

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

When the US invaded Panama
and seized its president in 1989
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 90/NO. 2 JANUARY 19, 2026

Panama outcry hits destruction of memorial to Chinese labor

BY MATILDE ZIMMERMANN

At night on Dec. 27, the mayor of Arraiján, an upscale suburb of Panama City, sent bulldozers to demolish a monument built in 2004 to pay tribute to the thousands of Chinese laborers who died building the first railroad crossing the Isthmus of Panama, as well as the Panama Canal.

The Chinese ambassador to Panama and members of the Chinese community were notified of the destruction by people who saw it driving by, and they rushed to the scene. But the destruction had been accomplished. By the next morning tons of debris had been carted off and all that remained was an ugly concrete slab.

Less than a year ago I visited the now-destroyed monument. Its large, colorful arch and somber obelisk were a dramatic and moving commemoration of the contribution of Chinese labor to the development of Panama and the expansion of international commerce. Perched on a hilltop overlooking the Pacific entrance to the canal, it offered spectacular views of the ocean and countryside, and of Panama City

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Condemn Washington's attack on Venezuela's sovereignty! US out now!



Militant/Laura Anderson

Protest in Miami Jan. 3 against Washington's violation of Venezuela's national sovereignty with its bombing and special operations forces raid in Caracas that kidnapped country's president.

US gov't says 'oil is ours,' threatens Cuba, Colombia

BY RÓGER CALERO

In the early morning Jan. 3 Venezuelans in Caracas and surrounding areas were awakened by explosions and aircraft flying overhead as U.S. forces carried out a murderous military assault aimed at forcing Venezuela's government

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Statement issued Jan. 3 by National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

The Socialist Workers Party condemns in the strongest possible terms Washington's invasion of Venezuela and its seizure of Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Adela Flores, his wife. We condemn President Donald Trump's stated goal for the US government and giant oil corporations to occupy

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Protests in Iran grow, spread as the toilers say No! to the gov't

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Iranian regime's Tasnim News claimed Jan. 6 that protests that began among shopkeepers in the bazaar in Tehran Dec. 28 and then spread across the country — including to small towns and universities — were now “moving toward complete calm.” But that same day videos showed police and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps thugs clashing with hundreds of merchants at Tehran's Grand Bazaar and firing tear gas to force protesters to disperse.

The government-funded Iranian Student News Agency admitted that merchants had closed “most shops” at the Grand Bazaar and that there were so many people protesting that “it was not possible to enter.”

The government's Fars News Agency reported protesters chanted, “Honorable merchants, support, support!” Fars said shopkeepers had closed their stalls to protest the drop in the value of the Iranian currency and “lack of price stability.”

The Dec. 28 protest began among merchants at bazaars in Tehran and then spread to other bazaars and towns around the country. Merchants and working people are being hit hard by the deepening economic crisis. This is

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Minneapolis march: 'Defend rights of immigrant workers, protest ICE!'



Militant/Mary Martin

Protest in Minneapolis Dec. 20 against ICE raids and deportations of immigrant workers. A contingent of Native American dancers, some with Mexican heritage, led the march.

BY MARY MARTIN

MINNEAPOLIS. — Chanting “El pueblo unido jamás será vencido” (The people united will never be defeated), thousands marched here Dec. 20 protesting recent arrests of immigrant workers by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, including in Latino and Somali communities along the march

route on Lake Street.

They also protested the government's targeting Somali immigrants for attack.

They were angered when ICE agents operating near the Somali-owned businesses at Karmel Mall had reportedly smashed the window of a vehicle Dec. 15, pulled occupants out of the car, drag-

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Socialist Workers Party mobilizes to get truth out about Venezuela, Cuba

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

As they woke up to the news that Washington had invaded Venezuela Jan. 3, SWP members organized to seek out and join protests against the assault, encouraging people they knew to join in too. They also campaigned widely in working-class neighborhoods, explaining why working people have a stake in the fight to demand Washington get out.

Members of the SWP and the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, and the U.K. distributed a statement issued by the SWP National Committee, “Condemn Washington's Attack on Venezuela Sovereignty! US Out Now!” It's published in English and Spanish in this issue. In their discussions with fellow workers, SWP and CL campaigners placed Washington's attack within the broader crisis of capitalism today and the drive of all the imperialist powers toward a new and even more devastating third world war.

“Our party across the country is protesting the U.S. government attack on Venezuela and its oil grab,” Norton Sandler, SWP candidate for governor of California, told *La Opinión*, a widely read Spanish-language daily at

a protest of 150 in the pouring rain in Los Angeles. Washington's intervention “goes hand in hand with employer and government assaults on the living standard and rights of the U.S. working class. The SWP is calling on the labor movement to take the lead in protesting this attack,” Sandler said.

SWP member Craig Honts was part of a team that campaigned door to door in Passaic, New Jersey, Jan. 4. He met a

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As fifth year of Putin's invasion of Ukraine nears, Ukrainians resist 7

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Tetrosyl workers in UK strike against bosses' move to cut wages

California teachers and other school workers win strikes

Kurds in Aleppo resist attacks by Turkey-backed Syrian forces

BY JANET POST

At least seven people were killed and 52 injured as of Jan. 7 in the Kurdish-majority neighborhoods of Ashrafiyeh and Sheikh Maqsood in Aleppo, the largest city in northern Syria, during attacks by Turkey-backed militias affiliated with the new Syrian government over the last month.

The factions, the al-Amshat (Suleiman Shah Division) and the al-Hamzat (Hamza Division), have also targeted the densely populated town of Deir Hafer, east of Aleppo, using mortar shelling, heavy weapons and suicide drones.

The Syrian National Army has taken advantage of the attacks on the neighborhoods, striking sites where it says the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces has launched drones in its defense.

In a major escalation Jan. 7, the army declared that “all military outposts” it claims belong to the SDF are “legitimate military targets.” Eighty tanks and military vehicles have been deployed.

The Kurdish Internal Security Forces in Aleppo told the media that the shelling had “caused significant material damage,” and “heightened tension among civilians.” It released a photo of 41-year-old Fatima Hamadeh “who was martyred as a result of the heavy shelling” there.

It is allied with the SDF, which controls most of northeast Syria. The SDF stated that the two neighborhoods are “under full siege,” with the entry of food, medical supplies and other essential goods blocked.

The Turkish factions have resisted integration into Syria’s new military

structure formed after the overthrow of dictator Bashar al-Assad by the Syrian people in 2024.

The Kurdish Internal Security Forces said it had “responded firmly” to al-Amshat and al-Hamzat. “Our responses will remain within the framework of the law and the legitimate defense of civilian lives and property,” it said.

On Jan. 3 Rudaw news wrote that the siege of the Aleppo neighborhoods has “severely disrupted daily life,” including a power blackout, the closing of schools and “mistreatment by security forces.” Nouri Sheikho, co-chair of the civilian council in the neighborhoods affected, said that Syrian authorities have so far

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Syrian Arab News Agency

Death toll is rising from ongoing assaults on Kurdish-majority neighborhoods in Aleppo, in northern Syria, by Turkey-backed militias affiliated with Syrian government, like above, Dec. 7.

Minneapolis march: ‘Defend rights of immigrant workers’

Continued from front page
ging a woman through the street.

Since Dec. 1 when President Donald Trump called Somali people “garbage,” federal officials say their Operation Metro Surge has led to the arrest of over 670 people.

Several immigrant rights groups, including CTUL (Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha), COPAL (Communities Organizing Latine Power and Action) and MIRAC (Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee) co-sponsored the action. The state AFL-CIO and other unions, including the United Food and Commercial Workers, UNITE HERE, Service Employees International Union, Minneapolis Federation of Educators and more, took part. Union members in AFL-CIO vests were

among the marshals for this disciplined protest.

In below-freezing temperatures, some small-business owners along the route passed out hot drinks to help fortify marchers.

The protest concluded with a short rally outside the Karmel Mall. Business owners welcomed marchers and offered food.

A contingent of Native American dancers led the march. Jackie Perez, who is American Indian and Mexican American, told the press that ICE talks about deporting criminals, but not about the construction and bakery workers arrested.

Ahmed Abdirahman, a member of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Local 22, said he was glad to see that the *Militant*, to which he subscribes, was writing an article on the action. “Immigrants are not criminals. Immigrants make this country move forward,” he said. “If they want to go after the ‘worst criminals,’ then go out and arrest them, but not the kids who are starting to have a life and a good future. America has always been part of immigrants’ lives, but going out and attacking the whole community will just make things worse. That’s why I was so glad I came to protest,” he told the *Militant*.

Some of the signs marchers carried connected the need to fight against Jew-hatred with defense of immigrant rights. One read, “The Holocaust began with deportations.”

“My dad was with the Dutch resistance, and he helped hide Jews and others who were fleeing Nazi persecution,” 73-year-old Rick Vandendolder told the press. “I met some of the people that he saved, and I never dreamt that I’d be seeing the same thing going on in this country.”

SEIU union banners were prominent in the march. On Dec. 22 SEIU Local 26 posted on its Facebook page that a union staff person named Said had been stopped on his way to work by masked individuals in unmarked cars. Said told them he was a U.S. citizen and asked if they were stopping him because they assumed he was Somali. They let him go.

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THE MILITANT

Support contract fight by Sky Chefs workers!

Since 2018, LSG Sky Chefs workers, members of UNITE HERE, who make and load food on airlines, have been fighting for higher wages, safer working conditions and better health care. Union faces Railway Labor Act, which buries them in red tape and no-strike measures.

Militant/Ved Dookhun
UNITE HERE protested Dec. 20 for contract in U.S. cities, including Philadelphia, above.

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Tetrosyl workers in UK strike against bosses' move to cut wages

ROCHDALE, England — After five days of strike action at Tetrosyl's warehouse and distribution operation here, north of Manchester, some 80 workers are determined to prevent bosses from imposing a substantial wage cut.

Workers were told they must sign a new contract by 4 p.m., Dec. 23 or be sacked. "The new contract results in warehouse staff pay being reduced by between £4,000 [\$5,400] and £7,000 per year, due to the removal of a shift supplement and paid breaks," Michelle Byrne, area organizer for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, said in a statement. Tetrosyl is Europe's largest maker of car care products.

Truck drivers — also members of the union — who pick up stock from the warehouse for B&M, a major U.K. retailer, are refusing to cross the picket line.

Striking workers describe how the number of agency workers in the warehouse varies through the year, but to weaken the strike bosses have expanded the number they're now using.

Like in several recent union disputes in the U.K., the workers don't have union recognition — that's one of the demands of the strike. Byrne told the *Militant* that before the bosses moved to impose their wage-slashing contract there were just 19 Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers members there. Over 60 workers have joined the union since to fight this attack.

"We urge the company to engage

in talks with USDAW," Byrne said. To date bosses have refused to talk to union officers. She said they plan further strike days.

— Anne Howie

California teachers and other school workers win strikes

OAKLAND, Calif. — After a spirited four-day strike that included rallies and vigils, teachers in the West Contra Costa Unified School District, members of United Teachers of Richmond, won improved wages and health insurance and more staffing.

Teachers walked out Dec. 2, in their first strike since the district was founded 60 years ago. Teamsters Local 856 school staff members joined them for two days before reaching a separate agreement.

The teachers held nearly daily rallies of hundreds, prompting the school district management to resume negotiations. At a lively vigil outside the negotiations Dec. 9, they chanted into the night and projected photos of union supporters on the building wall.

"It was OUR COLLECTIVE POWER that forced the District back to the table and paved the way for an agreement that lays a foundation for the safe and stable schools our students deserve," United Teachers of Richmond President Francisco Ortiz wrote in an early morning email to unionists and supporters after the agreement was reached Dec. 10. Teachers voted 92.6% to approve the contract.

They won an 8% wage increase, fully paid family health care by June 30, 2027, an increase in special education teachers' salaries, some caps on classroom size, improved classroom heating and "district sponsored pathways to permanent residency for educators who obtain clear credentials, as well as support for newly arrived educators." The school district, with a large percentage of immigrant students, relies on bilingual staff members to help students learn.

"Tomorrow, we will begin returning to work with our heads held high," Ortiz wrote. "Educators may return to school with pay tomorrow to retrieve their laptops and keys and can take the



Militant/Pete Clifford

Warehouse and distribution workers in Rochdale, England, picket against wage cuts Jan. 2 at Tetrosyl, Europe's largest manufacturer of car care products. They also seek union recognition.

day to prepare. We can't wait to see our students Thursday morning."

"Our victory shows the power of our collective!" Downer Elementary fifth-grade teacher Wendy Gonzalez told Richmondside news.

— Maggie Trowe

20,000 nurses prepare to strike Jan. 12 in New York City

NEW YORK — Nurses at 12 hospitals here are set to strike Jan. 12. Up to 20,000 members of the New York State Nurses Association are preparing to walk out after their contract expired Dec. 31. They're fighting for better health care benefits, higher staffing levels and increased pay.

Hospital bosses are determined to "roll back safe staffing standards that nurses won when they went on strike at two major hospitals three years ago," the nursing association said in a Jan. 2 statement. That strike involved 7,000 nurses. Days after they won, some 800 nurses at Mount Sinai South Nassau voted to join the union.

Hospital bosses "threaten RNs who have spoken out on workplace safety, questioned and threatened RNs regarding their union activities, interfered with RN's rights to speak to co-workers," the union said.

Managers at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn say they're preparing to hire contract nurses to try to break any strike.

At the same time, more than 1,000 New York State Nurses Association members at three Northwell Health hospitals in Plainview, Syosset and Huntington on Long Island voted to strike Dec. 23. The date for the strike to begin hasn't yet been set.

"We are working most shifts in the emergency room with too many patients and not enough nurses," Chris Coburn, a registered nurse at Northwell's Plainview Hospital, said on the union website. "Being asked to care for up to 12 patients" each shift "is physically impossible — it's not the care I want to give. Patients deserve better."

"NYSNA nurses on Long Island are united," New York State Nurses Association President Nancy Hagans said. "And they aren't scared."

— Terry Evans

Kurds in Syria

Continued from page 2

refused to repair the power grid brought down by the shelling.

"This is a political objective to force the people to retreat further," Sheikho said. "They do not allow fuel to pass through and say that the [Kurdish] military forces use it for themselves. These are all pretexts so that gas and fuel do not reach the neighborhoods and pressure is put on the people."

Kurds, an oppressed nationality, make up some 10% of Syria's population. Thirty million Kurds, in Iraq, Syria, Iran and Turkey, comprise the world's largest nation without their own country.

Last March an agreement was signed between SDF Commander-in-Chief Mazloun Abdi and the new Syrian regime, headed by President Ahmed al-Sharaa, to integrate SDF into state institutions. The SDF wants to join the Syrian army as a block, with its command structure in place for its 50,000 troops. Damascus is pressing SDF fighters to join the army as individuals.

The Turkish government, long a bitter opponent of the Kurdish struggle for self-determination, is threatening to intervene if the SDF doesn't dissolve itself completely into Syria's state military. Ankara views the SDF as totally intertwined with the Kurdistan Workers Party inside Turkey, which it has long attempted to suppress and dismantle.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs



Story of how a class-struggle leadership of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis in 1934 showed how to fight — and win — strike battles in midst of depression.—\$16

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

January 15, 2001

DES MOINES, Iowa — In a victory for working people, workers at the ConAgra sausage processing plant in Omaha, Nebraska, voted to join the United Food and Commercial Workers union. This is the second union victory in a drive to organize some 4,000 workers in the city's meatpacking industry.

The victory came 10 days after a highly publicized raid at Nebraska Beef by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, together with local and state police. The cops detained some 200 workers who they claimed were in the country illegally and marched them into buses. An organizing effort is underway at the plant and the UFCW protested the raid as a violation of labor law.

UFCW organizers say workers continue to get cards signed in the various plants and the organizing drive in Omaha might be the largest single packing-house campaign in the past 20 years.

THE MILITANT

January 16, 1976

RALEIGH, N.C. — The protest of prisoners at the North Carolina Correctional Center for Women has entered a new stage with a lawsuit seeking \$25 million in damages. The plaintiffs are thirty-six of the women who last June staged a peaceful demonstration on the prison grounds in protest of harassment and inhumane conditions of confinement. It was brutally quelled.

After the women began their protest, 450 male guards — armed with billy clubs, tear gas, pepper gas, dogs, and riot gear — were called in from Raleigh's prison for men. This force was supplemented with 150 highway patrolmen and 50 city police.

Five days later, this army managed to subdue the women prisoners. "I cannot understand why they beat us, terrorize us. I do not know why a handful of women — naked, unarmed, behind bars — frighten them so much," says a prisoner.

THE MILITANT

January 15, 1951

President Truman's "State of the Union" ignored the popular demand that overshadows every other today: Stop the war now and withdraw the U.S. troops from Korea! He evaded entirely the fundamental constitutional issue: Shall a single man commit this country to war or engage armed forces on foreign soil wherever and whenever he sees fit?

Instead, he presented us with the appalling prospect of ever increasing preparations for "full war mobilization" and a "full-scale war." He indicated a future of growing scarcity, higher prices, heavier taxes, frozen wages — the austerity of a garrison state.

Only the war profiteers got consolation from Truman's message. The government must "practice rigid economy in its nondefense activities [read social welfare program]." Guns instead of butter for everyone — except the rich! The real "State of the Union."

SWP discusses Venezuela, Cuba

Continued from front page
woman there who works in an electronics factory.

“I voted for Trump,” she told Honts, “and I think he’s trying to do some good things.”

“Trump says that Venezuela’s oil belongs to the U.S.,” Honts said. “That’s an attack on the sovereign rights of Venezuelans and a threat to people the world over.”

“I can see what you’re saying,” she said.

When Honts pointed to the administration’s stepped-up raids and deportations, she described going into work recently “and finding there was hardly anyone there.” Many of her co-workers didn’t come, fearing there would be a raid by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

“A union fight for an amnesty for immigrants in the U.S. is needed to lift the fear of deportation facing millions of workers,” Honts said. “This is crucial to unite the working class for the fight against the bosses and their government.” She decided to get a subscription to the *Militant*.

At a Jan. 3 protest of nearly 200 people in downtown Dallas, SWP members Hilda Cuzco and Josefina Otero spoke with Diane Symons from nearby Benbrook.

“It’s an act of war. He’s been threatening to do this because he wants the oil,” Symons said. “It’s all about money. I am not about the money; I am about the people.” Symons bought a subscription to the *Militant* and the books, *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class* and *The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us: The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward*.

“I’m here because I oppose the U.S. invasion. People are divided and there seems to be no end to this,” Lauren Arant, a health care worker from Dallas, told SWP members Gerardo Sánchez and Alyson Kennedy.

Sánchez pointed to Malcolm X who “explained the importance of building unity among working people no matter what your nationality.”

Workers need to take political power

“This invasion is a violation of Venezuela’s sovereignty,” Kennedy said. “It is part of the drive of the imperialist powers toward another world war. That can only be prevented if working people take political power

into our own hands.” Arant bought a *Militant* subscription and a copy of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire In Africa*, Pathfinder’s newest book.

In Montreal some 100 people responded to a call from the Quebec-Cuba Solidarity Roundtable to demonstrate their opposition to the intervention at the U.S. Consulate on a busy street downtown Jan. 3.

Joe Young, the Communist League candidate in the St. Laurent riding in the Quebec elections, was one of the speakers at the protest. “We need to denounce the U.S. aggression,” Young said. “We also need to denounce the Canadian government. It has declared its support for the U.S. intervention.”

Anna Salles, a passerby of Brazilian origin, stopped by to talk when she saw the protest. “I am outraged by Trump’s action! He’s a madman,” she said.

“It’s not just him. The U.S. oil bosses are aiming for Venezuela’s oil. This is about Cuba, too,” CL member Katy LeRougetel told her. “Trump and Prime Minister Mark Carney share the same goal of crushing the Cuban Revolution.” Salles gave \$5 for an issue of the *Militant* to learn more.

The Minnesota Peace Action Coalition called a protest against the U.S. invasion of some 200 people in Minneapolis. Tina-Desiree Berg, a reporter from YouTube channel Status Coup, was in town to cover attacks on immigrants and interviewed SWP member Kevin Dwire at the action.

During the wide-ranging interview Dwire said the SWP was for the defeat of Hamas and defended Israel’s right to exist as a refuge for the Jews.

“What about the Palestinians?” Berg asked.

“There are two national questions. What way forward for the Jews and for the Palestinian people?” Dwire replied. “The last two years have shown why Hamas is the biggest problem facing the Palestinians.” Its defeat will remove an obstacle to common struggle by Jews, Palestinians and other working people in the region, he said.

In San Francisco, Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for Congress in California’s 12th District, joined a protest of nearly 1,000 people Jan. 3. SWP campaigners carried signs demanding “U.S. Hands Off Venezuela and Cuba!” They got a lot of thumbs up.



Militant/Fredy Hunil

Norton Sandler, SWP candidate for California governor, discusses how Washington’s attack on Venezuela is rooted in imperialist drive for profits with fellow protester in Los Angeles Jan. 3.

One participant who asked to photograph the signs purchased books on the Cuban Revolution, including *Revolution and the Road to Peace in Colombia* by Fidel Castro and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

In New York City Jan. 3 some 700 people protested in Times Square. SWP member Seth Galinsky told the *Militant* that a number of Venezuelans came by who supported Washington’s action. He also talked to two young Venezuelans who didn’t support Maduro, but were outraged at the U.S. intervention. “They

have no right to bomb our country and it’s up to us to make changes. They just want the oil,” one of them told Galinsky.

Later that evening, the Militant Labor Forum, which had scheduled a talk and discussion on the class struggle in Canada, switched gears for a forum on developments unfolding in Venezuela and the stakes for the world working class. Given by *Militant* editor John Studer, speaking for the SWP Political Committee, it engendered a lively discussion appreciated by all.

To join the campaigning, contact distributors nearest you listed on page 10.



SWP member Seth Galinsky participates in Jan. 4 protest in New York against U.S. assault on Venezuela. Interview with Galinsky was broadcast on U.S. and Australian television.

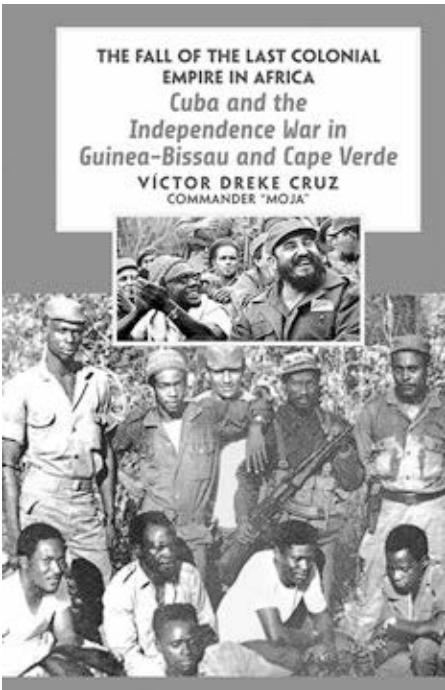


Left, “I’m here because I oppose the U.S. invasion,” health care worker Lauren Arant told SWP member Gerardo Sánchez at Jan. 3 protest in Dallas against Washington’s attack on Venezuela, kidnapping of president. Right, Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in California’s District 12, joins protest in San Francisco where some 1,000 people marched down Market Street calling for “U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!”



Militant photos: left, Alyson Kennedy; right, Eric Simpson

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US says Venezuela's 'oil is ours'

Continued from front page

ment to submit to Washington's imperialist dictates. The assault left 80 people dead; a trail of destruction; President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, taken captive; and the country's sovereignty violated.

In the operation, dubbed "Absolute Resolve," some 150 aircraft — bombers, fighter jets, helicopters, drones and reconnaissance planes — paved the way for special operations units to break into the compound where Maduro and his wife lived. They transported them to the assault ship USS Iwo Jima and then flew them to New York. Both pled not guilty to narco-trafficking and other charges in a Manhattan federal courthouse Jan. 5.

Washington claims the Venezuelan president is the head of a drug cartel that smuggles massive amounts of cocaine into the U.S. For weeks the White House had threatened to carry out land strikes inside Venezuela. U.S. forces have destroyed dozens of boats U.S. authorities say are carrying drugs, killed some 115 crew members, and imposed a naval blockade on oil shipments from Venezuela.

Circling vultures

"We are ready to stage a second and much larger attack if we need to do so," President Donald Trump told a press conference hours after the invasion. Washington is now going to "run" Venezuela, he said, including taking control of the country's oil industry and vast resources. They "stole it from us," Trump insisted.

The naval blockade and the massive U.S. armada will remain, he said. "All political and military figures in Venezuela should understand what happened to Maduro can happen to them," he added.

These moves announced the U.S. rulers' intention to step up their domination of the Western Hemisphere. "Our adversaries remain on notice," said Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at the Jan. 3 press conference. "America can project our will anywhere, anytime," he said. "This is America first."

One of their key goals is cutting off Venezuela's supply of oil to Cuba in hopes that it will bring the country's economy to a halt. The U.S. rulers have been determined to bring down Cuba's socialist revolution, ever since Cuban workers and farmers overthrew capitalist exploitation and oppression over six decades ago, taking their destiny into their own hands. "If I lived in Havana and I was in the government, I'd be concerned," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.

At a meeting of Venezuela's national defense council, Vice President Delcy Rodríguez condemned Wash-

ington's violation of the country's sovereignty and pledged to defend its territory and resources.

Rodríguez was sworn in as president Jan. 5, and is now the point person in negotiations going forward, the White House says. They expect her to be accommodating to U.S. interests.

In a message to the Venezuelan people and the world, she "invited the U.S. government to collaborate with us on an agenda of cooperation oriented toward shared development."

Writing in the *Miami Herald*, Antonio María Delgado summed up what Rodríguez faces: "private talks, public defiance, incremental compliance, and constant recalibration."

Time will tell what will transpire.

Prior to the Jan. 3 invasion, Maduro and Trump had held talks in which Caracas reportedly made offers to grant increasing access by U.S. oil bosses to the country's oil wells, refineries and vast reserves. Washington rejected the offers and kidnapped Maduro instead, to be in a stronger position to coerce Caracas into meeting the U.S. rulers' demands and to send a broader message.

"It's clear that they seek to impose themselves through threats, intimidation and force," President Maduro said in a Jan. 1 interview on state TV.

"What's their goal? They've said. To grab Venezuela's oil, gold, and rare earths," he said. "All the cocaine moving in this region is produced in Colombia, we've been victims of the drug trafficking in Colombia, for decades! Everything else is a narrative that no one believes, even in the United States."

Cubans die fighting in Venezuela

Among the dead in the Jan. 3 armed assault were 32 members of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Ministry of the Interior. They died in the bombardment or in fighting alongside Maduro's security detail in an ef-

Statement by Nat'l Committee of Socialist Workers Party

Continued from front page

py and "run the country" for the foreseeable future. These are flagrant violations of Venezuela's national sovereignty and of the desire of the working people of the US to live in peace!

For years the US ruling class has targeted for confiscation Venezuela's oilfields, the largest oil reserves in the world. They have never forgiven Venezuela for nationalizing the oil industry in the 1970s.

For months Washington has assembled a massive air, naval, and troop buildup around Venezuela. The US rulers have imposed what they call "a total and complete blockade of oil tankers entering and leaving the country," including tankers delivering oil to Cuba and China.

The US rulers have repeatedly declared that Venezuela's oil is theirs, based on past decades of imperialist exploitation. Such false claims trample on the right not only of Venezuela but of sovereign states and peoples the world over to freely develop and use their natural resources. That principle is central



Joaquin Hernandez/Xinhua via ZUMA Press

Thousands rallied in Havana Jan. 3 to condemn the ongoing U.S. military aggression violating Venezuela's national sovereignty. Washington is also targeting Cuba's socialist revolution.

fort to prevent the U.S. forces from kidnapping him.

They were publicly honored by the Cuban government. "Victims of a new criminal act of aggression and state terrorism, the combatants knew how to uphold through their heroic actions, the solidarity of millions of compatriots," said a statement Jan. 5.

Tens of thousands of Cubans demonstrated in Havana Jan. 3, calling on working people around the world to mobilize to stop Washington's war drive. The action showed what the U.S. rulers would face if they tried to invade Cuba.

Thousands of Cubans have been part of internationalist missions in Venezuela, working as doctors, teachers and other technical personnel for decades, earning the respect and admiration of millions of Venezuelans. These Cuban workers "feel as their own the attacks committed" against the Venezuelan people, the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Cuba's main trade union federation, said in a Jan. 3 statement. "We express our solidarity with that noble people and we will not stop denounc-

ing before the international community this new military escalation and interference by the U.S. government."

Governments in Mexico, Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America condemned Washington's aggression against Venezuela. Demonstrations against the invasion were held in cities across the U.S. calling for "U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!"

Major labor federations, including the International Trade Union Confederation, the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, and the ITUC's U.S. affiliate, the AFL-CIO, have condemned the U.S. attack.

"We, the trade union movement of the Americas, condemn the military aggression and kidnapping of President Maduro and his partner Cilia Flores, a violation of the sovereignty and integrity of the Venezuelan people and of all Latin America and the Caribbean," the ITUC and TUCA said in a Jan. 3 joint statement.

The AFL-CIO posted the statement, saying, "We join the international labor community in condemning President Trump's unconstitutional actions in Venezuela."



Washington bombing Caracas Jan. 3 as its forces attacked, abducted Venezuela's president, killing scores of people.

‘Sutures Saves Lives’ helps to improve health care in Cuba!

BY JANET POST

The “Sutures Saves Lives” campaign has a goal of raising \$75,000 to send 60,000 medical sutures to Cuba by mid-February. The effort is jointly organized by Global Health Partners and the Saving Lives Campaign. Over 31 years, GHP has sent \$275 million worth of medical supplies to the Cuban people.

“Sutures are the single most requested item by Cuba’s Ministry of Public Health,” Global Health Partners Executive Director Bob Schwartz told the *Militant* Jan. 3. “It’s a difficult situation for doctors when they have to decide whose surgery must be postponed based on the amount of medical supplies they have to work with.”

Washington has inflicted a brutal economic war on Cuba for more than six decades, in response to the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

In 2021 the U.S. government put Cuba on its “State Sponsors of Terrorism” list, a move that flies in the face of Cuba’s provision of medical volunteers and other aid to people in need around the world. This creates a barricade of impossible requirements by the Department of Commerce and the Treasury Department that block shipping supplies to the island and penalize businesses and banks from abroad that engage in trade or financial transactions with Cuba.

“It would be great for Cuba if they could buy supplies just a few miles away in the U.S., like, for example, medicine for insulin-dependent diabetics,” Schwartz said. “But instead it has to cobble together a dozen countries to get the insulin.”

One of the main trauma centers in Havana is at the General Calixto García University Hospital. Schwartz said that during the COVID-19 pandemic the hospital was down to two anesthesia machines, so “we sent 24 more.” Cuba needed 27 million syringes and was using its own COVID vaccine. “We supplied 6 million sy-

ringes to help ensure the entire population could be vaccinated.”

From 2024-25 the Saving Lives Campaign and Global Health Partners “sent 745 pacemakers to Cuba, saving 745 lives,” Schwartz added.

He said they work directly with Cuba’s Ministry of Health, rather than individual doctors, which ensures that the supplies are distributed equally throughout the country’s cities and rural areas based on need.

“We ship 40-foot containers on a regular basis throughout the year, so doctors and hospitals aren’t scrambling. One million dollars of supplies arrived in the Port of Mariel on New Year’s Day.” Many of these are packed by hand by volunteers with LA Hands Off Cuba Committee, Not Just Tourists, and the Pan-American Medical Association, he said.

“After last year’s Hurricane Melissa we sent medical supplies that were distributed throughout the four hardest-hit eastern provinces. Now with the chikungunya virus, we are



Prensa Latina

Global Health Partners Director Bob Schwartz, left, visits Calixto García Hospital in Havana in November 2023. GHP is helping raise \$75,000 to send surgical sutures to Cuba.

providing analgesics, rehydration packets, salts and other medications.”

Schwartz told the *Militant* that Global Health Partners is not just a social service organization, “We are very much a solidarity effort. We’re using this work to help build the anti-embargo movement and to get Cuba off the ‘State Sponsors of Terrorism’ list.”

So far “Sutures Saves Lives” has raised \$50,000 toward its goal. To contribute, send a check payable to Global Health Partners with “Sutures” on the memo line. Mail to Global Health Partners, 39 Broadway, Suite 1540, New York, NY 10006. To pay by debit or credit card, go to <https://ghpartners.org/sutures>.

‘Project 25 for 25,’ free books for youth in Latin America

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum announced the beginning of the “Project 25 for 25” Dec. 17, what will be the free distribution of 2.5 million books to young people aged 15 to 30 across Latin America. Simultaneously, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez did the same in Havana.

The collection of titles by well-known authors throughout the hemisphere involved a number of governments and was advanced by the Fondo de Cultura Económica, a government-funded publishing house based in Mexico.

“The construction of consciousness and collective reflection that a book provides can never be provided by social media,” Sheinbaum said.

The list of titles and authors whose works are being circulated include

Operation Carlota by Gabriel García Márquez; *The Forbidden Stories of Little Thumb* by Roque Dalton; *Weekend in Guatemala* by Miguel Ángel Asturias; *The Fox* by Sergio Ramírez; *The Wonderful Brief Life of Ernesto Guevara* by Eduardo Galeano; and *Geographies* by Mario Benedetti. The authors come from Mexico, Cuba, El Salvador, Uruguay, Colombia and more.

Díaz-Canel hailed the initiative taken by the Mexican president. “‘Project 25 for 25’ was born out of a simple and powerful conviction: the youth of Latin America and the Caribbean deserve to have books in their hands, not just in display cases,” he told a crowd in Havana.

Ever since its triumph 67 years ago, the Cuban Revolution has placed a top priority on raising the cultural level of the workers and peasants, a precondition

to their taking the revolution into their own hands. Fidel Castro, the central leader of the revolution, said, “We don’t tell the people: Believe! We tell them: read!”

“The Cuban Revolution has never ceased to stimulate literary creation and production, from the National Printing House, which became the Cuban Book Institute,” Díaz-Canel said, “and the book campaigns and fairs that, over time, have become authentic celebrations of books and reading throughout the Cuban archipelago.”

This course was at the heart of the 1961 literacy campaign, initiated by Castro, where 100,000 youth from the cities, many in their teens, went to the countryside to teach rural workers and peasants to read and write. And the volunteers got an education themselves from the toilers.

While called “25 for 25,” the number of titles by Latin American authors being freely distributed is actually 27, given the enthusiastic response by the authors or their families to being part of this project.

“Literature is a form of resistance,” Clara Brugada Molina, head of the government in Mexico City, told the crowd there.

“Books are being printed right now in Colombia, in Argentina, in Chile, in Peru and in Mexico,” Paco Ignacio Taibo, director of the Fondo de Cultura Económica, said. “At this moment, there are book distribution events taking place in parallel with this one: in the city of La Plata, in the province of Buenos Aires; in Santiago, Chile”; in Lima, Peru; Havana; Caracas, Venezuela; and elsewhere. The distributions will continue, to youth and to libraries, reading clubs, and, in some countries, to military bases.

Pathfinder titles sell well at Middle East Studies conference

BY ELLEN BERMAN

WASHINGTON — Pathfinder Press was one of over 50 publishers, bookstores and vendors at the Middle Eastern Studies Association conference here Nov. 22-25. Some 1,900 academics, authors and others took part in over 300 workshops and panel discussions. Topics included “Tied Up in Tehran: Women, Social Change, and the Politics of Daily Life in Postrevolutionary Iran,” “Precarity, Academic Freedom and the Profession in a Time of Genocide” and “Bearing Witness: The Transmission of Memory and Truth in Contemporary Algerian Literature and Music.”

“These are interesting books for sure,” said Lening Olivera when he visited the Pathfinder booth on the first day of the conference. He came back on its last day for more discussion. Many conference participants wanted to talk about the major political questions of the day and learn more about a working-class approach to resolving the growing crisis of capitalism worldwide. Several walked away with more than one book.

The international character of the conference was noticeable, with participants from Algeria, Afghanistan, Denmark, Egypt, Iran, Hong Kong, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, U.S. and elsewhere stopping by Pathfinder’s booth.

The prominently displayed books in Arabic and Farsi were a particular attraction. One young student bought copies in both English and Arabic of *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, the leader of the 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso.

Among the top sellers were *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege and Learning under Capitalism* by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes; *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women*; *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*; and *Labor, Nature, and the Evolution of Humanity*. Of the 109 books sold, almost one-third were titles on the fight for women’s emancipation. Two copies of *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class* were

sold. An Israeli Palestinian from the West Bank purchased a copy of *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* as a gift for a friend. “He probably has read an earlier version. I think he will like this very much,” he said.

There was also interest in Pathfinder titles on the Cuban Revolution. Charlie Fong, a student from Hong Kong studying at New York University’s Abu Dhabi campus, grabbed up *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, first in English, and then in Mandarin, for her mother. She said her grandfather was Chinese Cuban and a combatant in the Cuban Revolution.

“Once my grandmother told me about it, I have always been very proud of my grandfather. Now I have a chance to know what he was part of and learn about the Cuban Revolution,” Fong said. She brought several of her friends to the booth, one of whom picked up three Pathfinder titles.

Arlene Rubinstein contributed to this article.

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As fifth year of Putin's invasion of Ukraine nears, Ukrainians resist

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Moscow's assault on Ukraine is about to enter its fifth year, with Russian President Vladimir Putin unable to stamp out the determination of Ukrainian working people to resist. And opposition among working people at home to his war continues to fester.

President Donald Trump is seeking to end hostilities between Kyiv and Moscow in order to advance the U.S. rulers' own interests, with scant regard for Ukraine's right to national sovereignty. He especially hopes to rebuild normal relations with Moscow and to drive a wedge between Putin and the U.S. rulers' main rival, Beijing.

But Washington's invasion of Venezuela and its seizure of President Nicolás Maduro has sharpened tensions between Moscow and Washington. Putin's regime had been advancing close military and political relations with Maduro's government, a key ally in South America. Putin and Maduro signed a strategic partnership pact last May.

Moscow denounced the U.S. invasion of Venezuela as "an unacceptable violation of the sovereignty of an independent state." But Moscow's expressions of concern for "national sovereignty" are a sham. Putin falsely claims Ukraine doesn't exist as an independent nation and is really part of Russia — a pretext he used to launch his invasion.

While the Kremlin has embraced the White House's aim of normalizing relations, it has no intention of halting its war and is trying to gain more advantage on the battlefield at huge cost to both the people of Ukraine and to the Russian soldiers it uses as cannon fodder.

Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, suffered repeated Russian missile and drone strikes on residential neighborhoods and power infrastructure the first week of 2026. Five people were killed Jan. 2, with more than 30 injured. Last year Russian war fatalities hit

a record high. The ethnic republics in more underdeveloped regions of the Russian Federation have borne a disproportionate share of army recruitment quotas and of front-line casualties since the invasion began. The republics of Tyva, Buryatia and Altai have by far the highest number of deaths per capita.

Despite severe repression, Putin has been unable to eradicate opposition to his regime or its policies.

In the southern city of Krasnodar 1,000 residents rallied Dec. 14 to protest plans to build a new church dedicated to the Ukraine war. It would honor Moscow's military forces and serve as a center for the "patriotic education" of young people. Protest organizers made clear they "are not against religion."

Interview with Russian singer

Singer Diana Loginova gave her first interview since fleeing to Armenia. She had been arrested for performing anti-war songs with her band Stoptime to crowds in a main thoroughfare of St. Petersburg last fall. She described her political evolution and treatment by Putin's henchmen to Russian YouTube host Yury Dud.

Loginova said that after the 2022 invasion of Ukraine she had tried to avoid politics. At school she'd performed pro-war songs at the request of her teacher. "I did what I was told," she said.

She was only 14 when Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine. Despite a barrage of nationalistic propaganda, she viewed this as an unprovoked attack on a neighboring country. During nationwide protests in support of jailed opposition politician Alexei Navalny in 2024, and



Mediazona

Diana Loginova, center, of Stoptime street band joins fellow exiled Russian singers, Noize MC, left, and Monetochka, in Vilnius, Lithuania in mid-December. Stoptime trio were jailed last year after anti-war performances in St. Petersburg drew large youth crowd live and online.

especially after Moscow suppressed them, her political outlook began to change, she said.

Last year she founded Stoptime with guitarist Aleksander Orlov and drummer Vladislav Leontyev. "We needed to sing something fresh, something new. Something that people actually listen to but are afraid to admit it in public," she said. They started performing music by artists the Kremlin labeled "foreign agents."

"The songs aren't banned — so I thought, 'What can they do to me?'" Loginova said.

What drew the authorities' attention wasn't simply the songs, but that the performances drew large crowds, both in the streets and online.

The three band members were arrested for "organizing unsanctioned rallies." Authorities were nervous about setting off wider demonstrations as many fellow musicians and thousands of supporters spoke out against their arrests.

When she was initially detained,

authorities threatened to beat other members of the group when they found them if Loginova didn't reveal their whereabouts. They offered her fame and fortune if she apologized and promoted the Kremlin line — backed by the threat of a seven-year prison sentence if she didn't. She didn't back down. After the trio were released, her mother joined her and Orlov as they hastily left for Armenia.

Two weeks after they left, at a concert in Lithuania, Loginova and Orlov sang with Noize MC and the exiled Russian singer Monetochka, so-called foreign agents whose music Stoptime had performed in St. Petersburg.

Russian riot police raided a punk music festival at a Moscow nightclub Jan. 6, forcing concertgoers to lie on the floor while their phones were checked for any opposition or pro-Ukraine material. Those with online anti-war links were pressed to sign contracts with the military. Any who resisted or had subscriptions to Ukrainian channels were beaten.

Mamdani takes office, overturns orders against Jew-hatred

BY TERRY EVANS

New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, took office Jan. 1, pledging his administration would fight "hate across this city, and that includes the scourge of antisemitism." But he made a lie out of this pledge on his very first day in office, signing executive orders to dismantle anything the previous administration had done that was aimed at protecting Jews and defending Israel.

During his campaign, Mamdani refused to condemn calls to "globalize the intifada."

Mamdani overturned all of ex-mayor Eric Adams orders issued after Adams was indicted on corruption charges in September 2024. The new mayor claimed this was necessary to give him a "clean slate," despite the fact a federal judge had thrown out all charges against Adams. Mamdani's action was a cover-up of his real aim — undoing Adams' measures against Jew-hatred.

Mamdani is a prominent backer of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign. He has joined its efforts pressing to get Israel barred from all trade, economic and cultural contact with the rest of the world, a way of aiding Hamas' declared goal of destroying Israel.

One of the orders Mamdani threw

out barred city officials from discriminating "against the state of Israel, Israeli citizens based on their national origin, or individuals or entities based on their association with Israel," in the awarding of city contracts or in any other policy.

"Singling out Israel for sanctions is not the way to make Jewish New Yorkers feel included and safe," a coalition of Jewish groups wrote in response to Mamdani's move.

Mamdani also revoked an Adams order that accepted a definition of antisemitism approved by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. That designation says antisemitism includes "denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of Israel is a racist endeavor."

Another order overturned by Mamdani was one adopted after a mob threatened violence against Jews at the Park East Synagogue in Manhattan Nov. 19. "We need to make them scared," one of the Jew-haters repeatedly told participants.

Following the action, Adams had ordered cops to review "guidance for protection of both houses of worship and persons exercising their right to free assembly and free speech near houses of worship."

As a fig leaf, Mamdani has so far kept open the Office to Combat Anti-

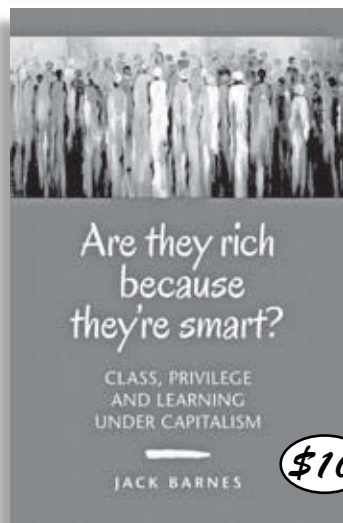
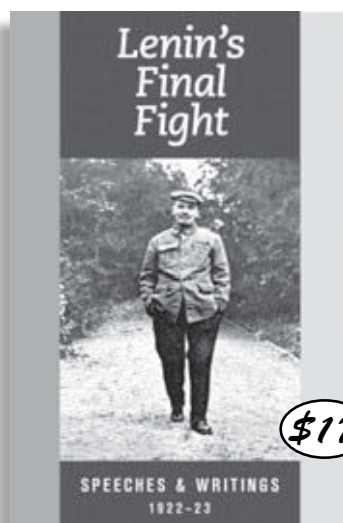
semitism, which was established last May. Many here will be looking to see how he staffs it and what it does.

Several members of Mamdani's transition team have a history of involvement in actions calling for the destruction of Israel. Zakiyeh Shaakir-Ansari, on the youth and education committee, was pictured in 2024 behind a banner with an inverted red triangle — Hamas' symbol for Jews their death squads target.

City University professor Ramzi Kassem was appointed by Mamdani as New York City's chief counsel. In 2024, Kassem worked closely with Jew-hating group Within Our Lifetime as it organized an event to glorify Hamas' bloody Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom that killed 1,200 people and wounded thousands more in Israel.

The new administration has unapologetically stripped away measures aimed at dealing with the marked rise in deadly Jew-hating assaults in the U.S. and worldwide. It has thrown out measures backing Israel, as it continues the fight to prevent Hamas from destroying the one state that offers Jews a refuge.

The new city administration is building on Mamdani's election campaign, which aimed to normalize Jew-hatred within capitalist politics. Its first actions should be opposed by workers and our unions.



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Memorial to Chinese destroyed

Continued from front page

on the other side of the waterway.

The mayor, Stefany Peñalba, said it was done because the memorial had posed a “structural risk” and they had to “protect tourists.” When she raised the idea of “replacing” the monument with a park some months before, the Chinese Association of Panama offered instead to organize and finance any needed repairs to preserve the structures. Their offer was ignored.

The overnight destruction of a monument honoring the contribution of the Chinese was denounced not just by Chinese groups, but by community organizations all around Panama, cultural and civil liberties organizations, and even the president of Panama. “For us as Panamanians of Chinese descent, it’s painful. For all Panamanians, it’s painful,” Tony Jiang, the president of the Fayen Beneficial Society, said.

The destruction took place as the fight between the rulers in Washington and Beijing over control of the canal is escalating.

The Chinese presence in Panama, the largest in Central America, dates back 171 years. In 1854 the Panama Railroad Company, based in New York, brought in 700 Chinese men to labor building a railroad across the 50-mile isthmus. Thousands more Chinese contract workers were imported to work on an unsuccessful French effort to build a canal in the 1880s and on the U.S.-run canal construction between 1904 and 1914. The Chinese worked along-

side a larger number of West Indian contract workers, the descendants of African slaves.

The Panama Canal was the deadliest construction project in modern history. Working conditions were brutal in every way. Nearly 30,000 laborers died — from disease, dynamite explosions and other “accidents,” hunger and suicide. Several thousand were Chinese.

The Chinese who survived often intermarried with the black Panamanians alongside whom they worked and lived. Their offspring were joined by other Chinese immigrants in the 20th century. Today 300,000 Panamanians, roughly 7% of the population of Panama, are of Chinese ancestry.



Chinese park, monument near Bridge of the Americas were demolished despite protests by Chinese community Dec. 27. Monument built in 2004 paid tribute to thousands of Chinese laborers who died building first railroad crossing the Isthmus of Panama and Panama Canal.

SWP in 1938: self-determination for colonial peoples

Below is an excerpt, “Colonial peoples,” from the Declaration of Principles adopted by the Socialist Workers Party’s founding convention in 1938. It shows the party’s political continuity in the fight against U.S. imperialism’s assault on the national sovereignty of the people in Venezuela and throughout Latin America today. The entire text can be found in The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 1982 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

United States imperialism, exploiting the masses within its national boundaries, at the same time and to

an even greater degree, exploits the peoples of Latin and Central America, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Liberia, the Philippines. These people are thus the potential allies of the American workers in the struggle against U.S. imperialism, and neither they nor the American workers can expect to win freedom except in joint combat against the common enemy. The SWP supports every progressive struggle of these peoples. It stands for the immediate and unhampered right of self-determination for them, free from military, political, or economic intervention or pressure by the U.S. government. It stands for the imme-

diate and unconditional independence of all the territories, colonies, and dependencies of the U.S. and for the withdrawal of all troops from them. It is opposed to any attempt by American imperialism, open or masked, to infringe upon the right of self-determination of any nation or people.

The revolutions in the colonies, semicolonies, and spheres of influence of United States imperialism are integrally and reciprocally related to the revolutionary struggle against that imperialism at home. A successful revolution in the United States would be decisive for the emancipation of the toiling masses throughout Latin America; while, on the other hand, a revolution beginning in one of the Latin American countries, or in one of the colonies or semicolonies of the U.S., could spread throughout the continent and powerfully accelerate the development of the class struggle and the revolution within the United States. The SWP regards it, therefore, as a central task to aid and support the revolutionary movement in these nations and colonies, and to establish the closest relations with the revolutionists and revolutionary organizations within them.

1989: U.S. rulers invade Panama, seize the president

The sizable U.S. military assault that captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro Jan. 3 was the culmination of months of escalating war moves by Washington. President Donald Trump says his administration will now “run” the country and seize the profits of its oil industry, in flagrant violation of Venezuela’s national sovereignty. These war moves are driven by the U.S. rulers’ need to shore up their domination in what they regard as “their” hemisphere.

This is not new in the history of Washington’s intervention in Latin America. Exactly 36 years ago to the day, the U.S. rulers carried out a similar assault on the government and people of Panama, arresting and imprisoning the country’s president, Manuel Noriega. Below is an excerpt from the Pathfinder pamphlet, Panama: The Truth About the U.S. Invasion by Cindy Jaquith, Don Rojas, Nils Castro and Fidel Castro. Copyright © 1990 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

On December 20, 1989, millions of working people throughout the Americas awoke to the news that United States military forces had invaded Panama during the night.

At 1:00 a.m., U.S. officials held a secret ceremony at Fort Clayton, one of the thirteen U.S. military bases in the canal zone. There Guillermo Endara was declared Panama’s new president. Moments later, massive bombing of Panama City began. U.S. troops then

mounted a savage assault on military bases and working-class neighborhoods. Washington’s forces eventually reached 26,000, including the 12,000 troops stationed there prior to December 20.

Panama’s working people were the chief victims of Washington’s brutal assault. In the first days of the invasion, thousands of civilians were killed, wounded, and left homeless. Whole neighborhoods were bombed into rubble or burned to the ground. U.S. troops prevented many of the wounded from receiving emergency medical care, and the lack of even the most basic medical supplies and facilities led to many deaths. Panamanian victims were poured by the truckload into common graves. Over 5,000 people were rounded up and held in detention.

Resistance to the invasion was led by Panama’s working people, organized in the Dignity Battalions. Though vilified by Washington and the big-business media as “thugs” and “looters,” these battalions were in fact popular militias set up in 1988 to help prepare Panama’s workers and farmers to defend their country against exactly what occurred: a U.S. invasion. Although most combat had ended by the second week of the invasion, the resistance led by the Dignity Battalions proved much stiffer than the Pentagon had bargained for.

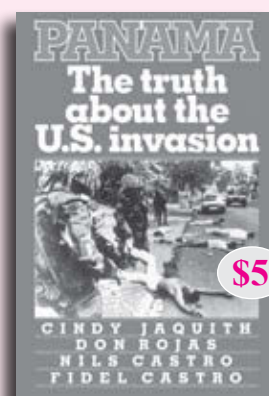
Two weeks after the invasion, the U.S. occupation force seized Gen. Manuel Noriega, Panama’s head of state, flew him to the United States

against his will, and jailed him. Washington has announced its intention to put him on trial in Miami. This arrogant move is in gross violation of Panamanian sovereignty, as well as all norms of international law.

Washington used the invasion to escalate provocations against Cuba and Nicaragua as well. The embassies of these two countries in Panama City were surrounded by U.S. troops. At one point several Cuban diplomats were illegally detained. On December 29, U.S. forces raided and ransacked the residence of Nicaragua’s ambassador.

In the days and weeks following the invasion, actions protesting Washington’s assault took place in many U.S. cities, as well as throughout Latin America and in dozens of other countries around the world. In particular, many anti-imperialist fighters in the Caribbean spoke out against the violation of their sister country. ...

The truth is that after several years of trying to overthrow Panama’s government using everything from economic sanctions to coup attempts, Washington finally decided that only direct military intervention could accomplish what it wanted. Its aim was to install a client regime, smash the movement for national sovereignty and social justice that had developed in Panama over the previous twenty years, undermine the Panama Canal treaties, ensure the use of U.S. military bases in the country, and strengthen U.S. domination throughout the region.



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Protests in Iran grow, spread

Continued from front page

worsened by the regime's allocation of significant funds to build missiles and weapons for future attacks on Israel.

The value of Iran's currency has dropped at least 40% since the 12-day war between Israel and the regime in June. While official inflation is around 42% annually, food inflation is at 72% and bread 113%.

Khamenei: Put rioters in their place

Desperately trying to quell the actions, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei admitted Jan. 3 that the shopkeepers were being battered by inflation. He claimed the currency crisis, the protests and the clashes with the cops and regime thugs were largely the work of "enemies" of the Islamic Republic — Israel and Washington. "We talk to the protesters," Khamenei threatened. "But there is no benefit to talking to rioters. The rioters must be put in their place."

By the 10th day there had been protests at more than 250 locations in at least 27 of Iran's 31 provinces and at 17 universities. At least 29 protesters have been killed and more than 1,200 arrested. Many of those killed are teenagers.

According to numerous reports, members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps forcibly entered Khomeini Hospital in Ilam Jan. 4 where medical workers were attending to protesters wounded earlier at a demonstration of thousands in nearby Malekshahi, a mostly Kurdish area. The thugs broke windows, fired tear gas and beat health care workers, patients and family members.

The Teachers' Association of Aligudarz, a town in Lorestan province, condemned the attack. "Hospitals and medical centers are supposed to be safe spaces," it said.

Jobs, marriage out of reach for youth

Poverty, corruption, "unemployment and rampant inflation have caused despair and rebellion among the people of this land," the association noted. "Jobs, marriage and housing have become unattainable dreams for the young. They have put their lives and bodies on the line and taken to the streets to express their demands."

Working people in Iran and many news reports compare this wave of protests with three previous ones: working-class protests that swept some 90 cities and towns from December 2017 into 2018; similar actions that broke out in November 2019 after the government announced an increase in gasoline prices; and the several months of protests starting in September 2022 after Zhina Amini, a young Kurdish woman, died after she was arrested by the hatred "morality" police for allegedly violating the reactionary dress code for women.

"The current protests are not nearly as widespread" as those actions, the *New York Times* said Jan. 5. And key organized sections of the working class, oil workers and truck drivers, while sympathetic, have not joined the latest anti-regime protests, at least so far.

Like the earlier waves, these protests are fueled by opposition to the regime's attempts to extend its reactionary influence throughout the Middle East, aimed at the destruction of Israel and the elimination of the Jews there; its repression of

basic democratic rights and its attempt to push the capitalist economic crisis on the backs of working people.

This time a popular chant has been "Not Gaza, not Lebanon, I give my life for Iran," a reflection of the opposition to being used as cannon fodder.

Protests in places 'never heard of'

One difference this time is that many of the protests are in small towns, where there had not previously been significant actions. "The government's repression is even more intense in the more deprived areas," noted Strengthening the Nation, a Farsi-language internet site. "In places that many of us may not have even heard of, hundreds of people take to the streets and the officers shoot at them."

Azna, a town in Lorestan province of roughly 50,000 people with little history of protest — mostly from the Lur minority — is a good example. The demonstrations there started peacefully Jan. 1. According to the IranWire news site, at first "the slogans were purely about livelihoods." Then the "repressive forces" started shooting live ammunition and tear gas, killing several young people.

"The killing of these kids made people extremely angry," one person told IranWire. "They pushed the repressive forces back toward the police station and set it on fire." By then the slogans had



Thousands take to the streets in Borujerd in Lorestan province in Iran Jan. 7, as protests continue to spread. By the 10th day, protests had taken place in more than 250 locations nationwide. Oil workers from two refineries joined an action at Kangan port in Bushehr province.

changed to "Death to Khamenei."

Thousands turned out for the Jan. 2 funeral for Khodadad Shirvani in Marvdasht, a city in Fars province with a population of just 150,000. Shirvani was killed at a protest the day before. Most of those who live in this area surrounded by small farms are from the ethnic Persian majority.

Along with open brutality the regime is also trying to quell the protests by announcing Jan. 5 that it will provide a monthly payment of 1 million toman — roughly \$7 — to most Iranians to

help ease the economic crisis.

"They want to give people 1 million toman each," a truck driver said on the internet site of the Association of Truckers and Drivers Unions, "because of the protests. On the other hand, what are transportation, supplies and food supposed to cost? With 1 million they've made fools of the people. An hour ago I went shopping, just a 10-kilo bag of rice, not counting chicken or meat, plus a few small items — by God it came to 12 million toman."

The protests are continuing.

Hamas looks to destroy Israel, oppresses Palestinians in Gaza

BY SETH GALINSKY

Determined to resume its drive to destroy Israel and eliminate all the Jews there, Hamas is using the U.S.-imposed ceasefire in Gaza to reestablish its dictatorship, attacking any Gazan who challenges its rule.

On Jan. 4 Hamas thugs kidnapped Majed Abdeen Abu Nabeel, his mother reports. Abu Nabeel is a supporter of the Palestinian Authority. "I still do not know where my son is," she posted on Facebook the next day.

As it has since taking control of Gaza in 2006, the Nazi-like group is once again putting its command posts and armories inside hospitals and schools, planning to create more civilian "martyrs" in future battles with Israel it can use as a propaganda weapon.

Moumen al-Natour, who helped lead

protests inside Gaza last year where thousands took to the streets demanding "Hamas, out! Out!" told Jusoor News the thug outfit is setting up its operation and "police" centers in civilian facilities in Gaza and in "all the schools." One of the ways it finances its operations is by taking much of the humanitarian aid delivered in areas under its control and selling it, he said.

The *Militant* reported last week that a new Hamas document, "Our Narrative ... Al-Aqsa Flood: Two Years of Steadfastness and the Will for Liberation," covers up the truth about the anti-Jewish pogrom that Hamas death squads carried out in Israel on Oct. 7, 2023 — from the murder of 1,200 people, mostly Jewish civilians, to the rape and mutilation of dozens of women.

Despite videos that the Hamas thugs themselves took and posted to their internet sites, showing them brutalizing and murdering civilians, the "Narrative" says this is just Israeli lies.

The report claims Hamas is fighting for the Palestinian people and their "sovereignty over their land and self-determination." Nothing could be further from the truth.

In the 41-page report, Hamas does not mention workers or the working class, or farmers or fishermen. It does not talk about labor or labor unions. It says not a word about women's rights, religious freedom or democratic rights.

Just like the Nazis in Germany, Hamas uses Jew-hatred to block working people from organizing independently of the capitalist class and fighting for their interests on the road to taking political power.

Hamas is opposed to labor unions organizing workers to fight for their rights and going on strike against capi-

talist bosses, to small farmers fighting to their right to land and credit. It is opposed to equal rights for women and practices violence against gays. It imposed laws restricting unmarried women from even traveling by themselves without a male overseer.

Despite the massive destruction in Gaza — a result of Hamas basing itself inside and underneath schools, homes, hospitals, mosques and U.N. facilities — there is not a word in the report about rebuilding the territory to meet the needs of Palestinians there.

Hamas could not have prepared for and carried out the Oct. 7 pogroms without financing, training and encouragement from the reactionary regime in Tehran, much less have built the fortified tunnel system through the territory that rivals the size of the New York City subway. Capitalist ruling families in the Middle East — including in Algeria, Sudan, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates — also help fund and promote Hamas.

That's because a dominant wing of the capitalist classes see the demonization of Israel and the fomenting of Jew-hatred as useful in diverting the attention of the working classes in their own countries from the real source of the crisis they face — the capitalist system. Instead they say, "Blame Israel, blame the Jews."

The last thing the capitalist rulers from Egypt and Turkey to Iraq and beyond want to see is workers of different nationalities and religious beliefs — Arabs, Kurds, Druze, Jews, immigrants — coming together in defense of their common class interests.

That's why Hamas must be defeated and dismantled. The only force currently able to do so is the Israel Defense Forces.

Recommended reading



pathfinderpress.com

Stalinist Popular Front led to defeat of revolution in Spain

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain by Felix Morrow is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The Spanish Revolution was an uprising by workers and peasants against Gen. Francisco Franco's 1936 military coup, backed by landlords and capitalists. The reformist Socialist and Communist parties collaborated with bourgeois forces in a Popular Front coalition government. The republican side in the civil war, crippled by the lack of a revolutionary leadership to fight for a workers and farmers government, was defeated by Franco's fascist forces in 1939. This made the outbreak of World War II inevitable. This excerpt, about events in July 1936, is from Chapter 7, "Counter-revolution and dual power." Copyright © 1974 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FELIX MORROW

Rather than arm the workers — their allies in the People's Front, who had put them into power! — [Manuel] Azaña and the republicans were preparing to make peace with the fascists, at the expense of the workers. Had Azaña carried out his plan, the fascists would have conquered Spain.

But in the very hours that the ministers huddled together in the presidential palace, the proletariat was already



Workers militia in Spain in 1930s. Trotsky said victory would advance socialist revolution across Europe, be blow to fascist reaction, imperialism's march to world war. But struggles of workers, farmers were sabotaged by Stalinist class-collaborationist bloc with capitalist parties.

mobilizing. In Madrid itself the Socialist Youth militia was distributing its scant store of arms; was throwing up barricades on key streets and around the Montaña barracks; was organizing its patrols for house to house seizures of reactionaries; at midnight had launched the first attack on the barracks. In Barcelona ... the C.N.T. [National Confederation of Labor] and P.O.U.M. ("Workers Party") militants had stormed several government arms depots on the afternoon of the 18th. By the time the garrison revolted, at one the next morning, the armed workers had surrounded the troops in an iron ring, arming eager recruits with equipment seized from the fascists, and with whatever could be confiscated from the department stores; later the militia seized the regular arsenals.

The Asturian miners had outfitted a column of six thousand for a march on Madrid, before the ministerial crisis was well over. In Malaga, the strategic port opposite Morocco, the ingenious workers, unarmed, had surrounded the reactionary garrison with a wall of gasoline-fired houses and barricades. In Valencia, refused arms by the Madrid governor, the workers prepared to face the troops with barricades, cobblestones and kitchen-knives — until their comrades within the garrison shot the officers and gave arms to the workers. In a word: without so much as a by your leave to the government, the proletariat

had begun a war to the death against the fascists. [Catalan President Lluís] Companys and Azaña found themselves confronted by the first regiments of the Red Army of the Spanish proletariat.

The Azaña-Barrio scheme for a deal with the fascist generals collapsed because the workers had prevented it. And for no other reason! Thanks only to their utter distrust of the government, the masses were able to prevent their betrayal. Independent mobilization, under their own leadership, with their own banners — only this prevented the victory of fascism.

Thus it was that, side by side with the formal power still held by the government, there arose the "unofficial" but far more substantial power of the armed proletariat — the "dual power," Lenin called it. One power, that of Azaña and Companys, was already too weak to challenge the existence of the other; the other, that of the armed proletariat, was not yet strong enough, not yet conscious enough of the necessity, to dispense with the existence of the other. The phenomenon of "dual power" has accompanied all proletarian revolutions; it signifies that the class struggle is about to reach the point where either one or the other must become undisputed master; it is a critical balancing of alternatives on a razor edge; a long period of equilibrium is out of the question, either one or the other must soon prevail!

The crushing of the counter-revolu-

tion will make infinitely more likely the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government. The interests of the bourgeoisie are not, therefore, served by a victory over the fascist generals: the true interests of Spanish capitalism lie in a victory of the counter-revolution or, what is the same thing, a compromise with it. That is why the People's Front government behaved so treacherously in the first days of the counter-revolution. That is why the People's Front government continued to behave treacherously thereafter. Surrounded by armed workers, the republicans dared not openly go over to the enemy; but their policy, at the front and in the rear, permitted the counter-revolution success after success. ...

On July 30, only a few days after the struggle began, [Leon] Trotsky dealt ... with the meaning of the Spanish events for France. ...

"Certainly, the Spanish proletariat, like the French proletariat, does not want to remain disarmed before Mussolini and Hitler. But to defend themselves against these enemies it is first necessary to crush the enemy in one's own country. ... In every victorious counter-revolution, the officers have played the decisive role. Every victorious revolution that had a profound social character destroyed the old officers' corps. This was the case in the Great French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, and this was the case in the October Revolution in 1917.

"To decide on such a measure one must stop crawling on one's knees before the Radical bourgeoisie. A genuine alliance of workers and peasants must be created against the bourgeoisie, including the Radicals. One must have confidence in the strength, initiative and courage of the proletariat and the proletariat will know how to bring the soldier over to its side. This will be a genuine and not a fake alliance of workers, peasants and soldiers. This very alliance is being created and tempered right now in the fire of civil war in Spain. The victory of the people means the end of the People's Front and the beginning of Soviet Spain. The victorious social revolution in Spain will inevitably spread out over the rest of Europe. For the Fascist hangmen of Italy and Germany it will be incomparably more terrible than all the diplomatic pacts and all the military alliances."

January
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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10 The Militant January 19, 2026

‘There is no peace!’ Threat of war grows

“The crisis of capitalism today is driving the imperialist powers toward a new and even more devastating third world war,” explains the Socialist Workers Party National Committee in its Jan. 3 statement “Condemn Washington’s Attack on Venezuela’s Sovereignty! US Out Now!” printed on the front page.

The imperialist epoch was announced by the U.S. victory in the Spanish-American war and its seizure of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines at the end of the 19th century. It has been marked by ferocious competition among national ruling classes for markets, resources and labor, with persistent deadly wars of conquest and world wars. With the world already divided among a handful of the strongest powers, the only way it can be redivided is through a new worldwide imperialist slaughter.

Between 70 million and 85 million working people were killed in the last world war.

In the course of capitalism’s financial breakdowns, social catastrophes and wars, Jew-hatred becomes a crucial issue for the working class — from the Nazi’s Holocaust during World War II to Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel and the recent murders of Jews in Australia. Contrary to the illusions spread by the U.S. capitalist rulers, Jew-hating violence will be promoted most virulently by the strongest imperialist powers.

The promotion of Jew-hatred and fascist thuggery is tied to the rulers’ response to expanding union and

working-class struggles, to workers’ growing class consciousness and to the forging of proletarian parties capable of leading the fight to end capitalist rule.

With the deepening crisis of capitalism, it’s impossible for the rival imperialist rulers to bring peace to the world. “There Is No Peace” was the *Militant’s* banner headline when World War II ended after the U.S. rulers’ nuclear destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. We told the unvarnished truth about the imperialist epoch.

Today there is no rival power capable of replacing Washington’s waning worldwide supremacy. Each of the world’s capitalist governments are tied together in their decline, as conflicts among them sharpen.

After letting their armed forces decay for years, governments across Europe are rushing to expand their militaries. Washington’s invasion of Venezuela was followed by President Donald Trump’s renewed threats to take control of Greenland. And the U.S. rulers are stepping up threats against Cuba, hoping to crush its socialist revolution.

The Cuban Revolution shows there is an alternative to a future of fascism and world war. It shows that with leadership, working people are capable of taking power and wielding it in the interests of the toilers worldwide. The deeper the crisis of the imperialist system, the more the U.S. rulers fear that example.

Working people need to study and emulate what was accomplished by the workers and farmers of Cuba. Led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, they overturned the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1959. Defying the dictates of Washington, working people took control of Cuba’s factories, banks and fields and began running society to meet human needs, not capitalist profits. And in the process they transformed themselves, joining struggles against imperialist oppression from Vietnam to Guinea-Bissau.

As the *Militant* explained in 1945, “Only world socialism can save mankind from atomic destruction in another imperialist war.” Proletarian parties can and must be built in the course of today’s union battles and the deeper struggles to come, and in the fight against the U.S. rulers’ war moves, from Venezuela to wherever their next predatory intervention takes place. Be part of that fight. Join the Socialist Workers Party!



Militant told unvarnished truth about imperialist epoch at end of World War II after U.S. rulers unleashed nuclear slaughter on Japan.

LETTERS

Nissen Huts

When we visited Cyprus, we went to the Jewish Museum, where the exhibit — “The Nissen Hut” — shows a tin hut and a small reproduction of the detention camps the British Army used to house the thousands of Jewish captives in Cyprus who were fleeing Europe to prevent them from reaching Palestine. The huts are named after Canadian engineer Lt. Col. Peter Nissen, who designed them during World War I. The British also blocked U.S. boats carrying Jews to Palestine.

There were a total of 12 camps which operated from August 1946 to January 1949, holding some 53,000 people in all. Over 2,200 children were born in the camps. There were five summer camps in tents and seven winter camps in the Nissen huts. There was no shade at all in the camps.

The British Army prevented 35 boats from entering Haifa during this time, in some cases putting bombs in the engine rooms to stop them. A report in the museum from the *New York Times* on Aug. 19, 1946, headlines that “Tear Gas and Fire Hoses Drive Refugees onto Transfer Crafts” and contin-

ues that “1,000 Jews Riot in Island Camp.” It says the Jewish refugees at Caraolos Camp after being refused admittance to Palestine rioted, unfurled their national flag and yelled at the British Guards, “Kill us. We want to go to Palestine.”

One of the exhibits shows the escape attempts made by the detained Jews. In one week it was reported by the Jewish Telegraph agency that 100 Jewish detainees succeeded in escaping from Cyprus. The British engineers blew up a secret tunnel after they had previously pumped 340,000 gallons of water into the subterranean passage without wrecking it. Local Cypriots reportedly helped some Jews escape and make the crossing to Palestine in small boats.

Joyce Fairchild, Antonis Partasis
London, England

NALC should be commended

I commend the postal union and the National Association of Letter Carriers for their courageous stand against ICE at local post offices in Minneapolis. As a letter carrier, I can empathize with the shock and dismay that would

be felt if someone used my postal parking lot as a place to detain, harass, and deport fellow workers who happen to be immigrants.

“Postal union protests gov’t using post offices to launch ICE raids,” headlined an article in the Dec. 29 *Militant*. It is a disgrace that ICE is resorting to such tactics, attacking our fellow working men and women. These raids on working people are despicable, and many of these individuals are ordinary, U.S. citizens.

This power grab by the ruling class against working immigrants who are in the United States, most legally, is an abomination against working people everywhere. Workers of the world must rise up against this tyranny, and I am most glad that the *Militant* is actively fighting for justice.

Curtis Roessler
West Hartford, Connecticut

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Ohio SWP: ‘Solidarity with Venezuela, Cuba!’



John Hawkins, left, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, talks with Amazon worker Tayvon Satcher in Cincinnati Jan. 6.

BY BETSY FARLEY

CINCINNATI — Campaigning door to door at the Montana Valley Apartments here Jan. 6, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, John Hawkins, met 20-year-old Amazon worker Tayvon Satcher.

“My campaign stands in solidarity with Venezuela,” Hawkins said. “We say the U.S. government has no right to invade a sovereign country, kidnap its president and take its oil.”

Satcher said his sister, who recently enlisted in the U.S. Navy, is in the Caribbean right now. “When we talked by phone a couple of weeks ago, she said they were chasing drug dealers,” he said.

“Now everyone knows the real aims of U.S. imperialism — to get control of the vast oil reserves and other natural resources, not only in Venezuela, but in Greenland, all of the Western Hemisphere and more,” Hawkins explained. “Working people here have nothing to gain from Washington’s military aggression.”

Satcher nodded. “None of this helps workers here,” he said.

“The U.S. assault is aimed at Cuba as well,” Hawkins said, describing how ever since workers and peasants took power and reorganized society in their own interests there, both Democratic and Republican administrations have sought to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. And, for completely different reasons, they want to deal blows to China, one of their largest capitalist competitors.”

Satcher got two issues of the *Militant* newspaper, saying he was looking forward to learning more about what can be done to stop the U.S. war drive against Venezuela.

Hawkins also had joined a protest of some 75 people in front of Cincinnati City Hall Jan. 3.

The Low Point of Labor Resistance Is Behind Us

The Socialist Workers Party Looks Forward

The global order imposed by the victors of World War II is shattering with explosive ramifications for workers and farmers worldwide. A decadeslong retreat by the working class and unions has come to an end. More and more workers are saying, “Enough is enough!”

They’ve begun to wield the collective power of the exploited producers in response.

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