

THE MILITANT

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break out into open warfare
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 90/NO. 11 MARCH 23, 2026

Letter from the editor: Join the SWP in expanding reach of the ‘Militant,’ books, fund drive

We’re inviting you to join the Socialist Workers Party’s spring campaign to expand the reach of the *Militant*, the SWP’s candidates for office, books by revolutionary working-class leaders, and to win contributions to this year’s Militant Fighting Fund. The eight-week effort runs March 14 to May 12.

The campaign takes place as Washington has launched a bloody war against Iranian sovereignty, stepped up efforts to overthrow Cuba’s socialist revolution and invaded Venezuela to kidnap its president, Nicolás Maduro, and Cilia Flores. The U.S. bosses’ war moves reflect the deepening rivalries among capitalist rulers worldwide that threaten a third world war. This mounting aggression deals blows to the desire of the working class to live in peace.

The only force that can stay these attacks is working people advancing
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Get all US bombers, troops, warships out of the Mideast!



Cruise missiles launched from U.S. warship against targets in Iran Feb. 28. Washington says its massive bombardment hit over 5,500 sites, including 60 Iranian warships by March 11.

Stop Washington’s assault on the sovereignty of Iran

BY SETH GALINSKY

Washington’s actions make clear that its massive use of air and naval power against Iran has nothing to do with aiding the peoples of that country nor defending Israel as a refuge for Jews and has everything to do with advancing the
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Israel fights a defensive war against Tehran rulers

BY SETH GALINSKY

In response to Washington’s assault and Israel’s defensive blows, the reactionary regime in Tehran has fired more than 200 ballistic missiles at Israel since Feb. 28, killing at least 12 people, injuring more than 1,200 and severely damaging over 3,100 homes. Many of the missiles — some with cluster munitions that split midair and disperse small bomblets across a 5-mile radius — de-
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US hands off Cuba! End Washington’s oil blockade!

BY RÓGER CALERO

The U.S. imperialist rulers are stepping up their suffocating oil blockade against the Cuban people and their threats to overturn Cuba’s socialist revolution, as the White House boasts about the “lethality” and “prowess” of the U.S. military in its bombing of Iran.

Cuba is “going to fall pretty soon,” President Donald Trump told CNN March 6. He was repeating the prediction that every U.S. president has tried to make a reality since Cuban workers and farmers took state power Jan. 1, 1959.

“We want to finish this one [Iran] first,” he said a day earlier. But it’s “just a question of time, and a lot of unbelievable people are going to be going back to Cuba,” Trump said, turning to Jorge José Mas, a Cuban American billionaire businessman. His father, Jorge Mas Canosa, was the chairman of the Cuban American National Foundation, a rightist organization dedicated to overthrowing the Cuban Revolution.

“That’s going to be a great day,” Trump said, claiming the Cuban government “wants to make a deal so
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Havana event features the African independence struggle, Cuba’s aid



Cuban and Guinean combatants during Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde war for independence. In fighting together “we became brothers,” said Cuban internationalist Alfonso Pérez Morales.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA — “This book is especially important right now,” said Cuban revolutionary leader Víctor Dreke. “It

brought down the entire Portuguese empire in Africa in the mid-1970s.

And it reminds us, he said, of the Cuban internationalist fighters who

Book shows how struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde brought down Portugal’s colonial empire in Africa — page 8

reminds us of the struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde — small countries,” he emphasized, whose victory

joined them, including “those of you sitting in this room today.”

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Join ‘Militant’ fight to overturn ban by prison officials in Florida

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The *Militant* is winning growing support in its fight to overturn the ban of three consecutive issues by prison authorities at the Taylor Correctional Institution in Perry, Florida. The

state-run prison impounded issues nos. 4, 5, and 6, objecting to front-page articles from Minneapolis reporting on demonstrations to defend immigrant rights and the need for a disciplined, labor-led fight for amnesty for workers in the U.S. without government-approved papers.

The ban is a violation of the constitutional rights of workers behind bars to receive and read a newspaper of their choice, to form their own politi-
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Protests hit US threats of war against Cuba

BY ROY LANDERSEN

NEWARK, N.J. — Chanting “U.S. hands off Cuba!” and “Cuba sí, bloqueo no!” some 35 people joined a picket line at Military Park here March 8. The action — one of a growing number across the country and around the world — was called by the New York/New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition and co-sponsored by a range of organizations whose representatives spoke. Protesters called for an end to Washington’s oil blockade of Cuba.

“Cuba unites us, whatever our dif-
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Ottawa steps up attacks on rights of immigrant workers

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Over the last year, the Liberal Canadian government of Mark Carney has proposed two new laws that attack the rights and conditions of immigrants, Bills C-2 and C-12. Bill C-2, introduced earlier, is named the Strong Borders Act. These laws aim to limit the right of immigrants to file for asylum, as well as open the door for deportation of whole classes of people.

After widespread protests against the Strong Borders Act, the government introduced C-12, which contains many of the same anti-immigrant measures while omitting some that had drawn the sharpest criticism. Both bills are still pending.

On immigration matters, “this new bill is the same as Bill C-2,” Karen Cocq, co-executive director of the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, told the press. “No one’s safety is served by measures that block refugees from hearings, impose retroactive time limits on safety, and grant mass status-cancellation powers that violate due-process protections for the most vulnerable.”

Dozens of organizations, including union and immigrant rights groups, have spoken out against the two proposed laws. On June 18, 2025, a statement was issued by 176 organizations calling for withdrawal of Bill C-2. Signers included the Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, United Church of Canada, Oxfam Canada and Migrant Rights Network.

The statement called for allowing permanent residency for all. A statement calling for withdrawal of C-12 was issued Oct. 14 by a broad coalition

of groups, including Amnesty International, International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group and several women’s rights organizations.

The Canadian government is pushing to strip legal protection away from the rapidly expanding number of immigrant workers. Ottawa is refusing to renew thousands of work permits granted in recent years.

The goal of the ruling Canadian capitalist families is not to stop immigration. They need a certain pace of cheaper immigrant labor. Their aim is to create a pariah layer of workers with less legal protection, and to set immigrant workers against workers in Canada with papers, to divide and weaken the working class. They see this as more important today, as competition among bosses and between capitalist powers is deepening.

More immigrant workers

In 2023 over 1 million immigrants entered Canada — more than in any year since 1867. Many have come on temporary work permits. It is estimated that 1.9 million of these permits will expire this year. The Feb. 6 *Globe and Mail* says there could be 2 million workers without papers in Canada by the end of 2026. Many will be forced to work underground and face even greater exploitation.

One type of permit — called closed permit — ties workers to one particular employer. If they stop working for that boss, they’re subject to deportation. This has led to all kinds of intimidation and abuses of immigrant workers.

Workers under these conditions, especially in agriculture, are subject to



Militant/Katy LeRougetel

More than 1,000 marchers in Montreal joined with actions across Quebec Feb. 7 protesting gov’t attacks on status of immigrant workers. Union contingents, banners marked the protests.

wage theft, physical and sexual abuse, and denial of protective equipment. Complaints to the police about dangerous and abusive conditions are ignored.

A Sept. 23 statement, supported by major unions here and other groups, calls for putting an end to closed permits. The groups “demand that the government respect migrant workers’ dignity and rights by granting them open work permits, which allow workers to freely change jobs.”

Members of the Hospital Employees’ Union marched April 17 in front of Surrey Memorial Hospital in Vancouver, British Columbia, protesting the threatened deportation of fellow workers whose permits were running out. The union says it can’t afford to lose essential health care workers since they already face serious staffing shortages. A February poll in Quebec found that 83% opposed deporting temporary immigrants who are working.

In Quebec, the provincial government has abolished the Quebec Experience Program (PEQ), a way for immigrants to get permanent residency, the last step before citizenship. Thousands of workers now face deportation. This has led to several protests, including by a new coalition called “Quebec is us too,” that brought out thousands in eight cities Feb. 7, with over 1,000 in Montreal alone.

Several unions, including the major labor federations — Confederation of National Trade Unions, Quebec Federa-

tion of Labour and Quebec Union Centre — took part.

There were a record 22,000 deportations last year, a significant increase. Some who have been denied extension of their permits are now applying for asylum. Only 14% for those on temporary resident visas and 20% of those on student visas have had their applications approved.

“The unity of the working class, regardless of where we are born, is a life-and-death question,” Joe Young, the Communist League candidate for Quebec’s National Assembly in the St. Laurent riding and a member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, told the *Militant*. “Permanent residency for all! End all deportations!”



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Cuban border guards stop armed assault from Florida

Armed counterrevolutionaries in a boat from Florida packed with weapons fired on border guards off Cuba’s coast Feb. 25. Cuban officers fired back, killing four and wounding six, while defending Cuba’s sovereignty and the lives and security of the Cuban people.



Cubadebate/Abel Padrón Padilla
Boat from Florida approached Cuban coast Feb. 25 packed with weapons, ammunition.

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Pakistan-Afghanistan clashes break out into open warfare

BY TERRY EVANS

Longstanding border clashes between Afghanistan’s governing Taliban forces and the Pakistani army escalated sharply Feb. 27, with Islamabad ordering airstrikes on Kabul, Afghanistan’s capital, and other areas. The conflict has had a devastating impact on working people, with hundreds dead and more than 100,000 forced to flee their homes.

The Taliban had launched drone attacks on Pakistani military bases in several border provinces hours before Islamabad retaliated.

The Taliban is a reactionary Sunni Islamist group whose origins lie in one of the U.S.-backed mujahideen rebel forces battling and ultimately defeating Moscow during its war in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. In the early 1990s, the Taliban took control of Kabul and held power from 1996, providing a safe haven for al-Qaeda.

After al-Qaeda’s Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center, Washington invaded and overthrew the Taliban regime. This led to a 20-year war, involving over 100,000 U.S. troops under four U.S. presidents, which Washington lost. The Taliban returned to power in 2021. During the war, ties between the Taliban and the rulers in Pakistan deepened.

Today the Taliban has allied with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which carries out terrorist attacks against the regime in Islamabad inside Pakistan. The governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan signed a ceasefire last October, brokered by the rulers of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. But multiple rounds of talks have failed to produce an agreement.

Islamabad says the Afghan government must cease all support for the TTP, while the Taliban says Pakistani forces must stop deadly incursions into Afghanistan that target the group’s bases. TTP leader Mufti Noor Waki Mehsud has urged its forces to retaliate against

Pakistan’s “invasion” of Afghanistan.

During the war against Moscow’s forces in Afghanistan, the Pakistani government backed the mujahideen fighters. This alliance continued when the Taliban came to power, with Islamabad providing a safe haven for Taliban fighters after Washington intervened and its long war in Afghanistan began.

Islamabad welcomed the Taliban’s return to power in 2021. But since then the TTP has stepped up its terror assaults inside Pakistan, killing some 1,300 people. This and old territorial disputes have increasingly set the governments in Pakistan and Afghanistan against each other.

Since last October, all trade between the two countries has been shut down, with a devastating impact on working people, especially in border villages in Afghanistan. Access to medicine and food is restricted. Islamabad says it will only restore trade ties if the Afghanistan government clamps down on the TTP.

Like the rulers in Iran, who are deporting Afghan immigrants, the Pakistani government launched a mass deportation program targeting the 4 million Afghans living there, under the banner of “combating terrorism.” Since 2023 more than 1 million Afghans have been expelled from Pakistan.

Rivalry between Beijing, New Delhi

The fighting is interconnected with broader conflicts in the region, as the capitalist rulers in China and India jockey to extend their sway.

The Pakistani government is partnered with Beijing in its Belt and Road project. It has become dependent on the Chinese rulers for the development of ports and other transport infrastructure that connect Pakistan to trade routes with Beijing.

Beijing has also sought relations with the Taliban, incorporating Afghanistan’s government into Belt and Road projects last year. The Chinese rulers have an eye on exploiting the country’s copper and other resources.

As a result, Beijing hasn’t taken sides in the war and urges both gov-

March 8 protest for women’s rights in Ukraine



The Women’s March

Over 3,000 women marched through central Kyiv March 8 on International Women’s Day for the first time since Moscow’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine began four years ago. They rejected a proposed bill drawn up behind closed doors by Ukraine’s parliament that would have set back women’s rights. They also demanded better protection for women serving in the military and the return of Ukrainian women prisoners held under harsh conditions in Russia.

Protesters were angry at the Ukrainian parliament’s sweeping rewrite of the country’s Civil Code behind the backs of working people. It would have denied women the right to divorce for one year after giving birth, including those in abusive relationships; imposed a vague code of “morality” on women; undermined secular marriage laws; and excluded same-sex couples from legal recognition.

The march backed legislation aimed against discrimination and sexual harassment in Ukraine’s armed forces, where over 75,000 women now serve as drone operators, medics, snipers, officers and more. A petition of 25,000 signatures has been submitted by Veteranka, a movement of women veterans.

The march highlighted the brutal conditions for 7,000 Ukrainians — including civilians — imprisoned by Moscow. Many of them are women who face stripping in front of men, beatings and starvation by their captors.

Organizers said the march was intended to return March 8 to being a day of political struggle for women’s rights, not a celebration or a holiday.

The spirited march in Kyiv, despite the war, is in striking contrast to Russia. There, working-class opposition in the streets to Moscow’s war has been suppressed as the regime has jailed and sometimes killed or exiled protesters or driven them underground.

— ROY LANDERSEN

Refinery workers fight for contract

BY JOEL BRITTON

MARTINEZ, Calif. — “Fair contract now!” demanded dozens of process operators and maintenance workers, members of United Steelworkers Local 5, who rallied in front of the Marathon biodiesel refinery here March 3.

Criff Reyes, an operator and Marathon Local 5 union chair, told the *Militant* that in recent contract negotiations Marathon management has refused to treat this refinery the same as its crude oil refineries. The previous national contract expired Feb. 1, and Marathon and the Steelworkers union agreed Feb. 6 on a four-year “national pattern agreement,” with wage hikes of 15%.

While crude oil is no longer what this refinery processes — replaced in recent years by corn oil, seed oils and tallow — Reyes said, “our biodiesel is explosive.” He cited a fire at the refinery here two years ago that caused severe burns.

“Whether we use what I call ‘dinosaur oil’ or ‘soybean oil’ our product is still explosive, still flammable,” said Reyes. He cited other refineries that have switched to “green” feedstocks that remain under the union’s National Oil Bargaining Program.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 19, 2001

A Capital Fund to make possible the continued production of Pathfinder books and pamphlets will be launched at the March 11 and 18 meetings in New York City and Seattle being organized by the communist movement.

“Capital contributions are necessary to finance the next steps in Pathfinder’s long-term publishing efforts,” Dave Prince, Capital Fund director, said in an interview. Prince explained the Pathfinder volunteers organized to put new books into formatted, digital form, ready for publication.

The Pathfinder Reprint Project is also turning out a growing number of titles from Pathfinder’s extensive catalog.

“Capital Fund contributions are needed now to assure the long-range stability of this book production pipeline,” Prince said.



March 19, 1976

Pressure is mounting against the white supremacist regime now ruling Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). In the wake of the setback to American imperialism and Apartheid South Africa in Angola, the Zimbabwean freedom fighters have escalated their campaign to oust the colonial-settler regime of Ian Smith and to win Black majority rule.

Beginning in February, the Zimbabwean guerrillas increased activity. This followed a recent influx of freedom fighters, who crossed into the country from camps in neighboring Mozambique. The Rhodesian military has been unable to halt the movement of guerrillas into the country.

The London *Sunday Times* reported Zimbabwean “sympathies lie overwhelmingly with the guerillas,” adding, “each week more disaffected black youths are leaving to join them.”



March 19, 1951

The mounting opposition to the Korean War in the ranks of the British Labor Party was demonstrated by a great anti-war conference held in London Feb. 25. This conference was attended by 231 delegates from the London trade unions and Labor Party.

With only six opposing votes the conference voted the following resolution:

“This conference of delegates from the London Labour movement pledge itself to fight inside the movement for the ending of all war alliances with capitalist countries; the withdrawal of British forces from Korea; the granting of immediate independence to those colonial countries at present under British domination; and the concentration of the energies of the Labour Movement on securing the complete and utter defeat of capitalism and the Tory Party as our contribution to the building of a socialist world.”

Israel fights a defensive war

Continued from front page
liberately target civilians.

These attacks by Tehran and by its proxy Hezbollah from Lebanon are not defensive moves in response to Washington’s bombing. They are an extension of the decadeslong course of the Jew-hating rulers in Iran. “Israel must be eradicated from the page of history,” Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini said on Aug. 7, 1979. “We must all rise, destroy Israel.”

The Iranian regime, which came to power through a counterrevolution against the 1979 popular revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah of Iran, has been determined to carry this out. It forged its “axis of resistance,” creating Hezbollah in Lebanon, setting up “militias” in Iraq, and financing and training Hamas in Gaza, including its Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel.

The damage to Israel in today’s missile and drone attacks would have been far worse if Israel had not destroyed much of Iran’s offensive capability during the 12-day war last June, and taken out some 60% of its rocket launchers since Feb. 28.

Anti-Jewish propaganda machine

To bolster Tehran’s goal of destroying Israel and eliminating the Jews there, an international propaganda machine — made up of a bloc of Islamist fundamentalists and middle-class leftists — promotes the narrative that Israel is a white supremacist “colonial-settler” state.

Its backers claim that Israel began as an imperialist colony whose goal was the “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” of Palestinians. This, they say, is why Israel’s destruction and a war against the Jews are necessary.

This “narrative” leaves out entirely the key reason millions of Jews fought to move to Palestine at the end of the Second World War: (1) The refusal of the Moscow-led Communist Party in Germany to join forces with the Social Democrats to lead a fight by the powerful working-class movement there to stop the Nazis. This allowed Adolf Hitler and his Nazis to take power and murder 40% of the world’s Jews in the Holocaust during the war; (2) The betrayal by the Stalinized Communist parties of revolutionary movements that could have brought the working class to power in Spain, Greece and other countries; and (3) The refusal of the imperialist rulers in the United States, Canada and Britain to let in Jews seeking to flee the Nazis, sending them back to their deaths.

Where were the Jews to go?

When the war ended, Jews, many who no longer had homes to go back to, were put in “displaced persons” camps in Germany, Austria and Italy, many of which had been concentration camps under Hitler.

Slaughtered by the Nazis, betrayed by the Stalinists and turned away by the U.S. and other capitalist powers, where were the Jews to go?

They fought to get to what would become Israel, against armed opposition by the British rulers who controlled Palestine.

When the newly created United Nations voted to approve the creation of the state of Israel, Jewish leaders agreed to its partition plan, with one section a majority Jewish state and the other majority Arab. But the semifeudal reaction-

ary Arab leadership refused. Five Arab armies, along with irregular bands of the Arab Liberation Army, attacked the new state of Israel.

Amid heavy casualties on both sides, thousands of Arabs fled or were expelled from Israel, which emerged victorious. Thousands of Arabs remained within the new country. Today some 20% of the citizens of Israel are Arabs.

In the wake of the creation of Israel, Arab regimes across the Middle East brutally expelled their Jewish populations. Roughly half of the Jews in Israel are descendants of Jews from these Arab countries.

Rise in Jew-hatred

None of the key questions that gave rise to Jew-hatred leading up to, during, and after World War II have been resolved. In the imperialist epoch, as the crisis of the capitalist rulers and their system deepens, they turn to Jew-hatred. Their aim is to divide and demoralize the working class and to foster fascist gangs.

There is a new rise in violent acts of Jew-hatred around the world, tied to today’s deepening capitalist crisis. Until there is a revolutionary-led la-



Reuters/Ronen Zvulun

People take refuge in underground parking lot, now a bomb shelter, in Tel Aviv amid Tehran missile attack March 2. They didn’t let it stop them from celebrating Jewish Purim holiday.

bor movement in the United States, France, Britain and elsewhere that views fighting Jew-hatred as a life-or-death question for the labor movement, thousands of Jews will continue to move to Israel every year because it is the only government in the world that defends Jews arms in hand.

Nearly half of all the Jews in the world live in Israel, a small country that

is 260 miles long and 10 miles wide at its narrowest point, and 70 miles at its widest. One nuclear bomb from Iran would cause a new Holocaust

That’s why Israel’s defensive war against Tehran is aimed at ensuring the bourgeois clerical regime there cannot develop nuclear weapons, nor long-range missiles capable of causing mass destruction.

Stop Washington’s assault on the sovereignty of Iran

Continued from front page
economic, political and military interests of the U.S. ruling class.

President Donald Trump arrogantly declared he was demanding Tehran’s “unconditional surrender” and that any replacement for Iran’s slain Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei would need his personal approval. A few days later CNN asked Trump if he was insisting that Iran have a “democratic” state.

“No, I’m saying there has to be a leader that’s going to be fair and just,” Trump said, and “treat the United States and Israel well” along with other countries in the Middle East.

In fact it is only the U.S. capitalist rulers he wants treated “well.” Trump said that the governments of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are now “fighting for us” in the war. He boasted his administration had succeeded in getting these regimes to turn away from growing ties to Beijing and toward Washington. The Chinese regime is U.S. imperialism’s main rival in plundering the oil, gas and other resources and labor in the Middle East.

Once the war is over, Trump threatened March 9, “If Iran does anything that stops the flow of Oil within the Strait of Hormuz, they will be hit by the United State of America TWENTY TIMES HARDER than they have been hit thus far.”

U.S. forces reported March 11 that Tehran had placed mines in the strait, and they had responded, destroying 16 Iranian mine-laying vessels. Still, the conflict means oil transport there has virtually closed.

Proving ground for World War III

The assault on Iran is also a proving ground for future wars as the U.S. rulers prepare for bigger conflicts, dragging humanity toward a third world war.

The U.S. military has deployed a range of new and more lethal weapons, including its new High-Energy Laser with Integrated Optical Dazzler and Surveillance system that takes out drones, and the LUCAS, a new low-cost

drone based on Iran’s Shahed drone.

For the first time since World War II, a U.S. submarine fired a torpedo to sink an Iranian ship March 4, killing over 100 crew members. Many of the 32 survivors have shattered legs. The 3,700 pound Mk 48 struck the Iranian warship IRIS Dena while it was more than 2,000 miles away from Iran and nowhere near a combat zone. It was in international waters off the coast of Sri Lanka, and was split in half in seconds.

The IRIS Dena had just participated in an annual military exercise in India along with dozens of other navies, as did the U.S. military.

The brutal assault was “an incredible demonstration of America’s global reach,” boasted Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. “To hunt, find and kill an out-of-area deployer is something that only the United States can do at this type of scale.”

That’s a message not just to Iran but to any nation that comes into conflict with the U.S. capitalist rulers.

Israel-Washington schism

While Washington’s goal is a regime that guarantees stability for U.S. interests in the Middle East — and won’t threaten oil shipments and profits — Israel’s war against the regime in Tehran is an entirely different question.

Israeli forces are striking as many targets as fast as they can, worried that Washington will force Israel to end its war — like it did during the 12-day war with Iran last June — before eliminating all of Tehran’s ballistic missiles, attack drones and nuclear weapons sites that are aimed at wiping out Israel. Israel is now carrying out nearly three times as many strikes in Iran than the U.S. forces.

“The United States and Israel have seen a public divergence,” the Times of Israel noted March 10, because Washington does not share “Israel’s long-term goals.”

After Israel destroyed 30 fuel depots in Iran, a U.S. spokesperson “told Israel not to do it again,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Another

Trump adviser told Axios that Trump “wants to save the oil.”

Regime keeps threatening opponents

Tehran still has some ballistic missiles and a large number of drones it uses to attack U.S. radar stations in the region, threaten oil tankers heading to the Strait of Hormuz and to keep targeting Israel.

The regime continues to threaten working people, oppressed nationalities and other opponents in Iran with as much or more ferocity than it shows to Washington. And many of the regime’s drone attacks are directed at armed groups based in the Kurdish region of Iraq. Kurds are an oppressed nationality across Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.

“Our struggle is for the self-determination of the Kurdish people in Iranian Kurdistan,” said Mohammad Saleh Qadri from the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan. “We do not want to replace this regime with another dictatorial regime.”

In Tehran, “the streets are emptier than ever,” the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers’ Trade Unions reported March 9. “The wheels of life and the economy are no longer turning here; the only concern is surviving until tomorrow.” Prices of necessities have skyrocketed.

The regime provides no bomb shelters for the Iranian people nor warning sirens, but “in the main squares and intersections, vehicles of repression and the heavy barrels of machine guns are prominently on display,” the union notes. “Numerous checkpoints throughout the province cast a heavy shadow of fear over the few weary and worried passersby. Before worrying about the sky above, we must first fear the streets of our own city.”

The regime’s need to intimidate working people amid Washington’s brutal war is a sign of its weakness and its fear that protesters will once again take to the streets, like they were doing in the tens and hundreds of thousands before the war to fight to get the regime off their backs and to fight for a better life.

Join SWP in expanding reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund drive

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ing the class struggle and charting a course to take political power into our own hands. Getting the *Militant* and books by Socialist Workers Party leaders and other revolutionaries is essential to building a tested leadership that can make this possible.

Israel continues to defend its right to exist as a safe haven from Jew-hatred and new pogroms, as it is doing in its defensive war against the rulers in Tehran.

Working people in Ukraine refuse to bow to Moscow’s demands to abandon the defense of their country’s sovereignty. The *Militant* explains why these struggles are in the interest of workers everywhere.

Working people in Cuba are showing they will fight to defend their socialist revolution. In response to Washington’s threats, the SWP and the *Militant* helped initiate “Hands off Cuba!” picket lines, rallies and other actions. They are in solidarity with the Cuban people, and get out the truth about what their revolution accomplished and why it’s an example

for workers everywhere to emulate. The *Militant* is a unique and invaluable source of news on today’s labor struggles. Getting it into the hands of fellow workers is vital for building solidarity and strengthening the labor movement.

Along with books by party leaders, the SWP’s candidates explain that the Democrats and Republicans only offer solutions that deepen the impact of today’s capitalist crisis on working people. SWP campaigners offer a road forward to replace the rule of the capitalist war makers, and explain why you should join the SWP to help make that possible.

We’re finding growing interest among working people, as we sell subscriptions and books on workers’ doorsteps, at strike picket lines, union rallies, actions in defense of immigrant workers and more.

We’re also expanding the *Militant*’s circulation to workers behind bars, as well as defending their right to get the paper, as we’re doing today against an unconstitutional prison ban in Florida.

The goals of the international cam-



Militant/Eric Simpson

Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, speaking at Feb. 19 Oakland picket line demanding “U.S. Hands Off Cuba! End the economic blockade!”

paign are to sell 1,300 *Militant* subscriptions and the same number of books, which are all offered at a discount. SWP campaigners will be taking advantage of political openings to raise \$165,000 for the *Militant*. The subscription, books and Fighting Fund campaign will be joined by the Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K.

You can help take this campaign over the top! To get involved, contact the *Militant* distributors nearest you, listed on page 10.

John Studer

John Studer
Militant editor

SWP candidates speak out against US war on Iran, Cuba blockade

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

Around the country Socialist Workers Party candidates are speaking out against Washington’s bombardment of Iran and its mounting threats against the Cuban Revolution. They’re explaining that the working class can prevent the rulers’ march toward a third world war by taking political power into our own hands, as they campaign widely in the working class, at strike picket lines and political actions.

From the first day of the U.S. war on Iran, Margaret Trowe, SWP candidate for governor of California, and her supporters have been on the streets building opposition to Washington’s brutal assault on Iran’s sovereignty. Campaigners have met the requirements to place Trowe on the June ballot, turning in more than the 65 signatures of registered voters that are needed and raising thousands of dollars to pay the filing fee.

“Our party supports the Iranians

who are fighting against the repressive regime in Iran, but the war the U.S. rulers are waging will not benefit working people there or anywhere,” Trowe told shoppers as she greeted them outside Farmer Joe’s Marketplace Feb. 28. “The goal of the U.S. rulers is to deepen their domination of the oil-rich region at the expense of their capitalist rivals and of working people.”

Near a Bay Area Rapid Transit station on March 7, SWP member Betsey Stone spoke with Robert Sandoval about the war. Sandoval agreed that the rulers in Washington are out to dominate the Middle East for their own profit, but the party’s explanation about the aims of Israel in the war was new to him.

“Israel’s goal in this war is different from that of the U.S. rulers,” Stone said. “The Iranian rulers are bent on destroying Israel. They build up Hamas and Hezbollah and their stock of missiles, and potential for creating a nuclear bomb, with this in mind.”

Israel is defending its right to exist as a refuge from Jew-hatred. To learn more, Sandoval decided to subscribe to the *Militant*.

Trowe is one of 21 SWP candidates being fielded across 11 U.S. states and in Washington, D.C. Efforts to win ballot status will begin later this month in New Jersey and in May in Minnesota.

In Fairburn, Georgia, Sam Manuel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, spoke to Danny Wells, an auto mechanic, on his doorstep March 7.

“I am not for a military invasion of Cuba,” Wells told Manuel. Wells said he and his wife had heard many things about Cuba and in 2024 decided to go see the country for themselves. He showed Manuel photos from the trip.

“What Cuba needs is normal trade with all countries including the U.S.,” Wells said. Many Cubans had told him they were hopeful that the steps taken by the Barack Obama administration to ease relations between the two countries would go further.

“What Obama did was to look for another way to overturn the revolution,” Manuel explained. “Every U.S. administration has sought that goal in different ways for 67 years.”

Wells got a copy of the *Militant* to find out more about current conditions in Cuba.

In Fort Worth, Texas, Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for governor, spoke with Veronica Bosque in a Walmart parking lot.

“It’s not right what Trump is doing with this war,” Bosque told Kennedy. “He wants to control the oil. I’m afraid it will lead to a bigger war.”

“Both the Democrats and Republicans defend the interests of the wealthy capitalist class. This is what the U.S. war on Iran is all about,” Kennedy said. “Working people need to break from both of these parties. Preventing another world war depends on the working class taking power. Our class has no interest in destroying other countries for profit.”

Bosque asked why Jew-hatred ex-

ists. SWP member Gerardo Sánchez explained that Jews are scapegoated during capitalist crises. “This will increase,” he said, “the wealthy class will try to convince the working class that the Jews are causing these problems and not them.”

Bosque bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a Spanish-language copy of *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred and Pogroms in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*.

SWP members are finding a thirst to learn about Cuba’s socialist revolution at recent actions around the country demanding, “U.S. hands off Cuba.” At a picket line in Newark, New Jersey, March 8, nine of the 35 participants bought copies of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*, Víctor Dreke’s firsthand account of Cuba’s decisive political and military aid to that successful liberation struggle.

To campaign with the SWP, and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and the U.K., contact the area nearest you listed on page 10.

Join campaigning with Socialist Workers Party candidates!

California

Margaret Trowe, governor
Laura Garza, mayor of Los Angeles

Florida

Rachele Fruit, U.S. Senate
Nelson Gonzalez, governor

Georgia

Sam Manuel for U.S. Senate

Illinois

Naomi Craine, U.S. Senate

Minnesota

Kevin Dwire, U.S. Senate

New Jersey

Joanne Kuniansky, U.S. Senate
Craig Honts, U.S. Congress

New York

Paul Mailhot, governor
Willie Cotton, lieutenant governor

Ohio

John Hawkins, U.S. Senate

Pennsylvania

Ved Dookhun, governor
Tony Lane, lieutenant governor
Abby Tilsner, U.S. Congress
Sergio Zambrana, U.S. Congress

Texas

Alyson Kennedy, governor
Dennis Richter, U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C.

James Harris, delegate to Congress

Washington state

Jacob Perasso, U.S. Congress
Rebecca Williamson, U.S. Congress



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Protests hit US attacks on Cuba

Continued from front page
ferences, because it sets an example of what true internationalism is all about,” César Sánchez, a co-chair of the National Network on Cuba, said to open the speak-out.

“Why has every U.S. administration, Democratic and Republican alike, tried to destroy the Cuban Revolution since its victory in 1959?” Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey, asked. “It’s because the workers and farmers of Cuba, 90 miles from U.S. shores, threw off a U.S.-backed dictator, made a socialist revolution, and set an example for working people everywhere, especially for us here in the U.S.”

Cuba is “a beacon of internationalism,” Larry Adams, vice chairman of the People’s Organization for Progress, said. The people of Cuba “have a right to self-determination to choose their form of society and their leaders.” He pointed to the hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers who served in Angola, helping to “defeat the apartheid regime in South Africa,” which had repeatedly invaded that newly independent country between 1975 and 1988.

“As we live through another war in the Middle East,” Ellen Whitt, from the Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War, said, Washington is escalating its blockade of Cuba, hoping “to completely collapse the Cuban economy by starving it of oil.”

“Let’s not let them succeed!” she concluded.

Karl Schwartz read a message from the North Jersey Democratic Socialists of America. He called for “an end to this cruel blockade against the Cuban people, who want to build a brighter future for their country.” And he noted the U.S. economic war against Cuba “hurts workers here too.”

Numerous passing drivers honked their horns and some cheered in support of the protest. A woman who works at Newark airport stopped and spoke to a *Militant* reporter. She said she was originally from Jamaica and disagreed with the move by the government there two days earlier to buckle under to pressure from Wash-

ington and end the decadeslong Cuban volunteer medical missions there.

A Cuban man on his way to work waved his thanks to the demonstrators. He told this reporter he has worked here three years, but all of his family are still in Cuba facing increasingly difficult conditions.

Bob Miller, from Cuba Sí in New Jersey and an organizer of the picket, chaired the speak-out. He announced the premiere of a documentary on well-known local Black artist Ben Jones, a fellow opponent of Washington’s attacks on Cuba, will be screened at the Montclair Art Museum March 15.

Ike Nahem, from Cuba Sí in New York, invited protesters to attend the March 14-15 Action Conference for US-Cuba Normalization at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York. He noted a delegation from Havana, including leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women, will be participating.



SYDNEY — Over 50 people welcomed Gilma Moreira Lino, the new Cuban ambassador to Australia, and joined in discussing the situation Cuba faces today at a meeting organized by the Australia Cuba Friendship Society here March 5.

“The humanitarian impact of the oil blockade is huge,” Moreira Lino told the meeting, scoring President Donald Trump’s move to block all shipments of oil to the country. “It has had an impact on all aspects of society, on almost everything. Power is out in half the country” right now, she said.

“The Cuban people will defend their country,” she added. After facing Washington’s economic war for over 60 years, “We have had a lot of preparation.”

In response to a question on how Cuba’s working people were responding to the crisis, Moreira Lino said, “We know the difference between living in Cuba and the rest of the world.” In Cuba “there is a lot of solidarity. We help each other.”

Led by Fidel Castro, working people in Cuba overthrew the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and carried out a socialist revolution. Washington responded by launching an economic war against the revolution, but the new social relations conquered by the revolution have prevailed, despite the continuing attacks of every U.S. government since.

During what Cubans call the “Special Period” following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, “many thought Cuba wouldn’t last a week,” Moreira Lino said. “U.S. presidents have come and gone, but we are still here,” and “we intend to continue.”

After the talk and a lively discussion period, Marx del Rosario reported on a recent solidarity brigade to Cuba he had been on, noting that Cuba is a society that is “not organized for profit.” The meeting wrapped up with music, food and informal discussion.

The Australia Cuba Friendship Society is part of a coalition of groups here calling a protest March 21 to demand an end to the U.S. oil blockade of Cuba.

— Bob Aiken



CHICAGO — Forty people joined a spirited rally and press conference calling for an end to the U.S. oil blockade of Cuba at the Federal Plaza here March 4.



Militant/Roy Landersen

Actions grow across U.S. demanding “US hands off Cuba!” Above, 35 protesters marched in Newark, New Jersey, March 8, calling on Washington to end attacks, oil blockade on Cuba.

The event was initiated by the Chicago Cuba Coalition and endorsed by 16 additional organizations.

Speakers included 25th Ward Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez; Lyra Spencer, from the Democratic Socialists of America; Jhonathan Gomez, from the Chicago Religious Leadership Network; and Cuban American filmmaker Eric Torres Alvarez. Cathy Gutekanst, a retired nurse, read excerpts from the National Nurses Union statement calling for an end to the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

Other endorsing organizations spoke after the press conference. Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois, Democrat and Republican alike, has tried to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. “What the U.S. rulers fear is the moral and political example of the Cuban working class taking power,” she said. “The oil blockade is an act of war that can quickly escalate. It is an attack on Cuban sovereignty and a threat to workers and the oppressed in the United States and worldwide who want to live in peace.”

The protest was covered on WGN-TV News.

Craine and other speakers pointed to the importance of reaching out to churches, unions and other organizations to join further, broader actions defending Cuba from U.S. attack.

— Amy Husk



LOS ANGELES — A spirited action at the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue here March 8 demanded “U.S. hands off

Cuba!” and “End Washington’s economic blockade against Cuba!”

With banners, signs, flyers, and speaking over a bullhorn, the two dozen participants explained why workers and others should oppose the continuous U.S. economic war against Cuba, in place since working people there made their revolution in 1959, and that has sharply escalated today.

Several passersby expressed support for the action. Some driving by honked in support, while a few disagreed with us.

“The protest today is part of international days of protest against the U.S. blockade of Cuba, especially the strangulation of the oil blockade, and as part of the week of solidarity March 8-15,” Mark Friedman, a steering committee member of the LA US Hands Off Cuba Committee, told the *Militant*. “It was called by the National Network on Cuba and Cuba’s Institute for Friendship with the Peoples.

“In four days we’ll be loading a truck with hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical aid to take to Miami and then fly to Cuba,” he added.

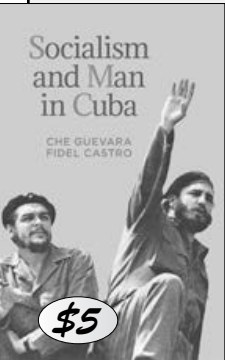
Ainsly Rivera, a young substitute teacher and member of the Hands Off Cuba Committee, told the *Militant*, “We have been fighting to remove the blockade against Cuba, to get the U.S. military base out of Guantánamo, and to remove Cuba from Washington’s State Sponsors of Terrorism list. The Cuba coalition also demands that the government ‘Let Cuba Play!’ in the baseball competition in the upcoming Olympics, demanding the U.S. grant visas that have been denied to athletes and coaches.”

— Deborah Liatos

Socialism and Man in Cuba

by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro

Guevara explains why the revolutionary transformation of social relations necessarily involves the transformation of the working people organizing and leading that process.



Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

“There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba,” Fidel Castro said in March 1961, an assertion that’s as timely today.



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High school students in Illinois protest ICE raids, deportations

BY RUTH GRAY

PARK RIDGE, Ill. — A spirited student walkout at East Maine High School here drew some 100 participants March 3. Many held homemade signs as they marched through the neighborhood to protest immigration raids and deportations. Some participated in their cars, honking in support and waving their national flags from their windows.

Students were eager to explain why they joined the action to this reporter. Alison Sanchez, whose parents are immigrants, said her uncle was re-

cently deported, leaving behind his wife and children. She rejected the government’s abuse of immigrants as “criminal aliens,” saying her parents “are extremely hard-working.”

“We have to take a stand,” she said. Sophomore Syeda Sanroz said immigration is a topic students often feel unable to discuss in school. The walkout was “an amazing way to get our political thoughts out,” she said.

Freshman Gaby Hogan said the protest helped spark discussion among students about the conditions immigrants faced.

US hands off Cuba, end blockade

Continued from front page

badly.” For over six decades the U.S. rulers have sought to overturn Cuba’s revolutionary government and reestablish capitalist property relations.

Havana’s decadeslong position has been in favor of normalizing relations with the United States on the basis of respect for Cuba’s sovereignty and self-determination. Washington has instead waged a relentless economic war against the Cuban people in its drive for “regime change.”

In its latest attempt, the White House tightened its economic chokehold on Cuba Jan. 29, threatening to impose punishing tariffs on goods from any country that sells or provides oil to Cuba. To underscore the warning, the U.S. military has maintained a military and naval deployment in the Caribbean.

The tariff threat and military presence have been effective in deterring oil deliveries to Cuba. A tanker carrying 200,000 barrels of Russian oil on its way to Cuba turned away Feb. 25. Cuba didn’t receive oil from anywhere in January, aggravating the country’s lack of fuel. This is having a devastating impact on Cuba’s economy and all aspects of life on the island.

Meanwhile, the White House is stepping up threats to fabricate criminal charges against Raúl Castro and other top Cuban leaders in U.S. courts. This could be used in Washington’s smear campaign against Cuba and to justify further economic sanctions and aggression.

The Trump administration has also sought to isolate Cuba, pressuring governments in the region to end their relations with Havana and to medical programs with Cuba.

Without any explanation, the government of Ecuador declared members of Cuba’s diplomatic mission in the country “persona non grata” March 5. The decision was announced two days before the White House hosted a so-called Shield of the Americas conference at Trump’s Doral resort in Florida. It was attended by representatives of 13 Latin America and Caribbean countries.

Washington used the conference to deepen its military presence in the region under the banner of fighting drug cartels and “terrorist networks.” Trump threatened Havana, vowing, “I’ll take care of Cuba.”

U.S. attacks Cuba’s medical missions

The U.S. rulers in recent weeks have also stepped up their slanders against



Welcome party for Cuban medical volunteers at airport in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, 2017. Hundreds of toilers there protested earlier attempts by the local medical guild to press the Honduran government to expel Cuban doctors who have served in rural areas many years.

Cuba’s volunteer medical missions to other countries. Washington claims that Cuban medical personnel are victims of exploitation and human trafficking by the government. It seeks to deprive Cuba of badly needed foreign income used to provide basic services for working people at home. The governments of Venezuela, Guatemala, Honduras and Jamaica recently announced they are ending longstanding medical programs with Cuba, bowing to Washington’s demands.

Some 170 medical professionals left Honduras at the beginning of March. “It’s a crying shame that after 25 years of contributing to the health of the Honduran people, government officials and the media have launched a smear campaign and lies” against the brigade, said Juan Loforte, Cuba’s ambassador to Honduras.

Cuba’s medical aid to the people of Honduras dates back to 1974 in the wake of Hurricane Fifi, which killed thousands. In an elementary act of working-class solidarity Cuba sent a medical brigade, despite the fact that Honduras was ruled by a U.S.-backed military dictatorship at the time.

Cuban doctors returned to Honduras in 1998 when Hurricane Mitch left entire communities isolated and without access to medical attention. Cuban doctors went deep into the Honduran countryside where access to health care was largely nonexistent.

In 2020 during the COVID epidemic Cuban doctors worked in intensive care units in Honduran hospitals.

The Honduran government, aided by capitalist medical associations, sought to discredit the work of the Cuban medical personnel, question-

ing their qualifications and alleging some of them were spies.

“We spy on diseases, that’s what we do,” Armando Castillo, head of the brigade told the Honduran press as they waited at the airport to travel back to Cuba March 4. Cuban medical workers “investigate how to treat, save, and relieve the pain of others.”

“Each surgery we performed, every person who recovered their sight, and each smile we received in return were acts of human sovereignty that no foreign power can stain,” Dr. Madelín Hernández said on her return to Cuba.

“For us, what’s important is the huge warmth we received from the Honduran people,” Castillo said. Washington “will never forgive Cuba for exercising the right of all peoples to self-determination.”

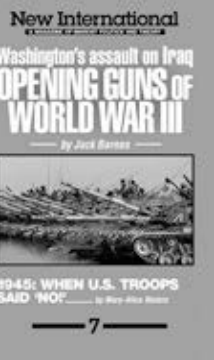
Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

In *New International* no. 7

The devastation of Iraq did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The Gulf war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions.

\$14. Also in Farsi, French, Spanish, Swedish



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SWP campaign kicks off in new Pittsburgh headquarters



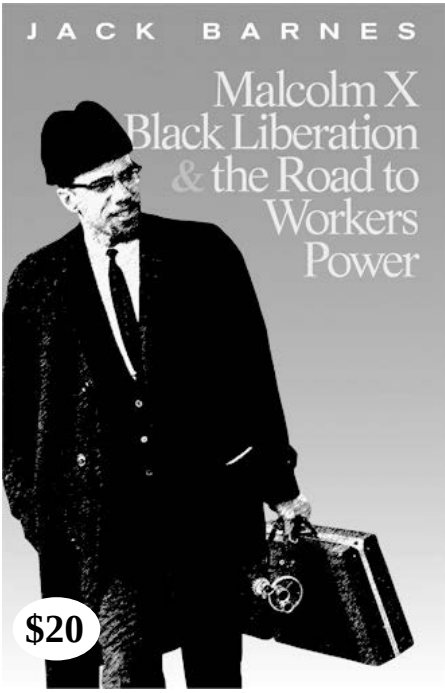
Militant/Kathie Fitzgerald

PITTSBURGH — Tony Lane, Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor in Pennsylvania, speaking, and Sergio Zambrana, SWP candidate for Congress in the 12th District, formally kicked off their campaigns here March 7, at a meeting in the party’s new campaign headquarters. The two candidates recently joined a rally of several hundred people in defense of Ukraine’s sovereignty against Moscow’s more than four-year-long invasion; helped organize a picket line calling for “Hands off Cuba!” at the Federal Building in downtown Pittsburgh; and distributed and discussed the recently issued SWP statement “US out of the Middle East!” at campus campaign tables and on doorsteps in working-class neighborhoods.

“Working people in the United States, the Middle East, and the world over must oppose Washington’s large-scale air and naval assault, begun Feb. 28, on the national sovereignty of Iran and the many peoples who make up its population,” the statement says. “It is a blow to the aspirations for peace held by workers and millions of other oppressed and exploited people in the United States.”

With a big boost from a number of supporters, they helped move the campaign into a brand new, more spacious headquarters for the campaign kickoff.

— KATHIE FITZGERALD



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U.S. Hands off Cuba! Action Conference

Conference for US-Cuba Normalization
Welcome Cuban Delegation of Leaders
of Federation of Cuban Women

March 14-15
CUNY Graduate Center
365 Fifth Ave., N.Y.C.

Public Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba
Greetings from Yuri Gala López

Sat. March 14, 7 p.m.
235 W. 23rd Street

For more information:
www.nnoc.org
www.us-cubanormalization.org



Yuri Gala López
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Cuba to the United Nations

Havana event features the African independence struggle, Cuba’s aid

Continued from front page

Some 90 people filled the courtyard at Casa de África Feb. 18 for the launching of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*. This firsthand account by Dreke was recently published in English and Spanish by Pathfinder.

The event drew an audience eager to hear from participants about a chapter in the Cuban Revolution’s proud history of aiding liberation struggles around the world.

Alberto Granado, director of Casa de África, one of the event’s sponsors, welcomed the many in attendance who themselves had been combatants in one or more of Cuba’s 23 military missions in Africa, including in the Congo, Angola, Ethiopia and Guinea-Bissau itself. Also present were many local residents who frequent the beautiful museum and cultural center in Old Havana that highlights Cuba’s African heritage.

The book presentation, Granado said, took place at a time when the U.S. government has sharply escalated its decadeslong economic war against Cuba’s socialist revolution. Three weeks earlier, he noted, after Washington imposed an oil blockade on the island, the annual Havana International Book Fair had to be postponed as one of a series of emergency measures to conserve fuel.

‘The enemy will never understand us’

“We were determined not to cancel this event,” Granado said. Because of the extremely limited bus transportation, “many people here got up very early and came here on foot.” *Militant* reporters talked with a few who had traveled four hours from outlying neighborhoods.

“The enemy will never understand us,” Granado said, referring to how the U.S. rulers continue to underestimate the capacities and consciousness of Cuba’s working people.

Many came to the meeting because they wanted to hear Dreke, whose lifelong record goes back to his participation in the revolutionary war, led by Fidel Castro, that overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista tyranny in 1959 and opened the first socialist revolution in the Americas. Dreke commanded the military campaign in Cuba’s Escambray Mountains in the early 1960s that defeated U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary bands there.

In 1965 Dreke was second-in-command

under Ernesto Che Guevara of 130 Cuban combatants who fought alongside national liberation fighters in the Congo.

Much less known, however, is Cuba’s decisive role in the war that won independence from Portuguese colonial rule in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde in 1974-75. Dreke headed Cuba’s combat mission there in 1967-68. He worked closely with the central leader of that struggle, Amílcar Cabral, and his African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). Today Dreke — still popularly known as Commander Moja, the Swahili nom de guerre given him by Che in the Congo — is president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association.

Chairing the presentation, Ana Morales, program director at Casa de África, introduced prominent guests in the audience. They included Maria de Lourdes Batista and Guisell Morales, ambassadors of Guinea-Bissau and Nicaragua, respectively. She welcomed Antonio Guerrero, one of five revolutionaries who spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons for helping defend Cuba from violent attacks by Cuban American counterrevolutionary groups.

In addition to Dreke, the speakers panel included Col. René Hernández Gattorno and Lt. Col. Alfonso Pérez Morales, both volunteer combatants in the Guinea-Bissau independence war, and Oscar Oramas, Cuba’s ambassador in neighboring Guinea-Conakry at that time. Ana Morales recognized in the audience Lt. Eduardo Torres Ferrer, known by his comrades as “Coqui,” who also took part in the Guinea-Bissau mission, and who like the others is now retired from active duty.

Gattorno, Pérez Morales, Torres Ferrer and Oramas are interviewed in the final chapter of the new book. Ana Morales herself led the Cuban medical mission and the founding of the medical school in Guinea-Bissau in 1986, after it won its independence.

Also on the panel was Mary-Alice Waters, co-editor of the book and president of Pathfinder, as well as a leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

What bothers the U.S. rulers

“This is an important moment,” Dreke told the audience. He condemned Washington’s assault on Venezuela and singled out the internationalist example of “our 32 Cuban compañeros who fell in combat there defending President Nicolás Maduro.”

“The U.S. imperialists are now threatening us and we face a difficult situation,” Dreke added. “Our people struggle day by day. The enemy attacks us with shameless methods,” with a blockade “that seeks to starve us into submission.” If the imperialists ever take control of Cuba, “they will try to wipe us out, as they’ve tried to do to the Palestinian people. But they won’t be able to defeat us.

“They say they’ll decide who is the president of Cuba. But their dispute is with the Cuban people. They’re not going to be able to overthrow the Cuban people.”

What bothers the U.S. rulers, Dreke said, “isn’t just President Miguel Díaz-Canel. It isn’t just Raúl Castro. What bothers them is Cuba’s dignity. Cuba’s courage in never giving up.”



We value the solidarity we receive from people in other countries,” Dreke said.

Pointing to Waters and other members of the communist movement in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom attending the event, he said, “These compañeros are here today not because of this book, but because of what we are confronting in Cuba. They are saying, ‘We are here with you.’”

Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, Dreke said, tells the story not only of the Cuban internationalists who aided that struggle, but of the outstanding

leadership of Amílcar Cabral and the movement he forged.

Dreke noted that Che Guevara, who met Cabral in 1965, “said that if there was one anti-imperialist organization in Africa with the potential of being victorious, it was the compañeros of the PAIGC.”

Cabral united independence fighters from Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde into a disciplined organization. As part of that, Dreke said, “a group of Cape Verdeans came to Cuba to receive military training and went back to fight in Guinea-Bissau.”

One of Cabral’s leadership qualities

was his active promotion of women’s participation in the liberation struggle, he said. “In Guinea-Bissau, we would see women with a basket on her head, a child on one shoulder, and a rifle on the other.”

‘We cannot forget this history’

Dreke paid tribute to the example of the more than 400 Cuban volunteers, both combatants and doctors, who over nearly a decade took part in the clandestine Cuban mission aiding the independence war in Guinea-Bissau. The new book is a contribution to ensure “that this history is not forgotten,” he said.

Oramas, who over the years was Cuba’s ambassador in several African countries, explained, “Support to the struggles of African peoples was intrinsic to the Cuban Revolution from the beginning.” As early as 1961, he said, Cuba sent a shipload of weapons for the Algerian independence movement against French colonial rule.

Wherever Cuban internationalists aided liberation struggles, “Fidel told us that we were not going to dictate what we think but to cooperate as equals,” Oramas said. “That’s what we did in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.”

By 1974, fighters in Guinea-Bissau were dealing decisive blows to the colonial army “and the Portuguese saw they could not win,” Oramas said. “Lower-level military officers rebelled” against the increasingly hated dictatorship in Lisbon. “That was the origin of the Carnation Revolution,” the military coup that overthrew the



Amílcar Cabral with young fighters, 1972. Victor Dreke’s book rescues legacy of “the real Cabral, the political leader of Guinean and Cape Verdean working people,” said Mary-Alice Waters.

regime and set off a revolutionary upsurge by working people in Portugal.

Pérez Morales, also known as Pina, his nom de guerre, said, “Little has been written about the Cuban mission in Guinea-Bissau,” and the new book is an important contribution to telling that history.

Pina, who was head of the Cuban combatants in the northern front of the guerrilla war, remarked that the Cuban fighters “lived alongside the Guineans. We ate together from the same pots in the guerrilla camps. We became brothers. They protected us at the risk of their own lives during the battles. I came to feel Guinean myself, and I still do.”

Cabral taught the liberation fighters that their enemy was not the people of Portugal but Portuguese colonialism. “The soldiers we captured were treated with dignity,” Pina said. Although the colonial army was brutal toward the Guinean population, “there were no

feelings of revenge against the Portuguese soldiers. In that sense, it was a very humane struggle.”

Gattorno vividly described highlights of the decisive battle against the Portuguese garrison at Guiledeje, in which he took part. “It was an enormous, heavily fortified base,” he said. The Guinean and Cuban forces carried out a joint ambush followed by a massive mortar attack that routed the Portuguese forces.

“The Portuguese soldiers we captured were sons of peasants. Many were illiterate. They would beg us to turn them over to the Red Cross, not to the Portuguese army,” Gattorno said. Portuguese imperialism, he noted, committed crimes against both African peoples and the Portuguese working people they used as cannon fodder.

“Young people in Cuba and around the world need to know these facts. That’s what imperialism is. That’s what capitalism is. They need to know that in face of this enemy, we must fight, and it’s better to die standing than to live on our knees.”

The audience was riveted by the combatants’ firsthand accounts. Most had never heard much about that liberation war and its broader impact in the world.

Waters, the opening speaker on the panel, told the audience that *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde* conveys “the heart and soul — the lessons — of the Cuban Revolution, lessons that are so badly needed in today’s world.” (See text of Waters’ remarks on this page.)

She noted that today Washington is

escalating its threats and actions to deny the Cuban people the most basic necessities of life because “you had the audacity to open the socialist revolution in the Americas.”

Dreke’s account not only highlights Fidel Castro’s course as a leader of working people, Waters said. It “begins the rescue of the real Cabral, the political leader of Guinean and Cape Verdean working people, the Cabral whose qualities Che and Fidel recognized and identified with.”

Waters concluded by describing the initial positive reception Dreke’s book has already received among working people and others in the United States.

And, she added, “the book has already reached Africa, where friends of Pathfinder in Burkina Faso are working with us to rapidly finish translation to French.”

The launching of Dreke’s book was followed by a presentation of *Breve historia política de Sudáfrica* (Brief political history of South Africa), by Angel Dalmau, who was Cuba’s first ambassador to South Africa after the end of the apartheid regime. He highlighted points in the book, including on revolutionary Cuba’s unstinting support to the struggle that ended white-supremacy rule in South Africa.

A second presentation

A few days later, Dreke presented *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde* at a community meeting in the Atabey neighborhood on the outskirts of Havana where he lives. He spoke together with Waters and Martin Koppel, the co-editors of the book. The event, attended by some 30 people, was introduced by Ana Morales, who is the elected delegate to the local government, known as People’s Power, here.

Dreke is well known by residents of Atabey. But some of those at the meeting said they didn’t know much about the history of the independence struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde and the exemplary role of Cuban internationalists in it.

One of the participants remarked, “Hearing about that history reminded us of who we are as revolutionaries.”

‘Book highlights Cabral’s leadership, Cuba’s proletarian internationalism’

The following is the talk by Mary-Alice Waters to the Feb. 18 presentation in Havana, Cuba, of the new book, *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa* by Victor Dreke (Commander “Moja”). The event was held at the Casa de África Museum in Old Havana (see accompanying news article).

Waters is co-editor of the book and wrote its introduction. She is president of Pathfinder Press and a National Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party. Copyright © 2026 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Before anything else, I want to thank both the Office of the Historian of the City of Havana as well as Alberto Granado, director of Casa de África, for hosting this presentation of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*. And to express my heartfelt thanks to “Comandante Moja” and to our moderator, Ana Morales, program director of Casa de África.

We are not here only to celebrate the publication of a book. We’re here to celebrate decades of revolutionary action by compañeros like Victor Dreke and Ana Morales, and the rich lessons for today and

tomorrow that this book conveys.

We’re especially honored to have with us on the panel Ambassador Oscar Oramas. We would have also been joined by Brigadier General Gustavo Chui Beltran had his car not broken down a half hour ago as he was on his way here. One of the many transportation challenges each of you successfully vanquished in order to be present. So, thank you to all. It is a real pleasure to greet so many friends and comrades we’ve had the priceless opportunity to work alongside for many years.

Before going on I want to recognize two other individuals without whose contributions this project might never have come to fruition. One is compañera Iraida Aguirrechú, now deceased, who for many years was the senior editor at the publishing house

of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, Editora Política. The other compañero, who is with us here today, is Martin Koppel, the co-editor of this Pathfinder book.

A book needed now

All of us are eager above all to hear from the author and others who had a role in *making* the history this book brings to life. So I will limit my remarks to three points.

First. There could have been no more important moment than today for Victor Dreke’s book to be published.

No better moment to learn about — and to study — the example of Amílcar Cabral and the humble men and women he led to victory over the Portuguese colonial empire.

There could be nothing more timely

than spreading — and studying — this example of the Cuban people and their practice of proletarian internationalism, led by Fidel, and led by Che.

In the last weeks we have witnessed Washington’s ruthless, murderous assault on the people of Venezuela, together with Yankee imperialism’s abduction of President Nicolás Maduro along with his wife, Cilia Flores. That is an arrogant, imperial, violation of the national sovereignty and the right to self-determination of the oppressed and exploited nations of the world.

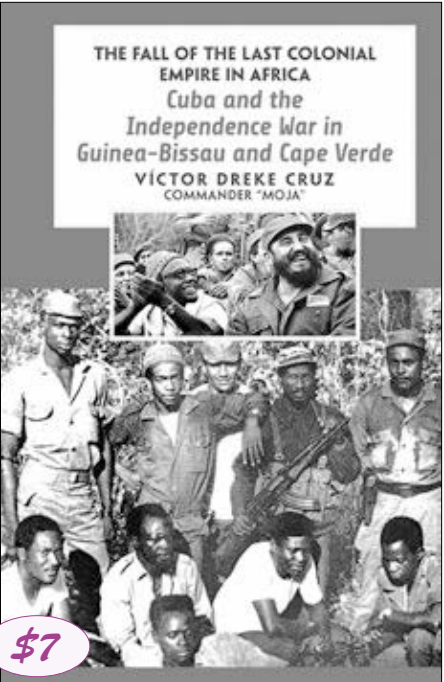
We’ve seen the escalating threats and actions by Washington aimed at denying the people of Cuba the most basic necessities of life because — inspired by the necessary political leadership — you had the audacity to open the socialist revolution in the Americas.

And it is important to add, these events are also a flagrant assault by Washington on the desire of working people in the U.S. — native-born and immigrant alike — to live in peace. To live in peace with each other, and with our brothers and sisters around the world.

All this and much more has come as a shock to most of those who have been born since the people of our hemisphere were last subjected to such murderous events. The most recent such

Continued on page 11

Essential reading

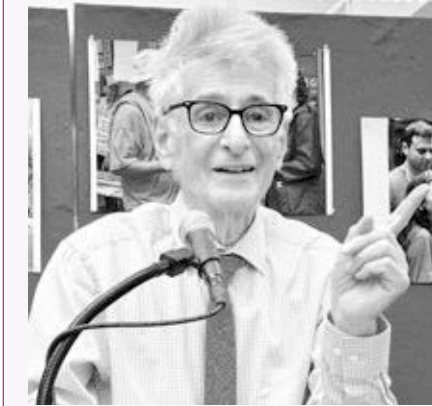


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Panel at Feb. 18 Casa de África event launching *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde*. From right, Ana Morales; Alfonso Pérez Morales, “Pina,” speaking; Mary-Alice Waters; Víctor Dreke; Oscar Oramas; and René Hernández Gattorno.



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You have to learn what fascism is in order to fight it and win

Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for March. Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The excerpt is from the section “Capitalism and fascism” in chapter 4. Today, as liberals and middle-class radicals demagogically label their bourgeois opponents “fascist,” it is vital for class-conscious workers to understand the deadly threat that a real fascist movement in the future will pose. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

The communist movement has written a great deal about “fascism, what it is and how to fight it,” to use the name of a very valuable pamphlet by Leon Trotsky that is published by Pathfinder. But the person from whom I learned the most about fascism concretely was Farrell Dobbs. Farrell was the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 until 1972, and in the 1930s was a central leader of the strikes and over-the-road organizing campaigns that built the Teamsters in the upper Midwest into a fighting industrial union movement. I learned from Farrell both directly, in the course of our work together for nearly a quarter century until his death in 1983, and from his four-volume series on the Teamsters struggles published by Pathfinder.



Mounted police block 50,000 workers at rally, called by Socialist Workers Party, protesting Nazi meeting at Madison Square Garden in New York, Feb. 20, 1939. Working class needs to advance struggle for power, including the defeat of fascist violence against Jews, unions.

ume series on the Teamsters struggles published by Pathfinder.

In the third volume, *Teamster Politics*, Farrell explains how small fascist outfits began to grow in this country in response to the deep economic and social crisis and the rise of workers’ struggles in the 1930s. ...

[F]ascism is precisely a movement set in motion and financed by sections of the ruling class in desperate circumstances in order to maintain capitalist rule. It is not an alternative to “democratic capitalism”; it is *bred* by “democratic capitalism.” When workers understand what fascism really is, then the enormity of the responsibility to get rid of capitalism — a task only the working class can organize and lead — becomes that much clearer. ...

[F]ascism is not a way of organizing capitalism. Instead, it is a radical petty-bourgeois movement in the streets — the most horrible, malignant such movement in history. Banal, mediocre, figures — but ones adept at radical demagoguery, nationalism, phrase-mongering, and organization — rise to leadership in these movements. Thugs rise among the cadres. The fascists ape much of the language of currents in the workers movement. “Nazi” was short for National Socialist German Workers Party.

These movements never begin with broad ruling-class support. At first, the rulers in their majority alternately

scorn and fear this rowdy “rabble”; only handfuls of capitalists back them at the outset. But as the bourgeoisie become convinced they confront an irresolvable social crisis, and as the working class puts up an increasingly serious challenge to capitalist rule itself, growing layers of the exploiters start supporting, or tolerating, the fascists in order to try to smash the workers and their organizations. That is the job the fascists are finally enlisted to do by the bourgeoisie when the threat to capitalist rule reaches a certain threshold.

The fascists’ stock of “ideas,” encrusted with historical mystification, are borrowed from the sewers of the bourgeoisie’s own views, values, and attitudes. The things the capitalist rulers say privately among themselves, the subtle and not-so-subtle bigotry they promote, are taken up as the banners of a radical mass movement. The demagogues use these banners to mobilize and channel the energies of radicalized layers of the frightened, resentful, and ruined middle classes in bourgeois society.

The fascists initially rail against “high finance” and the bankers, lacing their nationalist demagoguery with anticapitalist rhetoric. When they come to power with support from weighty sectors of finance capital, however, the anticapitalist rhetoric slacks off quickly. That is what happened in Italy under Benito Mussolini in the early 1920s after *il duce* also

became premier. That is what happened in Germany under Adolf Hitler a decade later after the *führer* also became chancellor. Once these new regimes set about reviving industry, building roads, and preparing for war, radical diatribes against capital went into rapid decline.

SWP leader Joseph Hansen wrote quite a bit about the experience of the working class with fascist movements in this century. He pointed out that when a fascist movement conquers, its character rapidly changes. The new government demobilizes many of the most radical sectors on which the movement rose to power, bloodily suppressing some of its own cadres if need be, and begins functioning basically as a military-police dictatorship. In mid-1934, a year after he was appointed chancellor, for example, Hitler disbanded the Storm Troopers — the “Brownshirts” — that he had mobilized for more than a decade as the party’s radical, street-fighting squads against the workers movement. He summarily executed their chief, Ernst Röhm, and murdered dozens of other leaders of the Nazis’ longtime cadre.

The regimes that come to power on the back of fascist movements are capitalist governments. It is misleading to talk about “a fascist regime” for that reason. It is not something historically different in class terms from a capitalist regime. Once fascist movements come to power, they use the state and forms of capitalist economic planning to bolster the strongest components of the bourgeoisie against smaller rival capitalists and against the toilers. Historically, these governments are short-lived. They become more and more bureaucratized, corrupt, and brittle. But a horrible logic is played out — a drive toward war, a monstrously brutal crushing and atomization of the labor movement, a drastic reduction in the value of labor power, crimes such as the scapegoating and extermination of the Jews in Germany and others that challenge language to describe. This is how a declining capitalism, in an unplanned and pragmatic manner, attempts to restabilize itself. ...

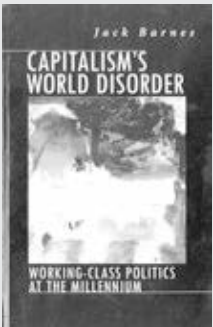
The workers vanguard must chart a course to mobilize and lead the working class and our allies to take power. Along the way, the labor movement will have to defend our organizations and those of other oppressed layers against fascist thuggery and murderous violence.

March

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Cabral, Cuba's internationalism

Continued from page 9

moment, which many of you here do remember well, was Washington's invasion of Grenada in October 1983, following the cold-blooded murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop by a small minority of his own colleagues. It was, as Fidel said, an act that handed the Grenada Revolution to US imperialism on a silver platter.

What is unfolding in the world today is not a series of isolated events. Nor is it due to the actions of a rogue, deranged president of the United States, drunk on his own enormous power and envisioning himself emperor of the world. These actions are not deranged. They are the deliberate course of an imperialist government to advance the bipartisan state policy of the ruling capitalist families.

What is unfolding today is the product of the powerful historical dynamics of capital itself. It is the product of sharpening interimperialist, intercapitalist competition for natural resources, markets, and profits. It's the laws of capital at work — the only "international law" that's real, not imaginary.

That is what inexorably drives the US rulers, and drags us with them, as they try to settle accounts through spreading wars that, sooner or later, will become a far more devastating future for all humanity — a nuclear World War III.

The only force that can ultimately prevent this future we are being marched into is the power of united, class-conscious workers leading the toilers of the world. That is to say, the only future for humanity is to make, defend, explain, and *extend* the socialist revolution.

Revolutionary leadership

To bring together the forces necessary to achieve that objective, however, demands revolutionary leadership of the highest caliber. It demands revolutionary leadership like that of Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Amílcar Cabral, Malcolm X. Many people will tell us that's impossible, nothing but a pipe dream. Because you and many others have lived it, however, you know that such leadership can and will be forged by the objective conditions and the class battles ahead of us.

That's why the example of the humble toilers of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde and of the Cuban Revolution is indispensable.

As Fidel expressed it in his magnificent tribute to Che in 1987: "Che believed in man. And if we don't believe in man, if we think that man is an incorrigible little animal, capable of advancing only if you feed him grass or tempt him with a carrot, or whip him with a stick — anyone who believes this . . . will never be a revolutionary . . . will

never be a socialist . . . will never be a communist," Fidel said. "Our revolution triumphed because we believed in man."

Those words summarize — in the clearest possible way — Fidel's political strength and his course as a leader of the working class and its exploited allies, his communist course. He described the road necessary and the challenge before all of us in following that road today.

Cabral's political clarity

Second. One of the most important things that shines through Víctor Dreke's account of the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde is precisely the political and leadership qualities of Amílcar Cabral.

Dreke begins the rescue of the *real* Cabral, the political leader of Guinean and Cape Verdean working people, the Cabral whose qualities Che and Fidel recognized and identified with.

When we started working on this book, like many others, I knew Cabral by name only. I knew vaguely that he stood out among the African leaders of independence struggles in the post-World War II epoch.

Preparing this manuscript gave me and others of us at Pathfinder Press the opportunity to see him as the working-class leader he was, a leader who started with the world.

Cabral rejected the idea, widely prevalent on the "left" of his time, that armed struggle alone could replace — supersede — the political battle to win the support of broad sectors of the toilers.

Before initiating the armed struggle, he sent young cadres of his party into the bush for months to learn firsthand the real conditions under which the majority of the population lived, to organize them as the protagonists forging their own future.

He fought to counter the tribal antagonisms used by the Portuguese to foster division.

He refused to accept the falsehood that the color of one's skin unchangeably defines one's enemies or friends.

He led the education of the movement he built, teaching them that the enemy was not the Portuguese soldier, or the Portuguese people, or even the fascist Portuguese president. It was the *colonial system* they were fighting to destroy. They were fighting for all oppressed and exploited peoples of the world. They were, in his words, "humanity's soldiers."

Captured Portuguese troops were treated with dignity and humanity, and turned over to the Red Cross, not the Portuguese military when released.

Cabral understood and helped lead in the fight against women's oppression



FMSMB/Casa Comum-Amílcar Cabral

PAIGC delegation at Cuban Embassy in Conakry, Guinea, 1967. From left, Amílcar Cabral, Ana Maria Cabral, Víctor Dreke, Carlina Pereira and Oscar Oramas, Cuba's ambassador to Guinea. Cabral "knew he could trust us," Dreke said. "We were comrades in struggle."

and pushed open the door of leadership for women. At the same time, he explained to those who became impatient with the pace of the struggle that women's second-class status could not be abolished by decree. It would only be eliminated with economic and social development that would, in turn, help men and women toilers both to bring changes in social relations.

He urged young people, irrespective of religious beliefs, to study science. To overcome their fear of nature.

Cabral was a historical materialist. He not only read and studied works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and other communists. He absorbed them, made them his own. He drew on them to guide his own course of action and to educate others.

The list could go on. But it's not necessary. The political course Cabral led was one that would have been familiar to Fidel and the cadres of the Rebel Army. They marched in the same boots. And the party Cabral built on these foundations proved strong enough to survive his assassination in January 1973.

A book to be read

Third. I want to finish with a few words about the reception Víctor's book has already received, even though it has been off the press, in English and in Spanish, for only six weeks.

The first review came in just days ago. It began with the words: This book is "informed and informative, eloquent, engaging and of immense interest for students, academia, historians, political activists, and non-specialist general readers . . ."

As if those words of praise in the *Midwest Book Review* were not enough, the writer adds the book is "singularly extraordinary" and "quite unique."

We regret that we were not able to have Dreke's book available for everyone at this meeting. That's one of the casualties of Washington's latest assault on Cuban working people and the emergency measures the Cuban government has had to take to conserve resources, which included, as you know, the necessity to postpone the Havana International Book Fair. That's why we prepared the brochure reproducing a few pages from the book that everyone here today can take with them to read and share with others.

You'll be pleased to know that the book has already reached Africa, where friends of Pathfinder in Burkina Faso are working with us to rapidly finish translation to French.

One of them, a professor in the city of Bobo Dioulasso, the second-largest

city in Burkina Faso, told us that in reading the book in English, he had really understood for the first time the immense contribution of the Cuban people to the independence struggle in Africa. And that the independence struggle of Africans had served to help working people in Portugal rid themselves of their own dictatorship.

He also commented that the Cuban revolutionaries who came to fight alongside them — unlike other so-called "friendly" powers — didn't tell Africans what to do. "They aided and collaborated with us," he said, "and weren't in Africa for themselves. They were humble and identified with all humanity."

The parallel next step is to get the book translated to Portuguese, and all suggestions are welcome.

The book is not only being reviewed in the U.S., it is beginning to circulate as well, including in the substantial Cape Verdean communities along the northeast coast of the United States. Some of those communities date back to the great days of whale-hunting sailing ships, some two centuries ago.

The book is being sold not only through big capitalist distributors such as Amazon. But especially among working people whom Pathfinder supporters are able to reach directly. One report we received two days ago is typical.

A supporter who works in a major food service establishment at the Philadelphia airport wrote that since the book came off the press, fellow workers there had bought 16 copies from him. Of those 16 new readers, 8 were U.S.-born, 4 were Haitian and the others originally from Ethiopia, the Philippines, South Africa, and Tunisia.

I mention that fact because it provides a snapshot of a typical industrial workplace in the U.S. The composition not only tells you something important about the interest this book generates. It gives you food for thought about the class struggle in the U.S. today and why immigrant workers have been selected by the capitalists and their government as a focus of the rulers' attack on the working class.



We have no doubt this will become one of most widely read books Pathfinder has published in recent years. Because it conveys the heart and soul — the lessons — of the Cuban Revolution, lessons that are so badly needed in today's world.

For that gift we say *Thank You* to the Cuban people.

More on the Cuban Revolution

pathfinderpress.com

US war and the imperialist world disorder

Washington’s devastating bombardment of Iran is aimed at restoring stability for the U.S. rulers to plunder the Middle East. They’re unleashing unmatched U.S. air and naval power, believing they can impose their domination in the region with no unintended consequences; push back Beijing, their main rival; and strengthen their declining place as top dog in the imperialist world order.

In fact, the U.S. war on Iran and the reaction to it in Europe, Canada and elsewhere, has shone a spotlight on the escalating conflicts among rival capitalist ruling classes that mark all politics today. And it is intensifying them.

The war has sharpened rifts between Washington and its weaker imperialist “allies,” fraying the U.S.-led NATO military bloc. The governments of Spain and the U.K. took their distance from Washington’s war moves, with Madrid refusing to let Washington use military bases on its soil. Along with the French government, they condemned the U.S. bombing.

The war has widened the U.S. rulers’ deepgoing antagonism with its chief rival in Beijing. The Chinese rulers are getting pushed back by Washington in Latin America and are now losing oil supplies from Iran, vital for their economy. Like most other Asian powers, Beijing has little oil resources to exploit at home. The rulers in Turkey hope to seize on Tehran’s weakened position to advance their own reach across the Middle East, providing the U.S. rulers with new challenges.

For Israel, the war has a far different meaning — the opportunity to deal blows to Tehran’s decades-long drive to destroy the state that offers refuge for Jews worldwide.

Whatever the war’s outcome, it will not prevent the

accelerating drive of capitalist governments everywhere to expand their militaries, including nuclear weapons and new space-based weaponry.

In the imperialist epoch, capitalism can no longer play any progressive role. Each competing capitalist ruling class is forced to fight to redivide the world at the expense of all others, in ever-more deadly conflicts, as they did leading up to the last two world wars. The crisis of their system breeds not only war, but Jew-hating violence tied to the rise of fascist forces.

All capitalist governments worldwide are drawn into this dog-eat-dog competition — whether U.S., China or members of the BRICS bloc of so-called middle powers, all hustling to find new corners of the world they can exploit. The conflicts unfolding today are a product of the intrinsic workings of capitalism. They cannot be ameliorated by the U.N., “international law” or any other supposed supra-state savior.

As wars proliferate in the Middle East, between the rulers in Pakistan and Afghanistan, across Africa and elsewhere, the stakes rise for the working class — the only social class capable of preventing the rulers marching us toward a third world war.

As the capitalist crisis deepens it increasingly breeds struggles by working people in the tens of millions, alongside battles for national liberation by peoples oppressed by capitalist domination.

In these struggles, workers will have our chance to forge the leadership we need, one that is capable of uniting working people of all religions, nationalities and languages, to fight to wrest power from the capitalist war makers and chart a road toward a socialist world, the only road to a lasting peace. To be part of the fight for peace you should join the Socialist Workers Party in advancing this course.

Victory! Outcry stops execution of Sonny Burton

BY JANET POST

After strong support from working people, jurors from his trial, family members of the man killed and opponents of the death penalty, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey commuted the death sentence of Sonny Burton March 10, two days before he was to be executed.

He is now sentenced to serve life in prison with no chance of parole. Only days before, Ivey had said she would not commute Burton’s sentence. It is only the second commutation in Ivey’s two terms. She has presided over 25 executions, the most of any governor since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976.

Burton was to be killed under an Alabama law permitting accomplices of some crimes to be executed despite the fact that they didn’t kill anyone.

Burton, 75, has been at the Holman Correctional Facility in Atmore for more than three decades. Now suffering from debilitating rheumatoid arthritis, he is in a wheelchair and wears a protective helmet as he frequently falls.

In 1991 Burton was one of six men who robbed an AutoZone store in Talladega, Alabama. After Burton left the store and was sitting in the car outside, robber Derrick DeBruce killed a shopper, Doug Battle. Burton didn’t even know Battle had been shot.

“I was so angry at him [DeBruce],” Burton told *Newsweek* March 5. “If I had been there I’d have tried to stop it.”

DeBruce was given the death penalty, but the sentence was reduced to life in prison after an appeals court ruled that his attorney had been “inadequate.” Two of the other six men were sentenced to life without parole and another two got 25-year sentences.

A lead witness in Burton’s trial was co-defendant LaJuan McCants, who accepted a plea deal in exchange for testifying against Burton. He has since recanted his testimony, stating that he never thought Burton intended violence.

In a clemency petition six of the eight living jury members said they have no objection to Burton getting life without parole. One of them, Priscilla Townsend, told *The Associated Press*, “You don’t execute someone who did not pull the trigger.”

A petition by the U.S. Campaign to End the Death Penalty calling for a halt to the execution with over



Courtesy of Amplify PR

Sonny Burton with his daughter, Carolyn Amanda Shavers.

67,000 signatures was delivered March 9 to Ivey’s office by a group that included two of Burton’s daughters.

Battle’s daughter, Tori Battle, was 9 years old at the time of the robbery and supports the call for clemency. “No one from the state has ever sat with me to explain why Alabama believes it must execute a man who did not kill my father,” she wrote in the *Montgomery Advertiser* last December.

“My love for my father does not require another death, especially one that defies reason.”

In a letter to Alabama Department of Corrections Commissioner John Hamm, Gov. Ivey wrote, “I cannot proceed in good conscious with the execution of Mr. Burton under such disparate circumstances.

“I believe it would be unjust for one participant in this crime to be executed while the participant who pulled the trigger was not.”

Burton was to be executed using nitrogen hypoxia, or suffocation while conscious. Even the American Veterinary Medical Association has deemed nitrogen hypoxia inappropriate for euthanizing most animals.

In 2024 Alabama became the first state to use this form of execution, killing prisoner Kenneth Smith, who struggled on the gurney for 22 minutes fighting to breathe. Last fall, Anthony Boyd, another death row prisoner at Holman, was executed by nitrogen gas. “Witnesses described seeing Mr. Boyd convulse and heave for about 15 minutes before being pronounced dead,” the *New York Times* wrote.

Fight ban on ‘Militant’

Continued from front page

cal opinions, as well as the right of the *Militant* to reach its subscribers.

One subscriber at Taylor wrote the *Militant* to urge the paper to fight to overturn the ban so he and others can read it.

Prison officials make the claim the *Militant’s* coverage is “dangerously inflammatory in that it advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, rebellion, organized prison protest, disruption of the institution, or the violation of the federal law, state law, or Department rules.”

The Florida Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee has tentatively upheld the ban on all three issues, without specifying what it found objectionable in any of the articles. *Militant* attorney David Goldstein has informed the committee he is preparing an appeal requesting reversal of the impoundments.

“Amnesty International USA is calling on the Literature Review Committee to overturn the impoundment decision,” wrote Justin Mazzola, the group’s deputy director of research, in a letter to prison officials March 4.

“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,” Mazzola wrote.

The articles “document current national events of the heavy-handed immigration enforcement taking place in cities such as Minneapolis and the protests that erupted there and across the country in response. The articles further detail the role of unions in the fight against these tactics, the need for solidarity across groups and classes and calls for the government to provide amnesty to those undocumented immigrants in the USA.

“However, reading the plain language of the articles,” Mazzola points out, “they do not contain language or descriptions of current events that would present a call for ‘rebellion’ or ‘riot.’ In fact, the articles merely provide updates related to ongoing protests against government action — information that squarely relates to individuals’ rights to freedom of expression.”

Ban ‘arbitrary and capricious’

“I am writing to request that you reverse your recent decision to ban several issues of the *Militant* newspaper,” Chris Pennock, vice president of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 9 in Minneapolis, wrote in a March 3 letter to the Literature Review Committee. “These issues covered protest actions against ICE in Minneapolis, which is the city that I live in. These actions were peaceful union-led protests which is the example that the *Militant* puts forward as the path toward change. The articles in the *Militant* condemn violence against ICE agents. This ban is arbitrary and capricious and must be overturned.”

Among the growing numbers of organizations and individuals who have sent letters calling for the lifting of the bans are PEN America; the Florida Press Association; David Lefrancois, a professor at the University of Quebec in Outaouais; rail worker Félix Vincent Ardea, president of division 89 of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference; postal worker Timothy Frankland in Minnesota; and many more.

These letters make a difference! Help get groups, unions and others to write and urge the Literature Review Committee to reverse the bans (see box below).

Fight prison ban on the ‘Militant’

Get letters of support from unions, churches and defenders of workers rights and free speech. Send to Literature Review Committee, Florida Department of Corrections, 501 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500, or email to Melvin.Herring@fdc.myflorida.com and Legault@fdc.myflorida.com, with a copy to themilitant@mac.com

Send a check to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, earmarked “Prisoners Rights Fight.”