in New Jersey the party is running Joanne Kuniansky for governor.

The problems working people face today — from the twin scourges of unemployment and high prices, to Jew-hatred and pogroms like that carried out by Hamas on Oct. 7, 2023, in Israel, to racist discrimination, to Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, to continuing assaults on constitutional protections — none can be explained, Mailhot said, by pointing to “bad” policies of the government, or particularly greedy capitalist owners.

“The mounting attacks on the working class and exploited producers by the bosses and their state and the growing threat of war are the result of the unraveling of the world order that emerged out of World War II that has been dominated by the imperialist victors, particularly the United States,” he said.

This involves “sharpening conflicts among the major imperialist and capitalist powers, their drive to secure sources of raw materials and markets, and trade disputes that will eventually end in military conflicts. These are the roots of assaults on living and job conditions of working people, and of imperialism’s march toward a third world war.

“The capitalist rulers have only one solution to the crisis of their profit system, to shift its burdens onto the backs of working people,” said Mailhot.

Need for a party of labor

Millions of workers, and the unions they are part of, are crippled by the illusion that social progress can be made through the parties of the enemy class. Democrats and Republicans, whatever differences in approach, have the same goals — how best to defend the imper-

alist system and the profit-making of the capitalist rulers. The SWP says workers need to break with the bosses’ parties and form their own, a party of labor, to chart a course to take political power.

Mailhot urged participants to extend support to nurses at NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn who have voted to strike March 1. The socialist candidate explained that the biggest issues involved in the nurses’ fight are the increased workload, and schedules that stretch out the workday.

The nurses union has documented 8,000 cases of short staffing in the past 36 months. Each is a violation of nurse-to-patient ratios set by state law and by the union contract with the hospital.

The socialist candidate pointed to other examples of unions facing the need to fight on a political level. “There are an increasing number of workers who can’t strike legally,” Mailhot said. He joined a rally Feb. 16 in solidarity with the National Association of Letter Carriers, whose members have been locked in a nearly two-year-long battle for a contract. The postal workers fight is weakened by a federal law barring them from striking.

“The experiences of organizing and using our unions show us that the working class needs its own voice, a party of labor,” Mailhot said. “All of the class struggle questions working people are confronting are political questions. This includes the fight for amnesty for undocumented workers, an increasingly large part of the U.S. working class.”

NY politics reflect world politics

The SWP mayoral campaign issued a statement backing the mobilization of Jewish residents of Borough Park in Brooklyn Feb. 18, to take on a violent attack by pro-Hamas demonstrators.

These thugs called on their backers to “Flood Borough Park, to protest stolen land,” echoing the name Hamas gave to their Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom — Al-Aqsa Flood. “When Hamas supporters chant ‘Settlers go back home!’ and ‘Palestine is ours,’ they mean ‘Jews out of Brooklyn’ and ‘Jews out of Israel,’” read the SWP statement.

Borough Park is home to tens of thousands of Jewish families. Hundreds from the community responded to counter the pro-Hamas threat.

“Trump’s pronouncements about Moscow’s war against Ukraine make clear, if you had any doubt, the world’s strongest imperialist power is acting solely in its own interest,” said Mailhot, referring to President Trump’s demands for exclusive rights to a large part of the mineral wealth of Ukraine as the price for past aid from Washington. “It shows



Militant/Tamar Rosenfeld
Paul Mailhot, SWP candidate for New York mayor, meets visitors to Center for Jewish History’s “Anne Frank The Exhibition” Feb. 23, discussing the importance of fight against Jew-hatred.

clearly the Ukrainian people can’t build their defense by relying on U.S. or European imperialist powers.”

The strongest ally for the Ukrainian people is working people in Russia, Mailhot told participants at a Feb. 24 rally of over 500 in Times Square. The fierce determination of Ukrainian working people to defend their sovereignty combined with worldwide support are key for victory.

At protests across the country, SWP candidates supported Ukrainian sovereignty and demanded U.S. troops and nuclear weapons out of Europe, and an end to U.S. sanctions on Russia, which fall hardest on working people in Russia.

“The working class is the only force that wants to — and can — open a totally different future for humanity,” Mailhot said at the campaign event. He pointed to the example of the October 1917 revolution in Russia led by V.I. Lenin and the 1959 Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro, “which showed that working people with the proper leadership are capable of taking power and addressing the needs of humanity.”

Celebrate Omari Musa’s 55 years building Socialist Workers Party

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — Omari Musa, a longtime member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, died here Feb. 22 after a fight to overcome complications from medical conditions he faced in recent years. Musa, a member of the SWP branch here, was 80 years old. His life was devoted to working-class struggle and internationalism — to building a proletarian party capable of organizing and leading tens of millions in the revolutionary fight for workers power.

Musa joined the communist movement in 1968 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and moved to the Bay Area in 1969 where he joined the Socialist Workers Party. He was a lifetime veteran of the national struggle for the rights of African Americans. He understood and acted on its political weight in the class struggle, explaining that only the working-class conquest of state power will open the decisive battle for Black liberation. Recognizing Malcolm X’s central place as a leader of workers and the oppressed, Musa spoke and educated widely about that revolutionary course here and abroad.

Musa was a national leader of the

Solidarity with union struggles is at the heart of the SWP campaign. But being part of and helping to lead union struggles is not enough, Mailhot said. “Building the Socialist Workers Party is essential. Workers have to take power, and create a new state based on solidarity and cooperation with the struggles of the toilers worldwide to truly make progress. That is what the Socialist Workers Party is built to do.”

Mailhot pledged to use the election campaign to put forward a fighting, working-class program to all audiences he is speaking to. Though the campaign is for mayor of New York, Mailhot says he will join in working-class struggles wherever they break out.

Mailhot urged the 35 people in attendance to endorse the campaign — “to help spread the word about what the Socialist Workers Party candidates stand for. Get friends and co-workers to subscribe to the *Militant* and help get it around to others. Help make the campaign a voice for working people in New York and beyond, and help build the Socialist Workers Party!”

SWP’s work to explain the political lessons for working people of the Cuban Revolution and the revolutionary internationalist leadership forged by Fidel Castro. Musa helped lead the SWP’s work in united actions to defend Cuba against the U.S. rulers’ unceasing efforts to crush the socialist revolution and Cuban toilers who made it.

An effective popularizer of the SWP’s program, Musa ran for public office from Oakland to Miami to Washington, D.C. For half a century, he worked to strengthen the unions, in every kind of job from rail and oil, to an ice cream factory, to Walmart. Wherever he lived and worked, he explained the necessity, and opportunities in the class struggle today, for the working class to break from the Democrats, Republicans and other imperialist parties; to build a party of labor; and to fight to conquer state power from the exploiters and war makers and build a new world, a socialist world.

A meeting to celebrate more than half a century of Musa’s political work and the party he helped build will be held in Washington, D.C., the weekend of March 22-23. The *Militant* will feature information about the meeting.

Socialist Workers Party Campaign Join in building the working-class alternative

California

Eric Simpson, mayor of Oakland

Florida

Laura Anderson, mayor of Miami

Georgia

Susan LaMont, mayor of Atlanta

Minnesota

Kevin Dwire, mayor of Minneapolis
Edwin Fruit, Minneapolis City Council

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, governor
Craig Honts, lieutenant governor

New York

Paul Mailhot, mayor of New York City

Ohio

John Hawkins, mayor of Cincinnati
Ned Measel, Cincinnati City Council

Pennsylvania

Tony Lane, mayor of Pittsburgh

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, mayor of Fort Worth
Hilda Cuzco, Fort Worth City Council

Protests: 'End Moscow's war!'

Continued from front page

A large banner brought by the organization Svitanok, which means "sunrise" in Ukrainian, said "Russia can stop the war anytime by leaving Ukrainian territories."

Socialist Workers Party members from a number of cities joined the action, finding participants wanted to talk about President Donald Trump's push for a deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war, the latest move by the U.S. imperialist rulers to advance their own interests in the region.

They also wanted to discuss the demands on placards SWP members carried. In addition to demanding Moscow get out of all of Ukraine, they said: "US troops, nuclear weapons out of Europe! End sanctions on the Russian people!"

"It's good that people showed up and that people from the Trump administration will see that," Sofia Klymyshyn told the *Militant*. "But I think the organizers should have made clearer what we are fighting for. We want peace, but we're not going to give up part of our country. And Ukraine must be part of any negotiations."

"I've been supporting Ukraine since the very beginning of the war, since 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea," Olga Petrova told Al Jazeera News. "I'm originally from Russia. Everyone should remember, it was Russia who attacked. It was Russia who invaded. It was Russia who began annexation."

Kate Gohm helps organize a group of Russians in the D.C. area who put together aid for Ukraine. "I think Putin is hoping that there will be a pro-Russian election victory in Ukraine. But I don't think that will happen," she told the *Militant*.

"In war, it's always working people

who get hurt first. But in Ukraine it's also working people who are on the front lines standing up," said Myrna Baydyuk, the president of United Help Ukraine.

"Ukrainians will never back down," Olenka Dubchak, said. "But we can only win if all of the world stands with us."

Debate on sanctions

Rally participants largely supported harsher economic sanctions against Russia by Washington and other imperialist powers.

Eric, a computer programmer from Philadelphia who asked that his last name not be used, said, "We need to do everything possible to pressure Putin's regime to get out of Ukraine."

"We look to workers in Russia and working people in Ukraine, not to U.S. imperialism, as the force necessary to take on Putin," replied Sergio Zambrana, a member of the Socialist Workers Party. "Sanctions hurt workers in Russia and cut across building solidarity."

"Is there even a labor movement and unions in Ukraine?" Eric asked.



Ostap Yarysh

Thousands rallied in Washington, D.C., above, Feb. 22, and in over 700 cities in U.S. and around the world in support of Ukraine's sovereignty three years after Moscow's invasion.

"Yes," Zambrana said. "Like the U.S. and Russia, Ukraine is class divided. Ukrainian workers are fighting on the front lines and at the same time have to defend their unions, wages and working conditions from attacks by their own capitalist government."

SWP campaigners explained Donald Trump's push to take control over

Ukraine's valuable supplies of mineral deposits, at the same time his administration pushes for a quick settlement, underscores the fact Washington's intervention serves the interests of the U.S. rulers, not those of working people in Ukraine, Russia or anywhere else.

SWP members also called for the freeing of all Russian political prisoners.

Over 700 rallies worldwide back Ukraine's sovereignty

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

MONTREAL — Demonstrations in support of Ukrainian sovereignty took place here and in over 700 cities in 78 countries around the world.

Across Canada, rallies took place in dozens of cities. This country has 1.4 million people of Ukrainian descent, the world's second largest Ukrainian emigre population after Russia.

Members of the Russian Canadian Democratic Alliance participated with a

large banner. Many of them are supporters of Alexei Navalny, the prominent Putin opponent who died in a Russian Gulag prison a year ago.

Andrii Vietrohon, who came to Canada from Ukraine three years ago, told the *Militant* about the conditions facing many Russian soldiers that lead them to enlist. "In far away villages, people are poor and they take the money because it means big possibilities for them. They've never seen so much cash," he said. "When they get to the front, it's not like TV. They surrender, they desert."

Svitlana Velychko told the *Militant*, "Ukraine is so small next to Russia but we can be proud to have stood up for three years." Like many others at the action, she pointed out that "full scale war started three years ago, but the aggression began in 2014," when Putin's forces seized Crimea and then sent Russian soldiers to command pro-Moscow forces fighting to seize the resource-rich Donbas region of southeast Ukraine.

Restore Ukraine's 1991 borders

Yurii Tukalevsugi, a 19-year-old fast-food worker and student, came from Kyiv to Canada a year and a half ago. He joined the Vancouver rally because "with the latest news about U.S.-Russia negotiations, we need to let others know that we want our country to be as it was in 1991," he said. "We want peace but with justice."

Some 2,000 protesters, a majority Ukrainian, marched on the Russian Embassy in London Feb. 22. People from Georgia, Belarus, Lithuania and Poland joined in. A protest the following day was held by Russians for a Democratic Society under the slogan, "This war should end on Ukraine's terms. We stand in solidarity with Ukraine."

Andrii Babchuk and Ilulia Sosnovska, Ukrainian residents in the U.K. for a decade, talked to the *Militant*. The U.S. government "promised to protect Ukraine's sovereignty. But they kept cutting the weapons they sent," Babchuk said. "Now they come and say, 'What else can we take from Ukraine?'" "My father fought in Afghanistan,"

Sosnovska added, during the invasion there by the Soviet Union. "Just like now, many of the soldiers then were non-Russian," from the oppressed nationalities inside the former Soviet Union.

Thousands more marked the anniversary of the war at a rally in Trafalgar Square, London, Feb. 24.

Some 500 rallied in Sydney, with similar events in other cities around Australia and New Zealand. In Athens, several hundred gathered, chanting "Putin, Trump, Ukraine will not kneel!"

In Paris, the demonstration and rally in solidarity with Ukraine drew around 4,000 people. Representatives of the CGT, CFTD, and Solidaires union confederations marched behind a banner that read, "Trade union support to the Ukrainian resistance — For peace, withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine — Solidarity with all the refugees." The unions send regular convoys of aid to Ukraine.

Ned Dmytryshyn and Paul Kouri in Vancouver, British Columbia; Catharina Tirsén and Ögmundur Jónsson in London; and Nat London in Paris contributed to this article.



Militant/Nat London

Banner by CGT, CFTD, Solidaires union confederations in Paris Feb. 23: "Union support to Ukrainian resistance — For peace, withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine — Solidarity with all refugees."

Teamsters strike 10 Roads Express

Continued from front page

hasn't been willing to come to the table and negotiate.

Drivers here joined the Teamsters two years ago as part of a wave of successful organizing drives at 10 Roads Express across the country, including in Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, North Carolina, New Jersey, Utah and Kansas.

"We're done with the unfair treatment from a company that takes millions from USPS while leaving workers behind," Keith Damguard, a nine-year driver at 10 Roads Express in Omaha and a member of Teamsters Local 554, said in the Teamsters press release. "We will not accept anything less than what we have earned and deserve."

"It's kind of a slap in the face. The post office is taking the jobs off us and giving it to brokers for half the cost," Keith Fisher, a driver on strike, told KD-

KA-TV in Pittsburgh. 10 Roads Express is pushing for lower wages to compete with the brokers at workers' expense.

"All these decisions are being made at the top," another driver, who asked that his name not be used out of concern of retaliation from the bosses, told the *Militant*, but the post office and 10 Roads bosses "aren't seeing how that's playing out at the bottom for us."

Fellow Teamsters members and others have brought solidarity to the picket line. Pepsi and UPS drivers, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers, Amazon workers and others have turned out. Strikers told the *Militant* the picket line is up 24/7 and encouraged other workers to visit anytime.

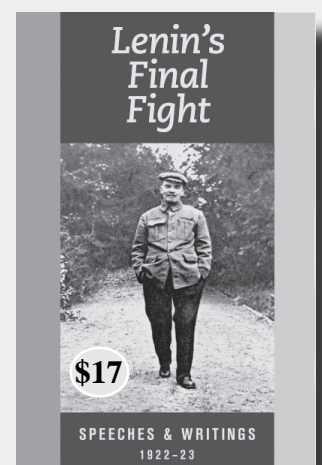
For more information on how to support the strike, visit teamster.org/2025/02/teamsters-strike-10-roads-express.

Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings, 1922-23

"I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism."

V.I. Lenin, 1922



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Quebec gov't files anti-labor bill attacking workers' right to strike

BY STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — Caroline Senneville, president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Quebec, spoke out against a proposed new law, Bill 89, which would give the provincial government the power to force striking workers back to work and impose contracts on them through binding arbitration. This is a “declaration of war” on the unions, she said.

Quebec Labour Minister Jean Boulet, who introduced the bill Feb. 19, said he was inspired by the federal government's use of similar anti-labor laws to end strikes by 70,000 rail, port and postal workers in the past six months.

“What the minister wants to do is help the employers negotiate lower wages and worse working conditions,” Magali Picard, Quebec Federation of Labour president, said.

The proposed new law would let the Quebec government end any strike that it declares is a threat to “social, economic or environmental security.” Since all strikes pose an economic threat to the bosses, the law could be widely used.

Ottawa used the same justification to impose the hated Emergencies Act to break up a three-week encampment outside the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa by truckers and others protesting job-threatening federal COVID mandates in 2022. Several thousand heavily armed police were sent in to break up the protest.

Encouraged by Ottawa's success in using the Emergencies Act, the Ontario government adopted Law 28 in November 2022, banning a threatened strike by 55,000 school workers. But the Canadian Union of Public Employees members defied the law, went on strike and made gains. They were supported by the Ontario Federation of Labour, which threatened to organize a province-wide shutdown.

Working people and unions across the country, including the Quebec Federation of Labour, joined in supporting the strikers, and the government was

forced to repeal the law.

In 2023 over half a million Quebec nurses, teachers and other public-sector workers formed the Common Front, to fight for wage increases amid soaring prices, for livable working conditions and to reverse the sharp decline in the quality of health care and education caused by government cutbacks. It was the biggest labor battle in Canada in decades.

The Quebec government condemned the strike, claiming that “inflexible” union contracts, not government cutbacks, caused the health care and education crisis. Bill 89 is aimed at undermining the ability of unions to wage such struggles. Boulet claims the new law will prevent unions from “taking the population hostage.”

A key fight on labor's line of march

“Growing numbers of workers are turning to their unions to fight for wages and working conditions that allow time and energy for raising a family and having a political and social life,” Katy LeRougetel, the Communist League candidate in the upcoming federal elections in the Montreal riding of Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle,



Archives La Presse/Patrick Sanfaçon

Unionists march behind banner reading “The Common Front: United with a single voice” in Montreal December 2023. Today workers are fighting new attacks on unions, right to strike.

told the *Militant*. “That’s what the government is trying to stop.”

LeRougetel, a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union at an industrial bakery, described discussions she has been having with her co-workers. Jean-François Léonard told her that Quebec City wants to give itself the power to “negotiate” contracts by legislating them. This is anti-union and anti-constitutional!”

Canada’s so-called Charter of Rights and Freedoms contains a clause

allowing the government to suspend any democratic right it considers necessary, LeRougetel said, so working people can only defend their rights by fighting for them.

“The unions need to break with all bosses’ parties,” she said. “And organize a fight against the rulers’ stepped-up attacks on the right to strike and other democratic freedoms.

“Through such battles, workers can build a party of labor with the goal of taking political power into our own hands.”

Oregon nurses approve contracts, end 6-week strike

BY JACOB PERASSO

PORTLAND, Ore. — After a six-week strike, 5,000 nurses at eight Providence hospitals across the state approved new contracts Feb. 24, ending what the Oregon Nurses Association described as the largest health care workers strike in state history.

Calling the agreements “a major victory for front-line caregivers,” the union said they include wage increases of 20% to 42% over three years, with an immediate raise of 16% to 22%. The contracts will also improve the quality of patient care by allowing nurses more time to work with the sickest patients.

The contracts don’t guarantee break

and meal times, a major demand of the union, but nurses will now automatically receive an hour of pay for each one that they miss.

The nurses went on strike Jan. 10 after months of negotiations. In what Dr. Ben LeBlanc, chief executive of Providence Medical Group, described as “unprecedented,” the nurses were joined by dozens of doctors. LeBlanc complained on the first day of the strike “only 10% of physicians are at work today.”

Some 83% of the nurses voted down the hospitals’ first proposed contracts. They “didn’t address the issues we are concerned about and some of it was almost insulting,” Michael Joyce, a sur-

gery nurse at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center near Portland, told the *Militant* on the picket line.

Joyce said the strike won a lot of solidarity. “When I walked into the Safeway grocery store the other day with my union button on I got support from the workers there.”

Strikers told the *Militant* that many other union members walked their picket line, including Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 364, Teamsters, United Steelworkers, members of the SMART-TD rail conductors union and a teachers union. Union workers from New Seasons Market also showed up in solidarity. They were on strike at the same time, demanding reinstatement of a fellow worker who was unjustly fired.

The new agreements include retroactive pay for nurses with contracts that expired before December 2024.

It’s meaningful that the new agreement refers to the money as back pay, Virginia Smith, a nurse, said at a press conference. The one nurses voted down had offered just a “ratification bonus.”

“Even though that feels like words, it’s not words. It’s meaningful, when you’ve worked and you’re owed pay,” she said.

As the strike battle took place, 2,300 nurses at three other Portland-area hospitals voted overwhelmingly to join the Oregon Nurses Association.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

March 6, 2000

This past week the government arrested Mariano Faget, an official of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Miami, and charged him with espionage on behalf of the Cuban government. They then demanded Cuban diplomat José Imperatori at the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., leave the U.S. for his association with Faget.

The Cuban government so far refuses to obey the order. Personnel at the Interests Section are barred by direct order from President Fidel Castro from engaging in spy activity. Castro said in a statement: “If we asked the U.S. Interests Section in Cuba to withdraw all those officers who actively participate in illegal and very undiplomatic actions, then practically very few — or none — would be left.”

Working people and youth can join in condemning Washington’s moves and demanding normalization of relations with Cuba.

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 7, 1975

LOS ANGELES — Organizing activity has begun for a statewide unemployment protest march called by the California AFL-CIO. The urgent need for the demonstration was underscored by a report in the California AFL-CIO News that in January there were 921,200 officially listed as unemployed in California, a rate of 9.3 percent of the work force. The unemployed rolls have increased by 31 percent in the past year.

NEW YORK— A march on Washington to protest unemployment has been called by a group of New York City unions. The Public Employee Press reported that “momentum is growing throughout the country” for a march on Washington. This call can pave the way for a show of strength by the labor movement. Such actions, relying on labor’s own strength instead of the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties, offer the only way to stop the layoffs.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 6, 1950

Leading locals of the United Auto Workers and other unions are calling for a national conference of all labor organizations and a nation-wide 24-hour general strike to aid the embattled coal miners.

Angered by Truman’s Taft-Hartley injunction against the miners and the “contempt” trial of the United Mine Workers now being heard in Washington, more and more sections of the labor movement are rallying to aid the miners’ magnificent struggle.

Overwhelming and enthusiastic response has greeted delegations of striking mine workers from Ohio and West Virginia who have visited Detroit, Flint and other cities. Their slogans — “We’re with this to the end!” “No Contract-No Work!” and the “Truman-Taft-Hartley Law” — have been welcomed uproariously. The labor solidarity being shown by the auto workers should be followed by every union in the land.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

GEORGIA

Atlanta
What Does Trump’s War Against ‘Big Government’ Mean for Working People? Speaker: John Benson, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., March 9, 4 p.m. Donation: \$5. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

Defend Israel as refuge for Jews

Continued from front page

on the caskets of Shiri Bibas and Lifshitz that called the Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom their “date of arrest.” It turned out it wasn’t even Bibas in the coffin. The next day Hamas sent the correct remains.

The Bibas’ family and Lifshitz were kidnapped from Kibbutz Nir Oz. Hamas claimed that the mother and two sons were killed by Israeli bombing in Gaza in November 2023. But forensic examinations by the Israel Defense Forces showed that Jew-hating thugs killed the two children with “their bare hands” and also murdered Shiri Bibas.

Lifshitz, who spoke Hebrew and Arabic, was a well-known peace activist and decadeslong supporter of Palestinian rights. For years he drove every week to the Erez crossing on the Gaza-Israel border to pick up sick Palestinians and drive them to Israeli hospitals.

He was shot in the arm while holding the handle of his safe room when the terrorist thugs attacked Oct. 7 and then held captive in Gaza by Islamic Jihad.

Hamas: Kill Jews, destroy Israel

Why shoot and hold hostage a man in his 80s known for his defense of

Palestinian rights? Because to Hamas and its allies all Jews are evil. The objective of the Nazi-like group is to kill all the Jews or drive them from the region, stop any possibility of solidarity between Jews and Arabs and destroy Israel.

That also explains their cruel treatment of Mengistu and al-Sayed. Both men have psychological disorders and were seized by Hamas after wandering into Gaza.

Al-Sayed was the only hostage not put on display during the choreographed “ceremonies.” Hamas claimed he was released privately “out of respect” for his “Palestinian roots.”

Sayed’s family says that’s nonsense. “They didn’t want the world to see him because it would expose their lies,” his father, Sha’ban al-Sayed, told the press. “He doesn’t talk. He doesn’t have a voice. He can’t remember anything. It’s like he hadn’t been with other human beings.”

Photos of the latest rally posted on Hamas’ internet sites — showing hundreds, not thousands, of participants — express the fact that support for Hamas is not what it claims. Palestinians there are all too aware of how Hamas has destroyed any semblance of democracy in Gaza and used them as human shields.

“The Gaza Strip population that supported the murder, rape and burning of our brothers and sisters, and still supports Hamas killers and their



Reuters/Ramadan Abed

Hamas parades coffins of dead Israeli hostages Oded Lifshitz, Shiri Bibas and her two children, Kfir and Ariel, Feb. 20 in Khan Younis, Gaza, before returning bodies to Israel. Caskets say “Date of arrest” Oct. 7. Banner on stage threatens “Al-Aqsa flood was our promise” to launch more pogroms killing Jews.

goals, has lost the right to remain there,” the Feb. 20 issue of the daily *Israel Hayom* claimed.

That echoes Hamas’ claim that it speaks and acts for all Palestinians in Gaza. In fact, the reactionary bourgeois group narrowly won election in 2006 after Israel pulled out its citizens and soldiers there and handed the territory over to Palestinian Authority rule. Hamas then crushed all opposition in bloody fighting and installed a brutal dictatorship.

Is Hamas popular in Gaza?

Hamas broke strikes by trade unions, restricted women’s rights and with the complicity and funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency imposed a schooling system that indoctrinated children in Jew-hatred.

In spite of that, Gaza residents found ways to protest against Hamas before and after Oct. 7.

Israel’s I24 TV News broadcast a Feb. 19 interview with Khaled, a Palestinian living in Gaza who speaks

for many others in opposing Hamas. They blurred his face and distorted his voice to prevent Hamas reprisals.

Most people in Gaza “do not want a radical, oppressive, Islamist rule that terrorizes the residents in the name of God,” he said. “They want to live alongside the people of Israel.” Many long for a return to before Oct. 7, 2023, when thousands of Gazans worked in Israel, often developing relations with Israeli co-workers.

“Hamas terrorizes anyone who openly opposes it, or who expresses opposition on social media or just on the street,” he said. “People have been tortured and beaten by Hamas operatives.”

According to Khaled, Hamas’ base of support is its 30,000 or 40,000 “operatives” and a similar number of its government operatives, out of a population of more than 2 million.

That doesn’t mean that most Palestinians in Gaza understand that Jew-hatred and pogroms are built into what Hamas is, and that Hamas is a deadly threat not only to them, but to working people across the Middle East.

But if Israel succeeds in dismantling Hamas and its structures, it would remove the central obstacle to opening the door to working people in Gaza, Israel and beyond — Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Arab, Druze and more — finding ways to work together.

“There needs to be a people-to-people dialogue,” Khaled said.



Israel Defense Forces

Freed hostage Hisham al-Sayed, a Bedouin Arab, with his father, Sha’ban al-Sayed, Feb. 22. Hamas “didn’t want the world to see him because it would expose their lies,” Sha’ban al-Sayad said.

Jews in Brooklyn outmoblize pro-Hamas thugs

BY SETH GALINSKY

About 200 supporters of Hamas and fellow Jew-hating allies provocatively targeted an event in the heavily Jewish Borough Park neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, Feb. 18, but got an unexpected surprise. They were outnumbered by opponents of Jew-hatred.

The anti-Jewish provocation was called by the Palestinian Assembly for Liberation-Palestinian Right to Return Coalition (Pal-Awda). They said their goal was to “Flood Boro Park to stop the sale of stolen Palestinian land,” a deliberate echo of the “Al-Aqsa Flood,” the name Hamas gave its Oct. 7, 2023, anti-Jewish pogrom in Israel.

Pal-Awda said their target was an event organized by the Israel Real Estate Expo, which offers apartments, houses and land in Israel. The Jew-hating groups falsely claim that all of Israel is “stolen Palestinian land.”

A similar event planned in Brooklyn last year was cancelled at the request of the police after pro-Hamas thugs threatened disruption, but this time the organizers refused to back down.

Several Jewish groups called for a counterprotest under the slogan “Antizionism=Antisemitism.” Some

chanted, “Nazis go home!”

The pro-Hamas group chanted “Zionists go to hell!” and “Settlers, settlers, go back home, Palestine is ours alone,” and made obscene gestures to passing buses full of Jewish students.

In the face of the harassment, growing numbers of young Hasidic Jewish men from the community joined the counterprotest. Many of the chants were in Yiddish, a common language in Borough Park.

Some Hamas supporters provocatively tried to enter the pro-Jewish protest. They were rebuffed. The police did little to prevent recurring clashes between Hamas supporters and members of the Jewish community.

“Stay in Palestine and there’ll be more October 7s,” one woman who supported Hamas yelled at the Jews. “We were dragging your soldiers on October 7?”

After several hours, and taking some lumps, the outnumbered Hamas supporters decided to leave. New York Police Department Deputy Chief Richie Taylor, the highest-ranking Orthodox Jewish police officer in the city, urged a crowd of young Jews to stop following them. “They’re leaving,” he said.

The assault by Hamas supporters “won’t be the last and sounds an early alarm,” said Paul Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, in a statement distributed in Borough Park and elsewhere. “Working people and our unions should stand with the Jewish community in Borough Park and say no to Jew-hatred.”

Further reading

Visit pathfinderpress.com

Cuba's aid to Africa liberation fight is theme of Havana book fair

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN
AND RACHELE FRUIT

HAVANA — The Cuban Revolution's decadeslong history of aiding freedom struggles in Africa is a central theme of this year's Havana International Book Fair. Several featured book presentations have addressed this internationalist record, and South Africa is the country of honor at the Feb. 13-23 fair.

Several events have marked 50 years since the start of "Operation Carlota." That was the 16-year-long campaign in which hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteer combatants helped defend newly independent Angola against invasions by the white-supremacist regime in South Africa. That victory also led to the independence of Namibia and the end of the apartheid regime in Pretoria.

A special program of events was called "Africa in Our Veins." It was held at a hall displaying books by Verde Olivo and Capitán San Luis, publishing houses of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces and its Ministry of the Interior, as well as the Fidel Castro Center and others.

Cuban Revolution's internationalism

"Since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, our commander Fidel Castro instilled among Cubans the need to fulfill a basic principle — to be an internationalist is to pay our debt to humanity," Víctor Dreke told the audience at the Feb. 14 opening of the program. Dreke is a longtime historic leader of the Cuban Revolution from the days of the clandestine struggle and revolutionary war that brought down the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959, through hard-fought battles in both Cuba and Africa since that time.

He pointed to Cuba's historic ties to the African continent since "the enslavement of Africans who were forcibly brought to the Americas. Their customs and traditions have marked our Cuban identity ever since.

"African blood was shed in the building of our country," Dreke said, as well as in revolutionary struggles throughout Cuba's history.

He cited the homage paid several years ago by Commander Juan Almeida, one of the historic leaders of Cuba's socialist revolution, to Cubans who had



Above, Militant/Jonathan Silberman
Hundreds of Cuban military cadets, above, attended Feb. 15 presentation of book, *The Unstoppable One*, about Gen. Ramón Espinosa, a hero of Cuba's internationalist mission in Angola that defeated apartheid invasion. Right, Víctor Dreke a historic leader of the Cuban Revolution and Cuba's missions in Africa, speaks at "Africa in Our Veins" event at book fair the day before. Dreke cited Fidel Castro, who always said that "to be an internationalist is to pay our debt to humanity."



fought in the Congo in 1965. That year 128 Cuban volunteer combatants, led by Ernesto Che Guevara, fought alongside national liberation fighters there. Dreke was second in command of that column.

After the internationalist campaign in the Congo, Dreke and other combatants from that mission returned to Africa in 1966 to lend support to the national liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau, which defeated the Portuguese government in 1974.

"Cuban volunteers in the Congo were pioneers in Cuba's internationalist collaboration in Africa," Almeida said. That "enormous undertaking is an expression of selflessness, solidarity, and a deep identification with the broad oppressed masses of the world."

Dreke, today the president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association, concluded with a remark by Fidel Castro: "What the imperialists cannot forgive is the integrity, courage, and political firmness" of the men and women who made the Cuban Revolution.

Among those attending the event were Gen. José Antonio Carrillo, president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, and Teté Puebla, a founder of the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon of the Rebel Army. Young soldiers from different branches of Cuba's armed forces participated, alongside a group of cadets from

South Africa studying at the Antonio Maceo military academy in Havana. To the audience's delight, these cadets sang and danced to a traditional song in the Sesotho language of South Africa.

Combat missions: Algeria to Angola

A feature of the morning program was a presentation by Col. José Manuel Cereijo, head of the Center for Military Studies of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. He outlined the history of Cuba's military missions in 23 African countries over several decades, from Algeria to Guinea-Bissau to Angola. The presentation was dedicated to the more than 4,000 Cuban combatants who fell during those battles.

Cereijo paid special tribute to Cuba's first combat mission in Africa. In 1963 some 700 Cuban volunteers went to Algeria, which had just won independence from French colonial rule. They helped deter a military attack by the Moroccan regime, an assault instigated by Paris and Washington.

Cereijo cited Fidel Castro's explanation that the revolutionary government had "sent some of our best weapons to Algeria," even though Cuba, "a small country, was relentlessly being threatened by the imperialists."

Another book fair event presented *Cuba-Algeria 1963: La primera misión* (Cuba-Algeria 1963: The First Mission) by Mario López Isla. Nine former combatants in Algeria attended. One after another, they stood to describe how they signed up for that volunteer mis-

sion, even before knowing what country they were going to. The experience not only aided the Algerian people, they said, but transformed each of them into revolutionaries for life.

The opening program at the book fair featured a short documentary on Cuba's combat mission in Angola as well, along with remarks by the film's director, Milton Díaz Cánter, a war correspondent and combatant in Angola renowned in Cuba for his 24-episode TV series "La epopeya de Angola" (The Angola Epic).

Among the fair's other presentations on Cuba's internationalist missions in Africa was *Cassinga: La verdad de una masacre* (Cassinga: The Truth of a Massacre) by Yeniska Martínez. It recounts a 1978 chapter in the Angola war, when 600 Namibian refugees were massacred by the South African army in the southern Angolan town of Cassinga. Cuban combatants joined in rescuing some of the Namibians, and 16 Cubans were killed. Gen. Pedro Horta, a Cassinga veteran, was present at the program. Hundreds of surviving orphans were brought to Cuba for medical care and to go to school.

Another title presented at the fair was a biography of South African leader Nelson Mandela by Oscar Oramas, who over decades served as Cuba's ambassador in Guinea, Angola, and elsewhere in Africa. A related tribute to Mandela featured Heriberto Feraudy and Ángel Dalmau, both of whom served as Cuban diplomats in Africa.

Hero of the Angola war

Another special presentation at the book fair introduced a book titled *El indetenible* (The Unstoppable One), which tells the life story of Gen. Ramón Espinosa Martín, one of the heroes of Cuba's Angola mission. Written by Col. Rafael Moreno Ruiz and published by Verde Olivo, it was presented in a packed hall to an audience of hundreds of young military cadets.

The author recounted how Espinosa, as a teenager in the 1950s, joined the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro in the revolutionary war that overthrew the Batista tyranny and opened a socialist revolution in Cuba. Years later, in 1975, Espinosa commanded troops in Angola's oil-rich Cabinda region, decisively defeating an invasion by U.S.-backed troops from neighboring Zaire. Espinosa was Cuba's deputy minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces from 2021 until his death last year.

SWP: 'US military out of Korea!'

BY JOHN STUDER

On Feb. 14, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists sent revolutionary greetings to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the occasion of the country's Feb. 16 national holiday.

"Washington's recent docking at the Port of Busan on the Korean Peninsula of the USS Alexandria — a fast-attack submarine armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles — is part of the unceasing US imperialist provocations against the government and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which seventy-two years ago defeated Washington's invasion force in face of brutal and ruinous bombardment of Pyongyang and other cities, towns, and villages," Steve Clark wrote for the SWP National Committee.

"There has been an escalation of

the deployment of US imperialist aircraft carriers, submarines, and bombers to South Korea over the past year by the former Democratic and now Republican administrations," Clark said. "This includes joint Washington-Seoul live-fire drills involving massive US B-1B bombers.

"On this anniversary, the Socialist Workers Party demands that the US imperialist rulers:

End all joint military exercises in Korean airspace and waters with the governments of South Korea, Japan, the United Kingdom, and other powers threatening the DPRK!

Lift all economic and banking sanctions against the DPRK immediately and unconditionally!

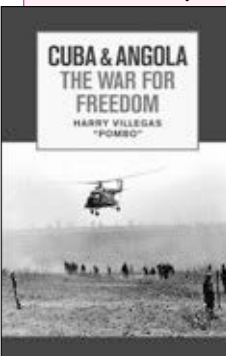
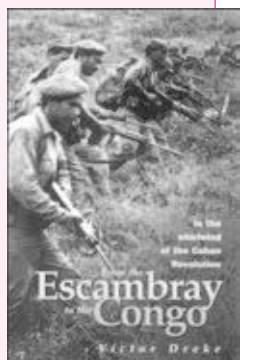
For a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula!
Get all US military forces out of Korea!"

The Cuban Revolution in World Politics

From the Escambray to the Congo In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution

Víctor Dreke

Dreke, second in command of the internationalist column in the Congo led by Che Guevara in 1965, recounts the creative joy with which working people have defended their revolutionary course — from Cuba's Escambray mountains to Africa and beyond. Also in Spanish \$15



Cuba & Angola The War for Freedom

Harry Villegas ("Pombo")

The story of Cuba's unparalleled contribution to the fight to free Africa from the scourge of apartheid. And how, in the doing, Cuba's socialist revolution was also strengthened. Also in Spanish. \$10

pathfinderpress.com

'The party must be proletarian in program and composition'

In *Defense of Marxism* by Leon Trotsky is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian Revolution and the Communist International under V.I. Lenin, fought in the 1930s to maintain Lenin's proletarian internationalist course against the bureaucratic counter-revolution headed by Joseph Stalin. As the U.S. rulers moved to enter World War II to defend their own imperialist interests, a petty-bourgeois opposition in the Socialist Workers Party buckled under Washington's patriotic war pressures, and turned their back on the party's working-class course. Trotsky's polemics stand alongside those of James P. Cannon, then national secretary of the SWP, in the book *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*. The excerpt is from a Jan. 7, 1940, open letter Trotsky sent to James Burnham, the leader of the opposition. Copyright © 1995 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Unionists at Bethlehem Steel shipbuilding yard in May 1941 during joint strike in San Francisco of 1,200 AFL and 900 CIO machinists against wage cuts. The Socialist Workers Party fought for labor movement to champion opposition to the U.S. rulers' drive to war.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

A worker spends his day at the factory. He has comparatively few hours left for the party. At the meetings he is interested in learning the most important things: the correct evaluation of the situation and the political conclusions. He values those leaders who do this in the clearest and the most precise form

and who keep in step with events.

Petty-bourgeois, and especially de-classed elements, divorced from the proletariat, vegetate in an artificial and shut-in environment. They have ample time to dabble in politics or its substitute. They pick out faults, exchange all sorts of tidbits and gossip concerning happenings among the party "tops." They always locate a leader who initiates them into all the "secrets." Discussion is their native element. No amount of democracy is ever enough for them. For their war of words they seek the fourth dimension. They become jittery, they revolve in a vicious circle, and they quench their thirst with salt water. Do you want to know the organizational program of the opposition? It consists of a mad hunt for the fourth dimension of party democracy.

In practice this means burying politics beneath discussion; and burying centralism beneath the anarchy of the intellectual circles. When a few thousand workers join the party, they will call the petty-bourgeois anarchists severely to order. The sooner, the better.

Why do I address you and not the other leaders of the opposition? Because you are the ideological leader of the bloc. ... Your ideology I consider the expression of bourgeois influence in the proletariat.

To some comrades, the tone of this

letter may perhaps seem too sharp. Yet, let me confess, I did everything in my power to restrain myself. For, after all, it is a question of nothing more or less than an attempt to reject, disqualify, and overthrow the theoretical foundations, the political principles, and organizational methods of our movement.

In reaction to my previous article, Comrade [Martin] Abern, it has been reported, remarked: "This means split." Such a response merely demonstrates that Abern lacks devotion to the party and the Fourth International; he is a circle man. In any case, threats of split will not deter us from presenting a Marxist analysis of the differences. For us Marxists, it is a question not of split but of educating the party. It is my firm hope that the coming convention will ruthlessly repulse the revisionists.

The convention, in my opinion, must declare categorically that in their attempts to divorce sociology from dialectic materialism and politics from sociology, the leaders of the opposition have broken from Marxism and become the transmitting mechanism for petty-bourgeois empiricism. While reaffirming, decisively and completely, its loyalty to the Marxist doctrine and the political and organizational methods of bolshevism, while binding the editorial boards of its official publications to promulgate

and defend this doctrine and these methods, the party will, of course, extend the pages of its publications in the future to those of its members who consider themselves capable of adding something new to the doctrine of Marxism. But it will not permit a game of hide-and-seek with Marxism and light-minded gibes concerning it.

The politics of a party has a class character. Without a class analysis of the state, the parties, and ideological tendencies, it is impossible to arrive at a correct political orientation. The party must condemn as vulgar opportunism the attempt to determine policies in relation to the USSR from incident to incident and independently of the class nature of the Soviet state.

The disintegration of capitalism, which engenders sharp dissatisfaction among the petty bourgeoisie and drives its bottom layers to the left, opens up broad possibilities but it also contains grave dangers. The Fourth International needs only those emigrants from the petty bourgeoisie who have broken completely with their social past and who have come over decisively to the standpoint of the proletariat.

This theoretical and political transit must be accompanied by an actual break with the old environment and the establishment of intimate ties with workers, in particular, by participation in the recruitment and education of proletarians for their party. Emigrants from the petty-bourgeois milieu who prove incapable of settling in the proletarian milieu must after the lapse of a certain period of time be transferred from membership in the party to the status of sympathizers.

Members of the party untested in the class struggle must not be placed in responsible positions. No matter how talented and devoted to socialism an emigrant from the bourgeois milieu may be, before becoming a teacher, he must first go to school in the working class. Young intellectuals must not be placed at the head of the intellectual youth but sent out into the provinces for a few years, into the purely proletarian centers, for hard practical work.

The class composition of the party must correspond to its class program. The American section of the Fourth International will either become proletarian or it will cease to exist.

February
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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IN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

LEON TROTSKY

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Destroy Hamas, Tehran's nuclear weapons

As more facts come out on Hamas' gruesome torture of the hostages it kidnapped in its Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom and the murder by strangulation of the two Bibas children, more working people in Israel and around the world can see why the government of Benjamin Netanyahu looks to decisively defeat it. Hamas must be dismantled and its military capacity destroyed if Israel is to survive as a refuge for Jews.

Hamas — with the support of the reactionary regime in Tehran — has not moved one inch from its goals. “The recently ended war is a prelude to the liberation of Palestine and annihilation of Israel,” says Hamas leader Khalil al-Hayya.

For more than 15 years Hamas imposed its dictatorial rule over the people of Gaza. It uses them as human shields, calling those who suffer “martyrs,” and brutalizes those who dare oppose its rule. The Fatah-led Palestinian Authority is no better, handing out cash rewards to those who commit terrorism against Jews.

Working people in Gaza are looking to get Hamas' boot off their necks. Blows dealt to Hamas by Israel help open more political space for them to organize.

Hamas' biggest backer is Tehran, which is driving to get nuclear weapons so it's able to target Israel and launch another Holocaust. That's why Israel is right to target Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.

This has nothing to do with targeting Iran's people, who increasingly oppose the regime, protest its policies and are the best allies of toilers in Israel.

Israel, like every other capitalist country in the world, is class-divided. This puts obstacles in the way of uniting and mobilizing working people for the fight against Jew-hatred.

The defeat and dismantling of Hamas is crucial to removing a key obstacle to working-class solidarity and common struggle by Jews, Palestinians, and other working people in Israel, the Middle East and around the world.

It's the global system of capitalist rule that is the source of Jew-hatred and pogroms in the imperialist epoch. When the capitalist class fears the working class is beginning to organize to put an end to their dog-eat-dog system of exploitation and oppression, it will turn to fascist gangs and Jew-hating violence to protect its rule. That is the lesson of history.

Jew-hatred is not eternal. It can be ended for all time by uprooting the class-divided society from which it emerges. Working people from Israel and Gaza to Iran, Europe and the U.S. have the same challenge — to build working-class parties that can unite and lead workers to take power, opening the door to socialist revolutions.

Workers looking for road forward, not 'lesser evil'

Continued from front page

as Democrats did throughout 2024. Now the liberal media say Trump is creating a “constitutional crisis.”

The new frenzy of Trump hatred is amplified by the tens of thousands of upper-middle-class dogooders who honeycomb federal agencies, seeking to administer the lives of working people. With Trump appointee Elon Musk cutting back parts of the sprawling federal bureaucracy, some in this self-serving layer see their perks and road to personal advancement threatened.

Trump's establishment of Musk's Department of Government Efficiency “is brute dictatorship of the worst kind,” Harvard professor Laurence Tribe insisted in the *New York Times*.

Many politically correct administrators also react against Trump's upending of their policies on diversity, equity and inclusion; his assertion of the scientific fact that there are only two sexes; and his administration's ban on transgender athletes in women's sports. These steps are widely popular among working people.

Liberals also complain that the new administration's push for talks to end Moscow's war on Ukraine, and its use of tariffs to have their way against rivals and allies alike, is undermining U.S. interests. In fact, Trump is utilizing the U.S. rulers' vast economic and military clout to try to impose stability on their terms, the better to monopolize resources and markets and extend U.S. imperialism's predatory reach.

Trump, like Joseph Biden before him, tries to line working people up behind our “own” ruling class and against all foes, and in doing so, against fellow workers worldwide.

Trump's foreign policies, Nicholas Kristof complains in the *Times* Feb. 19, “mark an abandonment of the rules-based international order that amplified American soft-power.” “Soft-power” is Kristof's cover-up for the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam and elsewhere aimed at preserving Washington's position at the head of the global imperialist pecking order.

Vance on free speech in Munich

A special target of liberal outrage is Vice President J.D. Vance's Feb. 14 address on free speech at the Munich Security Conference in Germany.

Vance told the gathering that the greatest threat to Europe “is not Russia, it's not China,” but growing attacks on free speech and working-class voters by woke-minded governments across Europe. “If you're running in fear of your own voters there is nothing America can do for you,” he said.

Liberal commentators in the U.S. condemned Vance's remarks, arguing that German and other European governments need to limit free speech

to protect abortion rights, silence “hateful content” and political views that align with Moscow's, and to prevent the rise of “another Hitler.”

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz rebuked Vance for meeting with Alice Weidel, leader of Alternative for Germany, a conservative bourgeois party that liberals call “far right.” Its rising support, liberals insist, shows working people are becoming more bigoted and reactionary.

A working-class road forward

The political conflicts at Munich reflect the sharpening rivalries between the world's imperialist powers. Each is driven to push its own national interests amid today's wars and economic crises at the expense of their competitors.

Since the U.S. rulers moved more aggressively worldwide after the fall of the Soviet Union, these conflicts have grown. By acting on the false premise that they'd won the Cold War, the U.S. rulers believed they could assert their power unopposed, accelerating imperialisms' inexorable drive toward a third world war.

More workers sense the problems we face today run very deep and that neither the Democrats nor Republicans have any interest in dealing with what our class confronts. But until working people break from the rulers' Democratic and Republican parties and set out to build a party of our own, a party of labor, we won't be able to make progress.

“The shrewd imperialists knew that the only way people would run toward the fox would be if you showed them the wolf,” Malcolm X explained after the 1964 presidential election, which pitted Lyndon Johnson against Barry Goldwater. Malcolm X and the Socialist Workers Party, which ran its own candidate, Clifton DeBerry, for president that year, were the only political forces claiming to speak for working people that didn't urge a vote for Johnson, in order to keep out Goldwater.

The Socialist Workers Party is running candidates for municipal and statewide offices around the country in 2025. They explain that all political questions are class questions. Working people need to chart an independent political road forward built on our sharply counterposed class interests against the bosses and their parties. Join the SWP campaign!

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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

Fight ban on 'Militant'

Continued from front page

impounded at all of the state's prisons.

The notice says the impounded issue is being held “pending review by the Department's Literature Review Committee, because another institution believes the publication contains subject matter that is inadmissible per Section (15) of Rule 33-501.401.”

That rule authorizes impoundment if the publication “presents a threat to the security, order, or rehabilitative objectives of the correctional system or the safety of any person.”

Santa Rosa's notice cites the front-page *Militant* article, “Israel fights for right to exist as a refuge from Jew-hatred,” and a text box on page 7, “Jew-hatred, ‘racial purity’ at heart of Hamas program,” as the reason the other institution impounded the issue. The first article reports on developments in the Middle East and Israel's fight to defend itself. The second traces Hamas' origins back to Arab forces who collaborated with Adolf Hitler in organizing the Nazi Holocaust.

In a letter protesting the ban sent to the Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee, Justin Mazzola, deputy director of research for Amnesty International USA, writes, “The first article ends with a call to action for multi-religious and ethnic groups in the region to come together in the struggle for class freedom.

“The act of informing subscribers about events of the outside world and a call for class solidarity in and of itself and without more should not be a means to violate prisoners' freedom of expression. We therefore urge the Literature Review Committee to overturn the decision to impound the Vol. 89, no. 2 issue of the *Militant*,” he wrote.

There are 14 *Militant* subscribers at the prison and 110 overall in Florida state prisons. Over the years, the *Militant* has fought a number of bans by Florida prison officials, winning most of them.

Militant attorney David Goldstein has written to the Literature Review Committee asking for a copy of the original ban on the issue so the paper can appeal it.

'Militant' ban at Phoenix jail

Militant readers can also join the fight to overturn the ban of issue no. 42, dated Nov. 11, 2024, by prison authorities at the Lower Buckeye Jail in Phoenix. Letters from individuals and organizations calling for the ban to be reversed should be sent to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

A prisoner at the jail who has subscribed for seven years wrote the *Militant*, “I am a fan of the *Militant* and love reading its content.”

Prison officials say this issue is censored because “a photo on the cover of the newspaper” violated MCSO policy, which “does not allow photos of weaponry.”

The picture shows armed Hamas thugs in Khan Younis, Gaza, surrounding a woman Hamas had taken hostage in Israel during its murderous Oct. 7, 2023, anti-Jewish pogrom. They seized more than 250 hostages and slaughtered 1,200 people.

The photo — which appeared in newspapers all across the country and worldwide — accompanied a *Militant* article explaining why the fight against Jew-hatred and the potential for a new Holocaust is crucial to the working class in the Middle East and worldwide.

“I am writing to urge you to reverse the decision by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to impound issue no. 42,” Carl Weinberg wrote to prison authorities. Weinberg is a professor at Indiana University in Bloomington and a member of the executive committee of the American Association of University Professors-American Federation of Teachers there.

“Whatever content bothered your staff, the fact is that Lower Buckeye inmates retain the right under the U.S. Constitution to receive and to express their political views regardless of how ‘inappropriate’ anyone thinks they are,” said Weinberg. This “suggests that you have engaged in viewpoint discrimination, which the U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled is a violation of our constitutional rights.”

Goldstein filed an appeal of this impoundment Jan. 13, writing that the “confiscation of an inmate's political literature violates the First Amendment.”

Letters urging the ban be reversed should be sent to: Ancillary Services Division Commander, MCSO, 3250 W. Lower Buckeye Road, Phoenix, AZ 85009. Email a copy to mcsocentralmailroom@mcsomari.com and to themilitant@mac.com.