

NY rally at UN protests spread of Jew-hatred

BY ROY LANDERSEN

NEW YORK — About 1,000 protesters rallied against Jew-hatred near the United Nations headquarters here Sept. 23, in an action called by a broad coalition of Jewish organizations. The next day, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the annual U.N. General Assembly meeting, with a powerful defense of Israel’s fight for its existence as a refuge for Jews, at a time when antisemitism is on the rise worldwide.

Other demonstrations converged on the U.N. Sept. 24 to protest Netanyahu’s presence, denouncing him as a “war criminal” and advancing false claims that Israel supports “genocide” in Gaza. These actions involved hundreds of middle-class radicals and liberals, including a few Hollywood celebrities and local Democratic Party politicians. Hundreds of protesters gathered at Bryant Park and marched across Manhattan to the U.N.

“Accusing Israel of genocide is the greatest lie of the century,” Netanyahu told the U.N., saying this was “inverting victim and aggressor.” The most glaring case of genocide — the deliberate, systematic effort to exterminate an en-

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Canadian gov’t deepens attack on unions’ right to go on strike

BY BEATRICE BOWEN

MONTREAL — In yet another frontal assault on Canadian workers’ right to strike, the Liberal government of Prime Minister Mark Carney introduced in Parliament a 243-page Building Canada Strong Act on Sept. 21. Designated Bill C-39, the law would change labor and environmental rules in ways Carney claims Ottawa needs to strengthen its hand in the ongoing trade war with the U.S. rulers.

The bill would amend Section 107 of the Canada Labour Code to expand the circumstances under which a labor minister can unilaterally force an end to a strike or lockout. As it is, Section 107 has been repeatedly used by the government to order workers under federal jurisdiction to end their strikes. Roughly 10% of Canadian workers are in federally regulated sectors, including rail and other interprovincial transportation, and on the docks.

Over the last year, Ottawa used Section 107 to order tens of thousands of longshore, rail, postal and airline

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Havana event discusses Cuba, Africa independence struggle

Amílcar Cabral, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde



Militant/Naomi Craine

Víctor Dreke, center, Cuban revolutionary leader, at Havana program on his book, *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa* Aug. 14. From right, Oscar Oramas, Ana Morales, Jonathan Silberman, Sara Sánchez.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

HAVANA — The contributions of Cuban internationalist volunteers to African liberation struggles, and the lessons of those experiences, were highlighted at an Aug. 14 presentation here of *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde: The Fall of the Last Colonial Empire in Africa*. The book’s author, Víctor Dreke Cruz, headed Cuba’s military mission collaborating with the independence movement in Guinea-Bissau in 1967-68, crucial years in the battle against Portuguese colonial rule.

The meeting was held at the Artists and Creators House, a cultural center in Havana. Thirty people participated on just two days’ notice. This was an indication of the interest in the subject, given the scarcity of transportation and other challenges Washington’s crushing economic blockade imposes on Cuba. The book was originally launched in Havana in February.

Dreke is well-known in Cuba for his lifelong record as a revolutionary leader and internationalist fighter. At age 15 he joined the revolutionary struggle, led by

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Hundreds protest ICE operation in packinghouse towns across Kansas



Great Bend Post/Mike Courson

Protests against ICE raids like this one in Great Bend Sept. 24 took place across southwestern Kansas. “I didn’t realize there was so much support for immigrants,” said one Cargill worker.

BY TERRY EVANS

Outraged at the sudden acceleration of immigration raids around meat-packing plants in southwestern Kansas, hundreds of people took to the streets to protest in Dodge City, Garden City, Great Bend and Liberal demanding an end to Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s weeklong operations.

Some 200 people gathered at Wright Park in Dodge City Sept. 25 calling for a halt to the detention and deportation of local workers. “I didn’t realize there was that much support for immigrants, but there is,” Noe Garcia, a worker at the Cargill plant there told 12News.

Ana Ortiz told KCTV that she’d

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Socialist Workers Party wins readers to ‘Militant,’ books by party leaders

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

The three-week campaign of Jonathan Silberman, who is on the ballot as the Communist League candidate in the Holborn and St. Pancras parliamentary by-election in London,

has found serious interest since it was launched Sept. 19.

“In two weeks of campaigning,” CL member Catharina Tirsén told the *Militant*, “22 people have signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant* and 26 books by Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionary leaders have

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US colonial rule breeds discontent in Puerto Rico

BY SETH GALINSKY

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — For decades the U.S. government claimed that Puerto Rico was a “showcase for democracy” and a demonstration of the superiority of capitalist development.

Today, almost every citizen of the “island of enchantment” knows the truth — Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony. U.S. corporations exploit the natural resources and cheap labor to boost their profits. And the people of Puerto Rico have no

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— On the picket line, p. 4 —

Teamster sea salt strikers united in fight with Cargill

Australian air freight workers strike for wages, jobs, safety

Thousands join 1966 ‘March Against Fear,’ deal powerful blow to Jim Crow

BY TERRY EVANS

This is the second half of an article run last week, “1966 Mississippi ‘March Against Fear’ dealt new blows to bastion of Jim Crow,” marking the 60th anniversary of that march. It draws on an account by Stu Singer, who took part in the action. Singer was a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee volunteer who became a leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

The 220-mile march from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi, took place at the peak of the Black-led proletarian movement that brought down the system of Jim Crow segregation. It was the culmination of a yearslong battle there, spurring fighters around the country to carry the struggle against Jim Crow through to the end.

Singer and two SNCC staff members in Boston drove to Mississippi to join the march after James Meredith, who single-handedly began the march, was shot and wounded by a segregationist on the day after it stepped off. Many others responded the same way after an appeal for reinforcements by SNCC and other civil rights groups.

By the time the three-week protest marched into Mississippi’s state capital, it had grown to 18,000. “We would run a block or two off the march route and urge people to come off their porches and join in,” Singer said. “Many did, and thanked us for inviting them.”

In Jackson, the *New York Times* reported, “thousands of Mississippi Negroes in their Sunday best flocked into the column from street corners, churches and lawns. They argued with policemen, stepped in tune to a four-piece

band and cheered when members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee burned a Confederate flag.”

A racist counterdemonstration estimated at 1,500 people was outnumbered 12-to-1. It had no purchase to attack the marchers and didn’t try to.

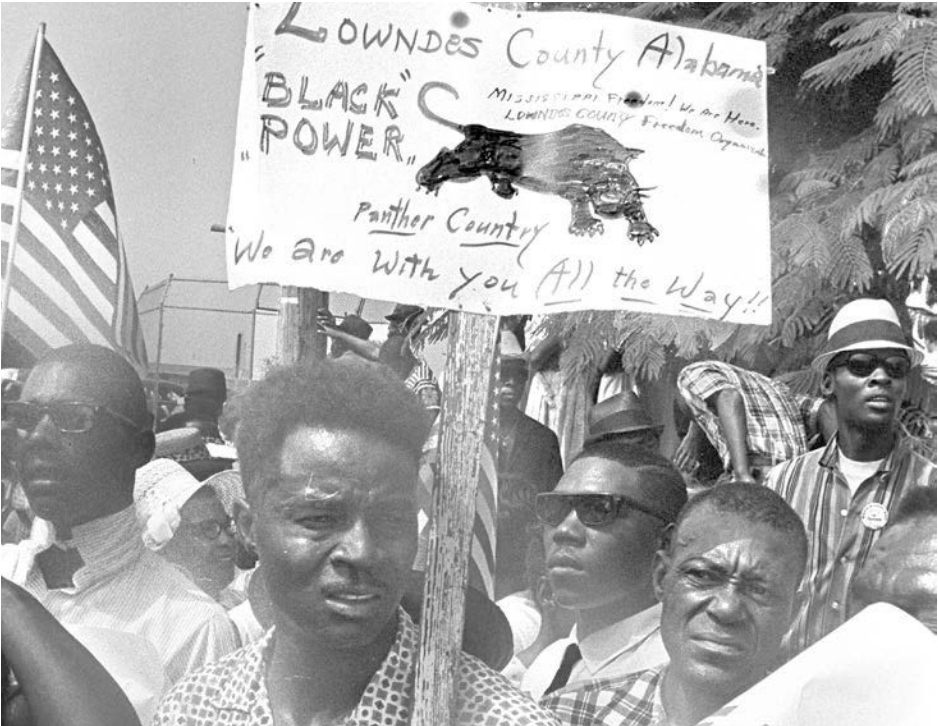
“Civil rights actions in the past were answered with waves of racist violence,” Singer said. “Nothing like that happened after the mobilizations of June 1966. The tens of thousands of African American workers and farmers who joined the march along its route permanently put their stamp on Mississippi politics.”

The final rally was addressed by Meredith, who was out of the hospital; SNCC’s Stokely Carmichael; and Martin Luther King. It was “loud and spirited,” Singer said.

In addition to dealing a powerful blow to Jim Crow and the Ku Klux Klan thugs, the success of the march drew in tens of thousands of Blacks in towns big and small across Mississippi. It posed a serious challenge to the Democrats’ decades-long bloc with the murderous segregationist forces that ruled the Southern states.

The NAACP had refused to back the action “because it could be viewed as critical of the Lyndon Johnson administration. Three years earlier the NAACP had called off demonstrations in Jackson under prompting from the Kennedy administration,” Singer explained. “That retreat led to an orgy of racist violence and the assassination of [civil rights leader] Medgar Evers on June 12, 1963.”

Few accounts of the 1966 march mention the joyful welcome marchers received afterward in the city’s Black



Alabama Department of Archives and History/Jim Peppler
Lowndes County Freedom Organization members from Alabama joined 1966 “March Against Fear” in Mississippi. They ran Black candidates against both the Democrats and Republicans.

community. Singer and other SNCC supporters were among those who dispersed into the community in what became “a kind of festival. Everyone was out on their porches. You couldn’t walk 10 feet without being invited in for food.”

At street corners Singer and others who’d been on the march were stopped and asked, “Where are you from? Tell us about the march. Was there trouble from the police and the Klan? How’s James Meredith?” They wanted to know what King and Carmichael had said at the rally. “Can we get one of those signs you’re wearing, with the black panther and ‘Move on over or we’ll move on over you?’”

The Black Panther was the symbol of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama set up by Blacks there to challenge both the Democrats and Republicans. SNCC worked closely with what became known as the Black Panther Party in Lowndes County.

‘We gained confidence and courage’

The end of the march was a celebration, Singer said, “but a thoughtful one. How far we had come. What more we needed to do.” All stores and restaurants that were open that day had to do away with segregation, or shut down. “We all gained a new sense of confidence and courage. Thousands of Blacks had registered

to vote, more than in all the previous voter registration efforts combined.

“Pressed by the intransigence of the marchers, federal registrars could no longer simply bow to the dictates of the Klansmen and White Citizens Council members running local registration offices,” Singer said.

Many Caucasians in Mississippi who “had never been part of night riding gangs but had been terrorized themselves under Jim Crow gained new confidence. Many began speaking out against racist discrimination and indignities, big and small.

“The only power that could begin changing Mississippi was the power that did begin changing it — the organized, disciplined mobilization of workers, farmers, sharecroppers and the young people and others who rallied to their cause. That’s who came out along the roads and in all the small towns and rural settlements as marchers made their way through Mississippi.”

And “that’s who welcomed and in many cases joined with the Deacons for Defense and Justice in providing needed self-defense” along the march route, Singer said.

The Deacons for Defense and Justice was formed by Black industrial workers during successful battles against Jim Crow in Louisiana. They offered the Mississippi marchers much-needed

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THE MILITANT

Canada farmers protest gov’t push to take their land

A government plan to build a high-speed train corridor by buying or expropriating farms in Canada has met strong opposition from farmers. For some it was a second battle. Thousands were ousted in 1969, then had to buy back their farms after a federal airport expansion failed.



Some 500 farmers, supporters rallied to protect their farms in Rigaud, Quebec, Sept. 19.

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Union, immigrants join in protest against deepening UK gov’t attacks

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LIVERPOOL, England — “Solidarity forever!” chanted hundreds of immigrant workers and their supporters at a protest called by public sector workers’ union Unison. They were protesting against the Labour government’s deepening attacks on immigrants. Overwhelmingly care workers, they came from across the U.K. to demonstrate outside the Labour Party’s annual conference here Sept. 28.

Unison is demanding a halt to government moves to extend from five to up to 15 years the time it takes before immigrants on employee-sponsored visas can apply for the right to remain indefinitely in the U.K.

The previous Conservative government had passed laws allowing immigrants to come to the U.K. to labor as care workers for the sick, elderly and vulnerable if they’re sponsored by an employer. Hundreds of thousands have done so, especially from Nigeria, Ghana and Zimbabwe, as well as Bangladesh and India. After five continuous years of employment, they could apply for the indefinite right to remain.

Bosses are using the harsher restrictions that immigrants on these visas face to impose worse wages and poorer conditions, care worker Israel Ayegba told the *Militant*.

“If sponsored employment is ended, immigrants must find a new sponsor within 60 days or face deportation,” he said. That also applies to any immigrant employed by a company that loses its government license to be a sponsor.

“Had we known it would be 15 years, we may have taken a different decision as to whether to come,” Ayegba said. “I was a pastor and my wife a nurse in Nigeria. We had two houses which we sold to raise the sums needed to get to the U.K. as a sponsored worker. My wife is sponsored, working in the health service. We have a son. My status is that of a dependent, too. If she loses her sponsorship, the whole family faces deportation.”

Ayegba pointed to a woman on the demonstration who’d had five different sponsors, having lost or changed jobs. “There are cases of employers charging the potential workers to become sponsored,” he said.

In her address to the rally, Unison

General Secretary Andrea Egan said, “Immigrants are being scapegoated for years of underinvestment in social services.”

Vallentyne Mazorotze came to the U.K. from Zimbabwe. “I’ve been in sponsored employment as a care worker for four and a half years,” he told the *Militant*. “I didn’t come for handouts, but to work. I want to remain a union member, part of the working class here. Now, what’s going to happen in six months’ time?”

Employers have “used their power over visas to deceive, overwork, underpay, and threaten migrants who complained with deportation,” wrote Dora-Olivia Vicol of the Work Rights Centre, in an article posted by the BBC.

Dozens of rail workers joined the protest. The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers General Secretary Eddie Dempsey spoke alongside Egan at the rally. Some RMT members are also facing deportation under parallel visa restrictions, Dempsey said.

The government has struck 180 job categories from the list of skilled workers who have visa eligibility, including rail travel assistants. Salary thresholds for getting visas were also raised by successive governments, so if your pay is lower than the new level, you’re no longer eligible and can be deported.

Joining the protest was Jonathan Silberman, Communist League can-



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Hundreds of immigrant workers came from across U.K. to protest Sept. 28 in Liverpool against deepening attacks on immigrants, overwhelmingly care workers. The rally was called by public sector workers’ union Unison and held outside annual conference of governing Labour Party.

didate in the Holborn and St. Pancras parliamentary by-election in London. Silberman was enthusiastically welcomed by protesters when he showed them his election flyer that is being mailed to 66,000 households in the constituency. “Immigrant rights: key union issue to unify the working class. Stop deportations. Work & Residency rights for all in U.K.” the leaflet says.

“The government’s anti-immigrant rules and demagoguery are a blow to immigrant workers and to workers born here,” Silberman said in discussion with participants. “Wages and conditions are determined from the bottom up. If there are workers who are cajoled into working for less, all workers face cuts to their wages.

“We need to forge a united movement of millions of working people to defend our interests — a movement of all nationalities, workers born here and born abroad,” he said.

The RMT members joining the protest had earlier in the day staged their own demonstration against “outsourcing” — splitting off rail services to subcontractors. “It’s another way of dividing us, leading to worse pay and conditions for all,” former rail worker Andrew Macdonald told the *Militant*.

Rail workers employed by subcontractors Bidvest Noonan and Rail Gourmet were staging a one-day strike “against low pay and in-work poverty,” the RMT said.

SWP wins readers to ‘Militant,’ books by party leaders

Continued from front page

been sold. One week to go in the election campaign!”

It’s part of a promising start to a seven-week international campaign kicked off Sept. 26 by the SWP and Communist Leagues in the U.K., Canada and Australia. The goal of the campaign is to expand the reach of the *Militant* and books by revolutionary leaders and to build support for the 2026 election campaigns of the SWP and CLs, with a plan to sell 1,150 *Militant* subscriptions and the same number of books. The SWP Party-Building Fund is set to raise \$140,000.

John Dixon, an office worker, sent an email to Silberman’s campaign, asking to join the party’s efforts. He heard about the CL candidate from the media and from the website “Who can I vote for?” He joined in doorstep campaigning that same day, Tirsén said.

In one exchange with a student originally from China who said he’d like to come to campaign meetings but is not eligible to vote, Dixon told him that wasn’t an issue. He himself lives 20 miles away in Surrey.

“The Communist League is not like the other parties that focus on seeking votes in Holborn and St. Pancras. Rather, the CL is building a working-class movement — and that’s a national and international task,” he said. Dixon told the CL campaigners that his experience was “wonderful” and he subscribed to the *Militant*.

Council worker Frederick Bielo got a *Militant* subscription after Silberman knocked on his door Sept. 26. “Other parties have knocked on our door but all they’re interested in is

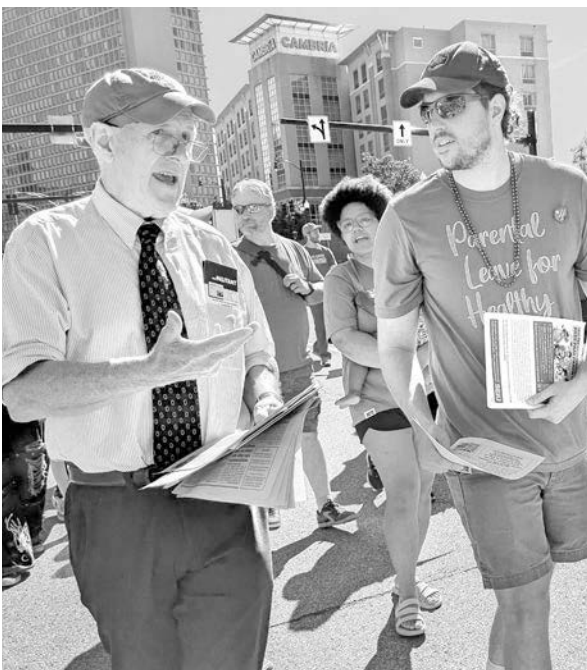
our vote. Then they move on,” Bielo said. “I tell them, ‘you make promises every election but nothing changes.’” Bielo and his wife Grace both said they appreciated the discussion with Silberman and the exchange on world and U.K. politics.

While campaigning door to door in Silver Spring, Maryland, Sept. 18, Samir Hazboun, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Washington, D.C., and campaign supporters were invited in by an Afghan cook who didn’t want his name published.

Over homemade Afghan food they discussed world politics and the situation in the Middle East.

He pointed to the picture of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husseini, meeting with Adolf Hitler in *The Fight Against Jew-Hatred in the Imperialist Epoch: Stakes for the International Working Class*. “Where I’m from in Afghanistan and everywhere in the Middle East, we all know that Hamas, the Houthis and other similar groups, all they care about is killing Jews,” he said. “But how can we get something different? They dominate everything and will never allow any other parties like yours to exist.”

“We have no crystal ball of when a mass movement that can topple these reactionary anti-working-class parties will develop,” Hazboun told him, “but we know that without a battle-tested



Militant/Candace Wagner

Tony Lane, left, SWP candidate for Pennsylvania governor, marching in Pittsburgh Labor Day Parade Sept. 7 with SEIU healthcare workers who won union recognition in 2025.

Mississippi march

Continued from page 2

protection from deadly Klan assaults. SNCC had led a debate and won agreement from other march organizers to deploy the Deacons for Defense.

As the march arrived in Jackson, Singer said, its Black community turned it into “a celebration and a classroom to discuss and absorb the lessons not just of this march, but also of the decades of struggle. That’s who welcomed allies, wherever they came from and whatever the color of their skin.

“Racism and segregation didn’t end that day in Mississippi, far from it. But Mississippi never returned to the way things were before,” Singer said. And it transformed many thousands who joined the fight to end Jim Crow once and for all time.

leadership and an already developed political program, truly revolutionary working-class parties will not be able to be built. That’s what we’re doing here in the U.S. — building the SWP — and that’s what will have to be done in the Middle East.”

He got a subscription to the *Militant* and asked campaigners to come back with more books in Farsi on Malcolm X and other revolutionary leaders.

Campaigners for SWP candidates in a number of cities reported that new *Militant* subscribers also gave contributions to the SWP Party-Building Fund.

To join in campaigning in your area, contact the *Militant* distributors listed on page 8.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Australian air freight workers strike for wages, jobs, safety

SYDNEY — Chanting “What’s outrageous? Airport wages!” over 100 Transport Workers Union members rallied at the Qantas airline domestic terminal here Sept. 24. The action was part of a one-day strike by some 500 Qantas freight workers at Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth airports for improved wages, job security and safety.

“We’re not after a million dollars, we just want the basic wage increase that we’re entitled to. There’s been no increase in five years,” Gary Frew told the *Militant* at the rally. He has worked as a Qantas freight handler for four years, saying it’s an unsafe workplace. “The conditions are appalling. The machines are broken and don’t get fixed.” Another striker said, “I had an injury four hours ago when equipment got jammed.”

For Frew and most workers at the rally this was their first strike. They voted by 97% in August to authorize a strike.

Over the past 20 years Qantas has split its workforce by dividing the company into subsidiaries and through subcontracting. In 2020, during the COVID pandemic, it laid off 1,800 ground staff, outsourcing their jobs. The company’s goal was to “divide the workforce,” TWU National Secretary Michael Kaine told the rally. The union wants workers brought back under one unit, with one union contract.

Qantas, Australia’s largest airline, reported a profit of 1.29 billion Australian dollars (\$900 million) for the 2026 financial year.

TWU members employed as luggage security screening staff joined the Sydney rally, striking for two hours.

— Mike Tucker

Montreal Metro workers make gains in six-month-long strike

MONTREAL — After six months on the picket line warehouse workers at the Metro food chain in the Montreal area are returning to work. On Sept. 24, 450 out of the 550 who were on strike voted by 77% to accept the new contract. They go back to work stronger from their monthslong struggle for bet-

ter wages and working conditions.

The workers are members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) at the fruits and vegetable warehouse in Laval north of Montreal, the Metro head office in Montreal, and the truck drivers at the warehouse in Rivieres-des-Prairies.

The workers won an immediate 10% raise and wage increase of 22% over five and a half years. Initially the bosses offered a paltry 11% over six years.

“The members are more united than ever. They believed in their fight,” Ricky Theriault, vice president of the union at the fruits and vegetables warehouse, told the *Militant*. Bernard, a warehouse preparer-loader for 13 years who didn’t want his last name used, said, “We held the line. We have the sentiment that we accomplished something. And we refused a company attempt to install cameras in work areas.” Still, he said, he voted no because he felt that the wage increase wasn’t high enough.

Early in the strike, the company got an injunction preventing picketing within 15 feet of company entrances. Despite Metro hiring strikebreakers — which is supposed to be illegal in Quebec — the government did nothing. Nor did it do anything when the company used two other warehouses,

Theriault says their health and safety protection has been strengthened. Shop steward Mathieu Klein said, “We are going back to work with our heads held high knowing we are now the best-paid workers in the food industry in Quebec.”

— Joe Young

ILWU posts information pickets at American Cruise Lines ports

SEATTLE — Informational pickets by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union are being organized regularly at several Puget Sound ports. They’re distributing leaflets explaining that American Cruise Lines is not using union labor to dock, load and unload their vessels at Washington ports.

Response from passengers to the leafletting was positive. One stopped to say he had been a union electrician all his life and “was with the ILWU” pickets.

A few cruise line workers talked



Militant/Janet Roth

Members of Transport Workers Union rally at Qantas airline terminal in Sydney, Australia, Sept. 24. One-day strike by freight workers demanded raises, jobs, safe working conditions.

with ILWU Local 19 pickets in Seattle’s Shilshole Bay Marina, saying workers are recruited across the country for about \$1,000 per week, working 15 to 18 hours per day, with no safety protection. This works out to about \$10 an hour.

On Sept. 19 five members of the Maritime Union of Australia joined the picket line. Gregory Hannon, who had been to a lively picket in Tacoma sponsored by ILWU Local 23, told the *Militant*, “We appreciate the solidarity and opportunity to exchange experiences with our brothers and sisters in the ILWU regarding the ongoing fight against automation.” Their next stop is going to be Vancouver, British Columbia, where longshore workers face the same issues.

In Seattle, the union pickets on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Dock A, 7001 Seaview Ave. NW.

— Barry Fatland and Michele Smith

Teamster sea salt strikers united in fight with Cargill

NEWARK, Calif. — Going into their seventh week on strike, 120 Teamsters are maintaining their picket lines at the Cargill sea salt plant here fighting for higher wages and a reduction of the huge sums they pay for health insurance.

“We’re all still out here,” Teamster striker Ramon Gonzalez told the *Militant* Sept. 22 as the night picket crew gathered outside Cargill’s operations, including salt evaporation ponds, a

giant mountain of unrefined salt, the processing plant and rail tracks where it is loaded for delivery.

Gonzalez said he’s worked at Cargill for 30 years and this is the first strike he’s been on. “This used to be a good job, people would encourage their relatives and friends to apply,” he said. “But that’s not as true anymore. That’s why we’re on strike.”

“When contracts come up, they offer a wage raise and tout that,” picket Bob Tatakamotonga said Sept. 17. “But then that gets eaten away when they raise our medical fees. We’re saying no more.”

Cargill is one of the biggest processors of sea salt in North America. Yet, in an ad offering jobs to those willing to scab, it claims it’s a “family company.”

Although the company is attempting to run with management and scabs, the strike is having an impact. Union Pacific train crews refuse to pick up the salt. The company no longer tries to schedule work on the weekends. And workers from Mexico who help during the harvest season have not come this year.

The mood on the picket line is upbeat. “We’re staying together, bonding with each other in a way not possible before,” striker Michael Stevenson said.

They need solidarity. Join the picket outside the Cargill plant at 7220 Central Ave. in Newark.

— Betsey Stone

Minneapolis condo workers win first contract, make gains

MINNEAPOLIS — Workers at three large condominium buildings here, members of Service Employees International Union Local 26, have been fighting to win a contract for over a year. To mark this, the union organized a rally and picnic Sept. 12.

At the rally the union announced that Riverview Towers, one of the buildings, had just agreed to a settlement the night before. Liv Ross, a desk attendant at the building, told the gathering they won a wage increase; the right to choose the union insurance plan, which costs almost 50% less than the company’s plan; and job security protection. Cleaners are also covered.

“This is an historic win, this is the first condo contract in Minneapolis,” Greg Nammacher, president of Local 26, told the *Militant*.

A number of Local 26 janitors and security officers who work in downtown office buildings joined in the festivities to show solidarity. The entire rally was translated into Spanish. A meal, both Mexican food and Middle Eastern food, was served to all. Negotiations continue with the owners of the other two condos.

— Helen Meyers

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

October 8, 2001

Washington is positioning its warplanes, troops and warships around Afghanistan, preparing for a brutal assault on the people of that country. At the same time the rulers are not wasting a day in pressing their decades-long offensive against the rights of working people at home.

The further militarization of the country and ability to use military forces at home is a long sought after goal of the ruling class. They are preparing for big class battles with working people that they know are coming down the road. Most of all, the bosses want to do everything in their power to limit the ability of workers to organize, discuss and mobilize in their own interests.

Building on resistance to the imperialist war at home, workers and farmers can join in demanding: End the imperialists’ war against the Afghan people! Stop the assault on workers’ rights!

THE MILITANT

October 8, 1976

Recent polls show increasing numbers of voters sick and tired of capitalist politics and anything but excited by the Democratic and Republican party presidential candidates Gerald Ford and James Carter.

In the first national presidential debate on TV, they had a breakdown and the sound went off. It was “the best thing that could happen,” one worker in a Cleveland bar told a correspondent. “Both candidates demonstrated a firm grip on their lecterns,” was the comment of the editor of Wall Street’s weekly financial newspaper, *Barron’s*.

“I thought the red in Carter’s tie highlighted his hair and the blue of the rug highlighted Ford’s suit,” one woman said in a letter to the NBC affiliate in Nashville, “but I’m going to vote for Peter Camejo of the Socialist Workers Party.”

The SWP is on the ballot in 26 states.

THE MILITANT

October 8, 1951

SAN FRANCISCO — Frank Barbaria and Harry Press, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for Mayor and Supervisor, have completed 18 appearances before union meetings in San Francisco after the first two weeks of campaigning.

The Ship Scalers and Painters local responded with exceptional enthusiasm to Barbaria’s socialist analysis and solution to the workers’ problems. Barbaria described the sharp drop in production in 1949. “The growing economic crisis led to a more intensive struggle to capture old markets and conquer new ones. This is the basic cause of capitalist war.”

During the question period, Barbaria was asked his opinion of the thought-control Smith Act. He replied the first prosecutions under this act was the Minneapolis Case in which 18 leaders of the great Minneapolis Teamsters union and of the SWP were railroaded to prison.

NY rally protests Jew-hatred

Continued from front page

tire people — was the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews. Six million were brutally murdered, 40% of the world’s Jewish population during World War II.

Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom in Israel was “the darkest day in Israel’s history,” Netanyahu said, as “Hamas terrorists committed the worst slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust.” Some 1,200 Jews and others were killed, thousands more wounded, dozens of women raped, and 251 hostages seized. Hamas leaders had hoped to drive deeper into Israel, killing more Jews, but were beaten back. They are the ones with genocidal intent, backed by the Iranian rulers and their proxy forces — Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen and others.

“Lies about Israel have become the newest disguise for the oldest hatred,” Darius Jones, president of the National Black Empowerment Council, told the Sept. 23 rally.

“When criticism becomes collective blame, when it becomes demonization, when it denies an entire people legitimacy and the right to exist, that’s not criticism,” Jones said. “That is that ancient hatred resurrected and weaponized.”

‘The worst and best of humanity’

Several speakers gave moving presentations of how they had stepped forward to stop murderous attacks on Jews during the Hamas pogrom and afterward in the U.S. and elsewhere. Participants listened raptly to the testimony of Shalev Biton and Younes Alkarnawi. Biton, a 27-year-old Jewish survivor of the Nova music festival massacre, whose family is of Moroccan descent, stood beside Alkarnawi, 52, the Bedouin Muslim farmworker who saved his life and that of other Jews.

“In a few hours that morning, I saw the worst of humanity and the best,” Biton said. “The best is standing right here next to me.”

The two men told their story, with Alkarnawi speaking in Hebrew and Biton translating. They are speaking together wherever possible around the world.

That fateful day, eight fleeing Jewish festivalgoers reached the farm where Alkarnawi worked. He confronted Biton, fearing he was Hamas, until he saw he wore an earring. “So I told myself, there is no chance that Hamas terrorists wear earrings. This guy is one of us,” he said, drawing laughter from the rally.

Alkarnawi provided them shelter for many tense hours. When armed Hamas members arrived on motorbikes at the locked farm gates, he told them in Arabic, “I’m a Bedouin from Rahat, I work here.” They demanded to know, “Where are the Jews?” Alkarnawi told them, “There are no Jews here.” The Hamas goons believed him and rode away.

This act of courage saved 33 lives — those of the Nova survivors, 24 Thai migrant farmworkers who had also hid there, and his own.

“Be the thing that hate crimes cannot operate around,” George Zamot, a United Parcel Service driver from the Bronx, told rally participants. He had courageously stepped forward to help counter a brutal antisemitic assault in Manhattan July 23. Moshe Grunhaus, who had been stabbed after coming out of a synagogue, sent a message to Zamot, which was read to the rally: “The world is a better place because of you.”

Arsen Ostrovsky, who was wounded by a bullet that grazed his head during

the antisemitic terror attack at Bondi Beach in Australia last December, described the horror of the shooting of Jews there. A human rights lawyer, he too now tours the world speaking out against the danger of Jew-hatred.

Netanyahu: ‘Israel has no choice’

Israel has had “no other choice,” Netanyahu told the U.N., but to wage a defensive “seven-front war” for the past three years. “Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, Iran, militias in Iraq, militias in Syria” and others have “all ganged up” to try to wipe Israel — and the Jews and others there — “off the face of the earth,” he said. But instead of collapsing, Israel is waging a war to defend its very existence, delivering “crippling blows to all of them.”

“The days when Jews were defenseless victims, marched to the slaughter, those days are over,” Netanyahu said. “Israel didn’t commit genocide. Israel prevented genocide.” The fact is, he said, Israel’s forces have sent millions of messages to Palestinian civilians in Gaza urging them to get out of harm’s way, when they were targeting Hamas for attack. And Hamas forces held Palestinians at gunpoint to use as human shields. Israel is going to win, he said, “we have no other choice.”

In this world of rising Jew-hating violence, the conflict in the Middle



Michael Priest Photography/UJA

Shalev Biton, right, was rescued from Hamas’ Oct. 7, 2023, pogrom at the Nova festival, and Younes Alkarnawi, a Bedouin who saved him. They spoke together at New York protest.

East is not about territory, the Israeli prime minister said, but about “the existence of a Jewish state.”

Israel’s existence is a result of political developments before, during and after World War II. Stalinist parties headed by Moscow betrayed promising revolutionary situations, in Germany, Spain and elsewhere in Europe. This opened the door to the rise of Hitler and his “Final Solution” for the Jews. Imperialist “democracies” in the U.S., United Kingdom and elsewhere shut their doors to all but a few Jews fleeing from the Holocaust. Where else were they to go? This made

the creation of Israel inevitable.

The Israeli prime minister pointed to some of the escalating attacks on Jews worldwide today. “Jews have been murdered in Sydney, Manchester, Montreal, Boulder, Colorado. They’ve been attacked in Los Angeles, London, Paris, Berlin, Washington, D.C.,” he said.

At its founding convention in 1938, the Socialist Workers Party adopted a resolution pledging that the party has “the special task of mobilizing the real defense of persecuted Jews, a defense of necessity based on the might of the organized working class.”

US colonial rule breeds discontent in Puerto Rico

Continued from front page

say in the laws or economic priorities the U.S. rulers force on them.

When the Barack Obama presidency and Republicans joined together in 2016 to impose the Fiscal Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico, some workers hoped it would clean up corruption and improve public services. It didn’t take long before they learned that the only purpose of the Junta, as the board is known here, is to squeeze working people in order to pay off the \$17 billion in debt contracted by the colonial government, and to keep filling the coffers of wealthy bondholders.

Ten years later the unelected Junta still has veto power over the colonial government’s financial decisions. It ordered the government to privatize the electrical system and forced through pension cuts. Even a decision to reactivate five wells to combat periodic water

shortages can’t be implemented without the Junta’s approval.

“I thought the Junta would at least clean up corruption,” 38-year-old teacher’s aide María Soto said when she met *Militant* correspondents visiting San Juan’s Barrio Venezuela Sept. 26. “But they turned out to be just as bad as the government.”

“It’s not our fault the government took out loans,” said her friend, Brenda Rivera, a government worker who lives in Trujillo Alto. “Why should we have to pay the bondholders?”

“I haven’t had a wage raise in 15 years,” she noted. She makes \$1,700 a month, but rent is \$750, her electric bill is over \$100, water costs \$150 and health insurance is \$300 a month.

The government doesn’t care about the “middle class and the poor,” she said. Like in the United States, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have stepped up their arrest and deportation of immigrant workers, especially Dominicans. “They’re not criminals. They’re just trying to feed their families like everybody else,” Rivera said.

Daily brownouts

Puerto Rico’s antiquated electrical grid was decimated by Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017. In 2021 the grid was put in the hands of Luma, a U.S.-Canadian joint venture, after the Junta ordered it privatized. “It was better when it was a public utility,” Soto said. “Now there are blackouts twice a week and brownouts almost every day.” Brownouts, with their low and fluctuating voltages, can severely damage appliances.

“But when you complain to Luma they say it’s not their problem,” Soto said.

Soto was one of hundreds of thousands who joined protests in 2019 that forced Gov. Ricardo Roselló to resign, after years of worsening conditions

for working people, officials’ negligence in the face of hurricanes, and outrage over government corruption. Roselló belonged to the pro-statehood New Progressive Party.

“What good did it do?” Soto asked. “We got rid of Ricky and got Jenniffer González,” from the same party. In her view the other main bourgeois party, the Popular Democratic Party, is no better.

Militant correspondents met construction worker Marino Hernández and government worker Melissa López. They were running a small food stand and grill. “Even though we work full time and our 19-year-old daughter works, it’s not enough,” López said. “So we put up this stand on weekends.”

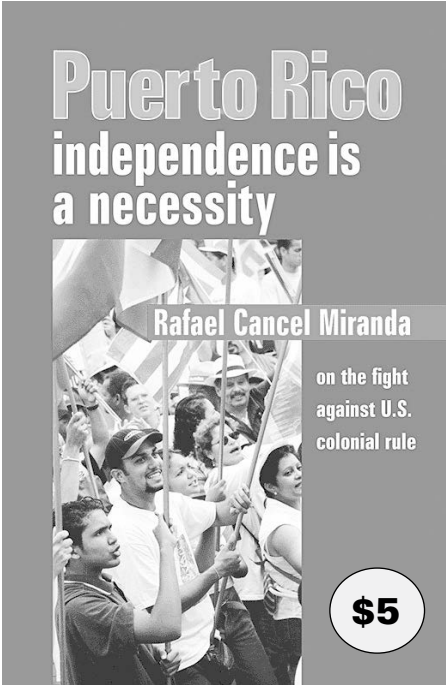
Hernández supports the Popular Democratic Party and blames the statehood party for the electrical blackouts and water shortages. But even though his party is for maintaining Puerto Rico’s subordinate status to Washington, he is for independence. “We’re not ready for independence yet,” he said. “But we have to get ready.”

Earlier this year a drought and the deteriorated water system left hundreds of thousands of homes without running water. Some 65% of the water leaks out of the antiquated system. But the government has no plan for replacing this infrastructure.

José Cajigas, president of the Independent Authentic Union of Workers at Puerto Rico’s water department, told the press the biggest problem is that “years ago there were nearly 5,000 workers, today there are just 2,800.” New hires quit because they are “overworked, disrespected [by bosses] and underpaid.”

The union held a one-day strike Aug. 18 to demand a raise. On Sept. 27 the water department finally agreed to raise the base pay from \$10.50 an hour to \$12. But even that small raise — after 15 years with no increase — must be approved by the Junta.

Recommended reading



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Rail workers face deadly cuts to safety from profit-driven bosses

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — The *Militant* published an article Aug. 17 on the escalation in deaths and injuries of rail workers caused by the bosses’ stepped-up push for profits that has made working conditions even more dangerous. Two more rail workers were killed in early September and another suffered severe leg injuries, all on the job.

The Norfolk Southern conductor with the leg injuries had been knocked off a tank car he was holding onto while his train was being shoved into the Conway Yard near Pittsburgh Sept. 8. He had to be flown to the hospital.

The National Transportation Safety Board took this tragedy into account in an ongoing investigation. The worker’s name wasn’t made public.

On Sept. 21 the NTSB released its conclusions, reporting it had investigated 16 “accidents” to rail workers during shove moves between October 2020 and December 2025. Fourteen of the workers were killed and the other two seriously injured. In issuing the report, the board noted it recently opened two more investigations.

Their proposal: “Prohibit railroads from allowing employees to provide point protection by riding equipment during shoving movements.” It would take a big fight by rail unionists to see this implemented.

Earlier this month there were two other deadly rail “accidents.” On Sept. 3, Moet McCullum, a 41-year-old mother of three and a member of Transport Workers Union Local 100 on the subway in New York City was killed after she was hit by a train while flagging to protect her crew.

And Luc Massie, a Canadian Pacific Kansas City conductor and member of Teamsters Canada Rail Conference, was struck and killed by a train in Montreal’s Ville-Marie borough Sept. 12. He had just gotten married and celebrated his 30th birthday.

Railroad workers know the relentless pressure of 15,000-ton trains run-

ning continuously, day after day. It means the tracks constantly need inspection, repair and replacement. Incredulously, CSX bosses are projecting to furlough over 1,000 members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division from now into at least next year.

In one typical case, CSX furloughs would reduce work crews from 12 to four to maintain “142 miles of mainline track and multiple yards,” BMWED General Chairman Brian Thompson responded. “The work does not disappear. The miles still have to be inspected, the defects still have to be repaired,” adding, “It is reckless.”

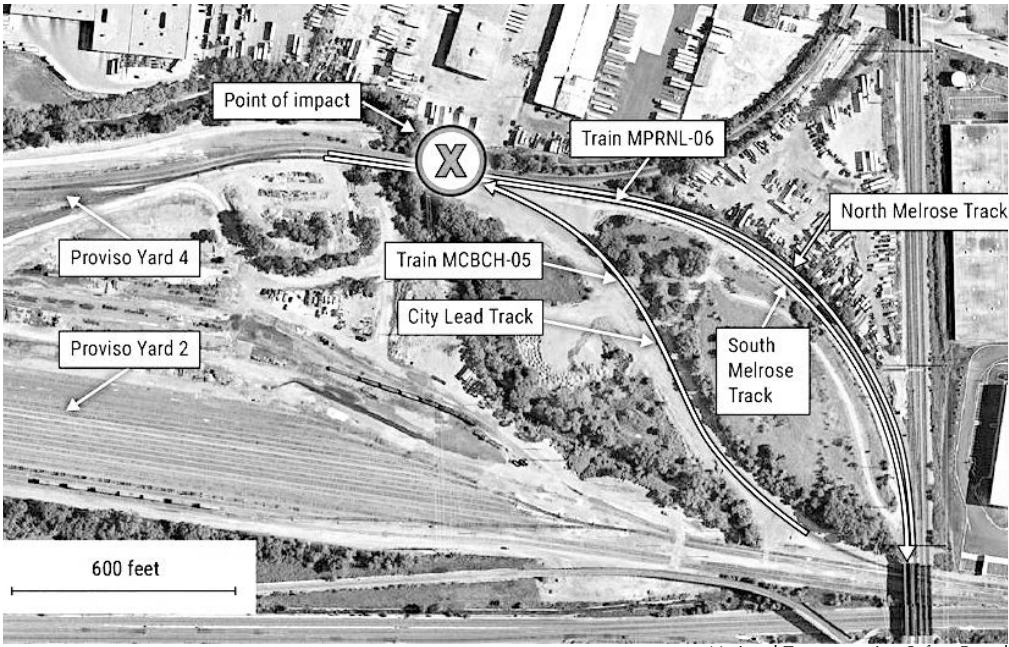
In addition, the union reported, CSX is permanently cutting 165 positions. The rail bosses are “making a conscious choice to have fewer railroaders, more territory, heavier workloads and less maintenance work being performed,” the union said.

At the same time, “CSX recently reported record quarterly revenue of \$3.94 billion, a 17% increase in operating income and approximately \$1 billion in quarterly net earnings.”

“CSX is choosing to cut the workforce and defer maintenance,” the union said. “BMWED is choosing to fight back. We will defend our members, expose the consequences and demand that CSX answer for its decisions.”

Is AI the answer?

The rail bosses claim they can cut away on jobs because they are substituting computers, “smart” devices and artificial intelligence to dispatch, keep track of and ultimately run their



NTSB exhibit shows where new Union Pacific conductor Justin Pender, 27, was killed riding on the side of a car in a shove move at UP Proviso Yard near Chicago, above, in 2024. A September NTSB report said 14 workers were killed, two more badly injured, in similar moves between 2020 and 2025.

trains and repair equipment. But already the serious dangers to workers in this course are coming to light.

A few weeks ago SMART-TD local union members in Washington state released a statement saying BNSF Railway management has still not informed the workforce about the “serious software failure” in their dispatching system June 16.

Instead, it was the American Train Dispatchers Association that informed other rail unions and urged the Federal Railroad Administration to investigate how a train was routed by computer software into a track where a rail worker was working.

An alert dispatcher saw the software error and told the crew to stop the 146-car train, nearly 2 miles long and weighing some 6,500 tons, which included 20 or more cars of hazardous materials. It was the actions of a human being, the dispatcher, who prevented a disaster.

The SMART-TD statement explains that conductors, engineers, switchmen, brakemen, carmen, dispatchers, yardmasters, locomotive

repairmen, track and bridge maintenance workers, signal maintainers, inspectors and the myriad of other rail workers are all needed to deliver freight safely.

And now management is rushing to use AI programs to run trains, replacing human crews altogether!

Rail workers have a different perspective. Stop cutting crews and reinstate the thousands you have cut. Run shorter, lighter and more manageable trains. Put control over rail operations, including use of new technology, in the hands of the unions.

“Our unions need to use union power to run the trains and maintain and inspect equipment and trackage safely,” Naomi Craine, a freight rail conductor and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois, told the *Militant*. “Trains should have a maximum of 50 cars and a crew of four, two on the head-end and two on the rear. These demands would extend protection both to rail workers and to those living, working or driving near the tracks — all in the interest of the working class.”

Hundreds protest ICE operation in towns across Kansas

Continued from front page
been unable to contact her mother who works at National Beef since federal agents stopped the vehicle she was traveling in. “We have a voice

call with her saying, ‘They’re shoving me, they’re hurting me.’ Then they took her phone away.” ICE agents, who claim they only target “the worst of the worst” convicted criminals, lay in wait to roust workers near the meatpacking plants.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 2 represents 2,500 workers at National Beef in Dodge City. “No one should have to live in fear of going to work, sending their kids to school, or shopping at the grocery store,” Martin Rosas, the local’s president, told the press.

“We stand arm in arm with all UFCW members in Dodge City and Liberal and condemn ICE’s presence,” UFCW International President Milton Jones said in a statement released Sept. 24.

Frank Duran, a worker at Cargill’s Dodge City plant, and his daughter, Guadalupe Navarrete, who works at National Beef in Liberal, told the press that they were stopped on their way home from work by federal agents. Navarrete showed the agents her identification, but when she asked why they’d been pulled over, the officer refused to answer. “They profiled us,” Duran said.

With many workers staying home, bosses at some plants cut back schedules, while several restaurants had to

close. “Fear is spreading,” said the owners of the Cabana Mexican Grill in Garden City, announcing its shutdown. “We refuse to pressure employees into risking separation from their families just so we can sell another plate of food.”

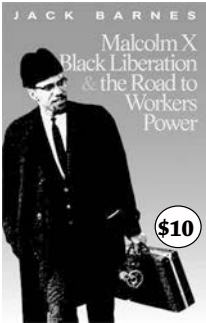
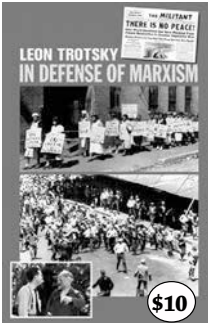
Kansas ranks second nationwide in cattle processing, behind Nebraska. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that the estimated number of cattle killed in the days during and after the raids had dropped, prompting complaints about ICE from packinghouse bosses.

Municipal officials in Dodge City and Garden City announced Sept. 25 that ICE agents had concluded their operations in the area just hours after the Dodge City protest. Over 100 workers were detained.

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Havana event discusses Cuban role in Africa independence struggle

Continued from front page

Fidel Castro, that overthrew Fulgencio Batista's U.S.-backed military dictatorship in 1959 and opened the road to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. He then helped lead the battles that defeated U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary bandits who terrorized working people in the Escambray mountains. And over the decades he has shouldered many other leadership responsibilities both in Cuba and Africa.

Sara Sánchez, director of the center, welcomed those present and joined the speakers table. The panelists were Dreke, Oscar Oramas and Jonathan Silberman. Oramas was Cuba's ambassador to Guinea-Conakry during much of the independence war and is interviewed in the book. Silberman is the director of Pathfinder Books in London and a leader of the Communist League in the United Kingdom.

The meeting was chaired by Ana Morales, program director at Havana's Africa House. She was the founding director of the medical school in independent Guinea-Bissau in 1986.

Morales recognized the presence of Edna Barreto, Cape Verde's ambassador to Cuba. Also in attendance were local leaders of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, as well as Cubans who have shouldered prominent responsibilities in public health and a number of Cubans who heard about the meeting by word of mouth.

Lessons from Congo, Guinea-Bissau

Oramas said the story of Cuba's participation in the anti-colonial war in Guinea-Bissau builds on "an earlier struggle that Dreke was part of in the Congo alongside Che." In 1965 a unit of 130 Cuban volunteers led by Ernesto Che Guevara joined Congolese fighters battling the imperialist-backed regime there. Dreke was second-in-command of that mission under Guevara.

The Congo mission, Oramas said, was "a school where much was learned, where lessons were drawn that aided the struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde." The Congolese leaders were beset by internal rivalries, lack of discipline and marked by tribal loyalties and superstition.

In contrast, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), led by Amílcar Cabral, was a politically steered, disciplined organization that involved the population in a movement capable of defeating Portuguese colonialism.

The lessons of both the Congo and Guinea-Bissau, Oramas noted, made



Courtesy of Víctor Dreke

Amílcar Cabral, left, leader of liberation forces in Guinea-Bissau, met with Víctor Dreke in Conakry, Guinea, in 1967. Dreke led Cuba's military mission there, collaborated with Cabral.

possible the success of subsequent Cuban military missions in Africa. These included helping lead the defense of Angola from invasions by South Africa's white-supremacist regime and winning the independence of Namibia. That struggle led to the fall of the apartheid state in South Africa itself.

These are examples, he said, of what Fidel Castro meant when he explained, "We have created a revolution larger than ourselves." That's why today, Oramas said, "the imperialists want to suffocate the Cuban people."

Cabral's leadership

The speakers highlighted Amílcar Cabral's leadership capacities. Cabral led the political fight in the independence movement to break down ethnic and tribal enmities that the colonial masters fostered as part of their divide-and-rule tactics. He championed the fight for women's emancipation and their participation in the independence struggle. He explained that the fight was against Portuguese colonialism, not the Portuguese people, and that the Portuguese soldiers, most of them exploited peasants, could be won as allies in a struggle against their common enemy.

Cabral led the combatants to see themselves as part of a global struggle against imperialism, as "soldiers of humanity." We are fighting, he said, not to replace European "white faces" with African "black faces" but "so that our peoples may never more be exploited."

The PAIGC leader didn't live to see the victory himself — he was assassinated in January 1973 in an operation organized by the Portuguese secret police. But the party he built was able to

win independence for Guinea-Bissau in 1974 and Cape Verde the following year. Their victorious struggle triggered the collapse of the fascist dictatorship in Portugal itself and of the vast 500-year-old Portuguese empire in Africa.

Dreke, who today is president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association, spoke about the importance Fidel Castro gave to aiding the anti-colonial struggle in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. In 1966 the Cuban leadership invited a PAIGC delegation headed by Cabral to attend an international gathering in Havana of anti-imperialist forces known as the Tricontinental Conference. Impressed by Cabral's contribution to the discussion, Castro invited him to the Escambray mountains for three days to show him how the Cuban Revolution was transforming social conditions in that region for the benefit of rural toilers.

"On the front cover of the book you can see a photo of Fidel and Amílcar during their visit to the Escambray," Dreke said.

Dreke noted the close collaboration between the Cubans and the PAIGC on the battlefield, including what they learned from Cabral's leadership. He paid tribute to the contributions of other Cuban combatants who are interviewed in the final chapter of the book. These include Col. Alfonso Pérez Morales and Lt. Eduardo Torres Ferrer, better known as "Pina" and "Coqui," who in 1966 were among the first Cuban combatants to arrive in Guinea-Bissau. And Col. René Hernández Gattorno who played an important role in the battle where the liberation fighters took the Portuguese garrison of Guilede in 1973.

Castro sent Commander Raúl Díaz

Argüelles to collaborate directly with PAIGC commander João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira in leading the offensive at Guilede, which turned the tide of the war, leading to the defeat of the Portuguese colonial army.

A tool for today's struggles

In his remarks, Silberman said Pathfinder had published the book for working people around the world "resisting the effects of today's gigantic international capitalist crisis and its wars." The story told in *Cuba and the Independence War in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde* shows that, with a leadership of the caliber of Amílcar Cabral, working people in a small African country could defeat an imperial power with many more military and economic resources.

"It also gives the answer when we are asked what's behind Washington's decades-long aggression against Cuba and its sharp escalation today. It's not because Cuba is 'a threat to U.S. national security,' as imperialist spokespeople claim, but because of the threat of its example. The book explains what the Cuban Revolution is and how working people in Cuba changed themselves as they helped change the world. And how Fidel Castro led working people along that proletarian internationalist course."

Dreke's book, now available in English, Spanish, French and Arabic, has received a great response, Silberman said. Book presentations have already drawn audiences in the United States, Norway, Australia and France, anxious to learn about this little-known struggle.

During the lively discussion period, María del Carmen Betancourt, president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution in Old Havana, said, "This book is a study tool for young people, for combatants like us to tell this history."

Dr. Luis Estruch Rancano, a founder of the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) in Havana, pointed out that, in addition to the Cuban internationalists who fought in Africa, the Cuban government has offered scholarships to thousands of youth from around the world to study medicine here. "Some of the first ELAM scholarships were for students from Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and other African countries," he said. "That, too, is part of the revolution."

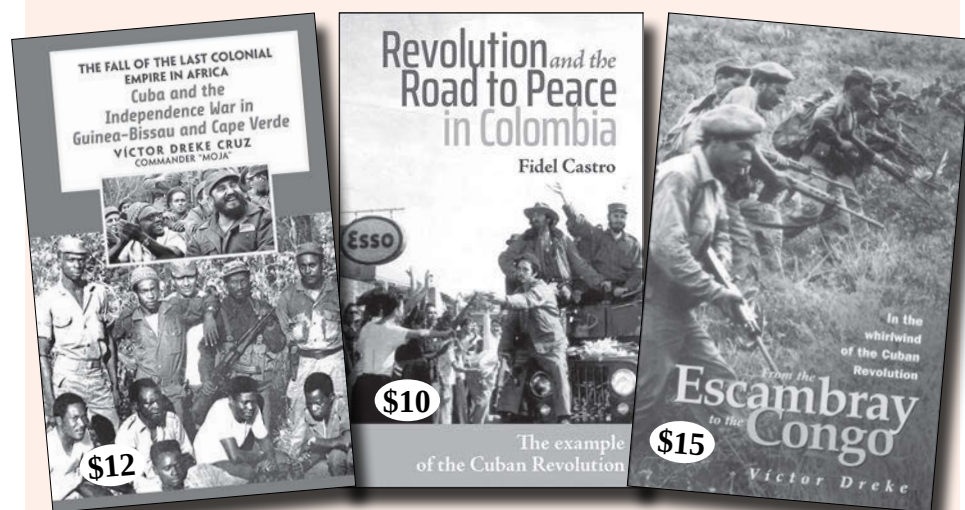
Following the program, audience members welcomed the opportunity to buy copies of Dreke's book and other Pathfinder titles, both on the Cuban Revolution and on the class struggle worldwide.



Amílcar Cabral Foundation, Cape Verde

After training in Cuba, Cape Verdeans rest before returning in 1967 to join the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau. Cuban internationalist aid was decisive in African independence battles.

Read about example of Cuba's Revolution



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V.I. Lenin: ‘The world proletarian revolution is invincible’

One of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for October is Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922 by Farrell Dobbs. It is the second of his two books on Marxist leadership in the U.S. Dobbs was a central leader of the Minneapolis Teamsters strikes in 1934, then of the Teamsters campaign to organize over-the-road drivers across the Midwest. As Socialist Workers Party national secretary from 1953 to 1972, Dobbs led the building of the proletarian revolutionary party needed to lead the fight to end capitalist rule. Below is an excerpt from the Aug. 20, 1918, “Letter to American Workers” by V.I. Lenin, an appendix to the book. Copyright © 1983 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY V.I. LENIN

The international imperialist bourgeoisie have slaughtered ten million men and maimed twenty million in “their” war, the war to decide whether the British or the German vultures are to rule the world.

If *our* war, the war of the oppressed and exploited against the oppressors and the exploiters, results in half a million or a million casualties in all countries, the bourgeoisie will say that the former casualties are justi-



V.I. Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Party that led world’s first socialist revolution, speaking in Moscow in 1920 to army leaving for Polish front. Leon Trotsky on stairs at right.

fied, while the latter are criminal.

The proletariat will have something entirely different to say.

Now, amidst the horrors of the imperialist war, the proletariat is receiving a most vivid and striking illustration of the great truth taught by all revolutions and bequeathed to the workers by their best teachers, the founders of modern socialism. This truth is that no revolution can be successful *unless the resistance of the exploiters is crushed*. When we, the workers and toiling peasants, captured state power, it became our duty to crush the resistance of the exploiters. We are proud we have been doing this. We regret we are not doing it with sufficient firmness and determination.

We know that fierce resistance to the socialist revolution on the part of the bourgeoisie is inevitable in all countries, and that this resistance will *grow* with the growth of this revolution. The proletariat will crush this resistance; during the struggle against the resisting bourgeoisie it will finally mature for victory and for power. ...

[E]ven if we committed 10,000 mistakes for every 100 correct actions we performed, even in that case our revolution would be great and invincible, *and so it will be in the eyes of world history*, because, *for the first time*, not the minority, not the rich alone, not the educated alone, but the real people, the vast majority of the work-

ing people, are *themselves* building a new life, are *by their own experience* solving the most difficult problems of socialist organisation. ...

The old bourgeois-democratic constitutions waxed eloquent about formal equality and right of assembly; but our proletarian and peasant Soviet Constitution casts aside the hypocrisy of formal equality. When the bourgeois republicans overturned thrones they did not worry about formal equality between monarchists and republicans. When it is a matter of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, only traitors or idiots can demand formal equality of rights for the bourgeoisie. “Freedom of assembly” for workers and peasants is not worth a farthing when the best buildings belong to the bourgeoisie. Our Soviets have *confiscated* all the good buildings in town and country from the rich and have *transferred all* of them to the workers and peasants *for their* unions and meetings. This is *our* freedom of assembly — for the working people! This is the meaning and content of our Soviet, our socialist Constitution!

That is why we are all so firmly convinced that no matter what misfortunes may still be in store for it, our Republic of Soviets is *invincible*.

It is invincible because every blow struck by frenzied imperialism, every defeat the international bourgeoisie inflict on us, rouses more and more sections of the workers and peasants to

the struggle, teaches them at the cost of enormous sacrifice, steels them and engenders new heroism on a mass scale.

We know that help from you will probably not come soon, comrade American workers, for the revolution is developing in different countries in different forms and at different tempos (and it cannot be otherwise). We know that although the European proletarian revolution has been maturing very rapidly lately, it may, after all, not flare up within the next few weeks. We are banking on the inevitability of the world revolution, but this does not mean that we are such fools as to bank on the revolution inevitably coming on a *definite* and early date. We have seen two great revolutions in our country, 1905 and 1917, and we know revolutions are not made to order, or by agreement. We know that circumstances brought *our* Russian detachment of the socialist proletariat to the fore not because of our merits, but because of the exceptional backwardness of Russia, and that *before* the world revolution breaks out a number of separate revolutions may be defeated.

In spite of this, we are firmly convinced that we are invincible, because the spirit of mankind will not be broken by the imperialist slaughter. Mankind will vanquish it. And the first country to *break* the convict chains of the imperialist war was *our* country. We sustained enormously heavy casualties in the struggle to break these chains, but we *broke* them. We are *free from* imperialist dependence, we have raised the banner of struggle for the complete overthrow of imperialism for the whole world to see.

We are now, as it were, in a besieged fortress, waiting for the other detachments of the world socialist revolution to come to our relief. These detachments *exist*, they are *more numerous* than ours, they are maturing, growing, gaining more strength the longer the brutalities of imperialism continue. ... Slowly but surely the workers are adopting communist, Bolshevik tactics and are marching towards the proletarian revolution, which alone is capable of saving dying culture and dying mankind.

In short, we are invincible, because the world proletarian revolution is invincible.

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Defend and extend constitutional freedoms!

“Defending and extending the freedoms protected by the US Constitution is at the center of the class struggle,” the Socialist Workers Party said in its political resolution adopted in 2022. “Workers and farmers must organize and act to prevent the federal government’s assault on these freedoms, which we have won in class battles over some two and a half centuries. We must oppose the US rulers’ relentless drive to refurbish the reputation and expand the use of the government’s political police, first and foremost the FBI.”

Today the U.S. rulers are deepening their drive against workers’ wages and conditions, sharpening conflicts with rivals abroad and accelerating their brutal blockade, seeking to overturn Cuba’s socialist revolution. In the imperialist epoch, capitalist rulers everywhere are preparing for more and bloodier wars. And Washington is driven to assault constitutional freedoms, to try to weaken workers’ ability to defend ourselves and to act together with fellow workers around the world.

The Justice Department recently said anyone involved in “public demonstrations” that it claims further the “goals of the foreign power” — like Cuba — must register as a foreign agent. This is a barefaced attempt to silence opposition to the U.S. rulers’ foreign maneuvers.

Sen. Bill Cassidy, chair of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, is targeting the International Association of Machinists for having the gall to extend solidarity to the Cuban people and for making its union hall in Los Angeles available for a meeting opposing the U.S. blockade. Cassidy demanded the union turn over details of all its alleged ties to the Cuban government and its collaboration with Cuba solidarity groups in the U.S.

These spokespeople for U.S. imperialism say the unions have no right to use their own funds to speak out on foreign policy. But the labor movement has a big stake in world developments and in opposing these moves. It needs to defend all or-

ganizations whose constitutional protections are under attack, regardless of who these attacks are directed against.

Similar assaults on free speech and association were launched by the Franklin Roosevelt administration as it prepared to enter the second imperialist world war, fought over turf and plunder. It claimed it was combating un-American “subversives.” Utilizing the FBI, the government framed up and imprisoned leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Teamsters under the Smith “Gag” Act. Their real “crime” was organizing opposition in the labor movement to Washington’s drive to use working people as cannon fodder in the war.

The SWP led an international defense campaign to combat the frame-up, winning wide support.

The party again took the lead in fighting government witch hunts in the 1950s. It led a broad-based effort to defeat the attempt by officials in Michigan to declare party members “subversive” and subject to imprisonment and to bar the party from the state ballot under the Trucks Act. It fought and reversed the firing of World War II veteran James Kutcher from a federal government job because of his party membership. It defeated attempts to deport party leader and Teamster fighter Carl Skoglund.

In 1973 the SWP initiated a political fight and lawsuit against decades of FBI spying, harassment and disruption. Its victory in that case broke new ground in pushing back government assaults on constitutional protections.

The SWP was the only party that could do this because there is nothing it does that contradicts what it says. It has no secrets or special goals of its own. Everything the SWP does is to advance the class battles of working people, and to build a party capable of leading the toilers to take political power into our own hands to run society in the interests of the vast majority.

In the course of advancing these struggles today, the unconditional defense of constitutional freedoms remains indispensable.

Canadian gov’t deepens attack on right to strike

Continued from front page

workers to end strike action. But the decision by 10,000 Air Canada flight attendants, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, to defy a back-to-work order against them in August last year, a decision backed by the entire labor movement, set a powerful example the bosses’ government is seeking to reverse. Unions have called for the repeal of all of Section 107.

With passage of Bill C-39, the labor minister would have the power to end any strike they deem significantly disrupts the Canadian economy, causes significant social disruption or impacts freedom of association. Already, Section 107 gives labor ministers the power to extend existing contracts or impose binding arbitration.

Business groups quickly spoke out in favor of the proposed changes. Pascal Chan, vice president of strategic policy and supply chains at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, hailed the bill’s creation of new “dispute resolution tools” for labor disputes, as well as the preservation of government powers to shut down strikes or lockouts, saying the bill helps create certainty for the capitalists’ investment projects.

Say no to attack on right to strike

In a statement issued Sept. 25, the Canadian Labour Congress called on Parliament to remove Bill C-39’s new restrictions on the right to strike.

“When large corporations are cheering new government powers to shut down legal strikes, workers should be alarmed. The right to strike only means something if workers can use it when it matters,” said Bea Bruske, president of the Canadian Labour Congress. “If employers believe government will step in when the pressure is on, they have less reason to compromise. A right you cannot exercise is not a right.”

On Sept. 23 the National Executive Board of Cana-

da’s largest union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, announced that it had unanimously voted to defy Bill C-39’s restrictions on the right to strike if the legislation passes as written.

The day before the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, whose more than 7,000 members move more than 500 billion Canadian dollars’ worth (\$350 billion) of goods through Canada’s West Coast ports yearly, condemned the tightening of Section 107 “which effectively legislates away ILWU members’ right to strike.” It’s an “attack on our members’ fundamental rights,” the union said.

The ILWU also denounced the government’s attack on “longshore workers’ freedom of association by letting employers ask the Canada Industrial Relations Board to redraw bargaining units established by our members.”

Joe Young, Communist League candidate in the Oct. 5 Quebec National Assembly elections in the St. Laurent electoral district here, said he opposes the proposed changes to Section 107, which is “already a weapon used against workers in their struggle for better wages and working condition, including safety on the job.”

Young recently joined the picket line with 1,200 Steelworkers on strike at National Steel Car in Hamilton, Ontario, pledging to build solidarity for their fight. For more than six weeks they’ve been battling for better pay and against unsafe working conditions. Seven workers there have been killed on the job since the 1970s.

“Hard-fought struggles like this one show the importance of workers having the right to strike, to use our collective power to defend our interests,” he tells workers as he campaigns. “These fights also indicate the pressing need for the labor movement to join in building solidarity with all workers in conflict with the bosses — be it a strike or a lockout.”

Navy: 8 sailors tried suicide on USS Lincoln

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao admitted in a Sept. 22 letter to Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand that eight sailors attempted suicide while deployed on the USS Abraham Lincoln and its support ships. The aircraft carrier strike group spent more than seven months in Mideast waters for military operations against the rulers in Tehran.

One sailor jumped overboard from the Abraham Lincoln in early August before being recovered by an air wing search-and-rescue helicopter. Another sailor “attempted to go overboard in March and was stopped by his shipmates,” Cao said.

The carrier group played a key role in the U.S. bombing campaign against the Iranian people and in Washington’s ongoing blockade of Iranian ports. Many of the troops — workers and farmers in uniform — were totally unprepared for the months of intense combat conditions without any shore leave.

The USS Abraham Lincoln was accompanied by a cruiser and destroyers and with its dozens of aircraft, involving around 7,000 people — sailors, Marines and other troops.

The Lincoln set an unenviable modern Navy record for having spent more than 280 days at sea without a port call. That means they had no respite from the war drums, and limited replenishment of supplies or maintenance for the ship.

“Earlier in deployment,” Cao’s letter said, “the ship experienced localized piping failures and temporary issues with its reverse osmosis desalination units.” Translated into English, this meant conditions for the sailors deteriorated.

Top government officials have tried to pretty up the situation. War Secretary Peter Hegseth insisted that conditions aboard the Lincoln were “completely misrepresented.” In an astounding piece of denial, President Donald Trump said the deployment “was not nearly long enough.” And the Democrats, who have no more concern for workers in uniform — as they showed graphically in Vietnam, Afghanistan and other wars they led — other than their efforts to benefit from this becoming a midterm election issue.

Meanwhile, Navy brass asserted that these suicide attempts were consistent with the overall percentage among U.S. sailors worldwide. In 2024 the Navy reported 356 suicide attempts, and there were more than 1,500 attempts among all active duty military personnel that year. This just underscores the fact that U.S. troops aren’t given proper training to prepare themselves for combat conditions.

Concerns about conditions sailors faced on the USS Abraham Lincoln were publicly aired at an August town hall meeting in San Diego, a major U.S. naval base. Family members and others there told military officials about how these sailors — their children, parents and other relatives — were forced to live day to day in cramped quarters with substandard food and sanitation, and expressed their concerns about more suicide attempts to come.

Navy officials tried to downplay the situation. “Based on information available to the command, we have not identified an increase in reported suicidal ideation or suicide attempts aboard the ship,” one Navy official said.

Our trade unions need to intervene, to fight so that workers are not just thrown into combat without adequate training. They need to learn how to handle the tools of war. This has nothing to do with being gung-ho partisans of the U.S. rulers’ imperialist war abroad. It has everything to do with being able to work together to survive and return home.

As the capitalist rulers drive toward more wars, amid sharpening competition with their rivals for markets, raw materials, exploitation of labor, and profits, this becomes an increasingly important question for the working class.

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