Oil workers strike continues as focus shifts to local talks

BY ANNE PARKER
WHITING, Ind. — Oil refinery workers remain on the picket lines here and across the country after the United Steelworkers announced March 12 that a tentative agreement had been reached with Shell Oil on a pattern framework for contracts in union-organized refineries. Contract talks have shifted both to other national companies and to local issues at each refinery. No dates have yet been set for votes on contracts.

Oil workers went on strike Feb. 1, their first nationwide strike since 1980, fighting for more hiring, shorter hours, increased rest time and safer working conditions; to bring more maintenance workers into the union; and to keep the “retrogression clause,” which guarantees gains won in the past would continue.

In a press release the USW said the pattern agreement calls for reviews of staffing levels and status of maintenance workers as well as honoring previous contract agreements.

The four-year contract proposal sets wage increases of 2.5 percent the first year, 3.5 percent each of the next two, and 3.5 percent the last year. It maintains the current health care program, where the bosses pay 80 percent of the premium.

Meanwhile, picket lines remain at struck facilities and locals continue to

Continued on page 3

$15 and a union!  
Join fast-food workers protests April 15!  
For more info on actions across the U.S. visit:  
april15.org

‘Militant’ backs the union, tells the truth about workers’ battles

BY MAGGIE TROWE
“Thank you for supporting the union and keeping the truth about the union in the news,” said Caleb Rabalais, a pipefitter at Shell in Texas City, Texas, as he purchased a copy of the Militant March 12, as a tentative agreement on a national contract between Shell and the United Steelworkers was announced.

The strike, which began Feb. 1, continues, as Steelworkers negotiate local contracts from Anacortes, Washington, to Catlettsburg, Kentucky.

A growing number of oil workers across the country look to the Militant not only for accurate reporting on the stakes of the strike and solidarity with their battle to defend safety on the job, Continued on page 4

Tour backs fight against naval base, US intervention in Korea

BY SETH GALINSKY
Two participants in the fight against the construction of a South Korean naval and submarine base that will also be used by the U.S. military in the village of Gwangjong on Jeju Island on the southern tip of South Korea have begun a U.S. speaking tour to win support. The campaign against the base has become a rallying point against Washington’s decades-long record of trampling on Korean sovereignty and the rights of workers and farmers on the island and U.S. imperialist intervention in the region.

The tour is titled “If You Don’t Give Up, You Can’t Lose” and features two veterans of protests against the base, Korean-born Hye Eun Park and Paco Michelson, from Indiana.

The 11-city tour, which starts in Boston March 17 and ends in Portland, Oregon, April 20, also features the film “Gureombi — The Wind Is Blowing,” which documents the fight against the base. More than 700 island residents and their supporters have been arrested for participating in peaceful civil disobedience.


Continued on page 4

‘Cuba’s revolution and principles not negotiable’

Women’s delegation speaks at NY events

BY NAOMI CRAINE
NEW YORK — “The Cuban people welcome talks with the U.S. government, on the basis of respect,” said Teresa Amarelle Boué, general secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), at a citywide meeting at Fordham Law School March 14.

“The Cuban government has made clear that we maintain our principles, which are not negotiable.”

Amarelle, who is also a member of Cuba’s National Assembly and Council of State, headed the delegation from the FMC and other Cuban organizations to the United Nations 59th annual Commission on the Status of Women. The commission, held March 9-20, occurred in tandem with events at the U.N. involving more than 1,100 nongovernmental organizations.

Members of the Cuban delegation also took part in activities in New

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Ukraine workers defend jobs, wages against Kiev gov’t, separatist attacks

BY NAOMI CRAINE AND JOHN STUDER
From the mines and railroads to the country’s largest airport, workers across Ukraine are fighting to defend their jobs and conditions of life and work, in face of attacks by the bosses and their government, spurred by economic contraction exacerbated by the Moscow-backed separatist war in the east. Many see these struggles as a continuation of what they fought for in the Maidan, the mass popular protest movement against the corruption, brutality and subservience to Moscow of former President Viktor Yanukovych, who was toppled in February 2014. Unionists view the current government in Kiev not as a product of

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The council then deadlocked in a 4-4-1 vote on the motion to appoint Beyda.

“What I’m seeing right now is someone potentially being denied a position because they’re Jewish,” Baral told the council after the vote. “I see no other reason.”

UCLA administrator Debra Geller, who advises the students association, intervened and the council reversed its vote, unanimously voting to appoint Beyda to the post.

A week after the vote, the Daily Bruin, the student newspaper, printed a letter from Rachel Frenklak, Beyda’s roommate, who was at the hearing. Beyda’s testimony was followed by “a disgusting 40 minutes of what can only be described as unequivocal anti-Semitism during which some of our council members resorted to some of the oldest accusations against Jews, including divided loyalties and dishonesty,” she wrote.

On Feb. 20, after a growing outcry, the four council members who had voted against Beyda apologized in a letter in the Bruin. “Our intentions were never to attack, insult or delegitimize the identity of an individual or people,” they claimed.

“A foul odor is in the air,” said a joint reply by David Myers, chair of the history department; Chaim Seidler-Feller, executive director of UCLA Hillel; and Maia Ferdman, a Latin American studies student, in the March 9 Bruin. “Their contrition is welcome, but these cases are wake-up calls. As much as we assumed it to be dead, the Jewish Question lives on.”

The New York Times in a March 6 article that brought the incident to national attention noted that there “appears to be a surge of hostile sentiment directed against Jews at many campuses.” The Times said it was “often a byproduct of animosity toward the policies of Israel.”

At the council meeting that discussed her candidacy for the board, no one asked Beyda about her opinions of Israel or its policies.

A week earlier the UCLA Judicial Board had taken up a case involving conflict of interest charges filed by the campus chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine against two council members who had voted on a resolution calling on the college administration to divest from companies that do business in the West Bank after they went on a free trip to Israel.

UCLA Students for Justice in Palestine distanced itself from the anti-Jewish statements made during the recent student council debate. In a Feb. 24 statement, the group said that it was not involved in the Judicial Board issue and strongly believes in the ability of any student at UCLA, regardless of background, to serve in that or any other position on campus.”

— Dag Tirsén

UK communist candidate hails Kurdish women fighters

MANCHESTER, England — “On March 8 we celebrate the advances made by women around the world. This year we can add the advances made by the Kurds. Today especially we celebrate the role of women in Syria and Iraq fighting to stop Islamic State,” said Catharina Tirsén, Communist League candidate for Manchester City Council in Bradford ward. She was speaking at a meeting of more than 100 Kurdish women and men gathered to celebrate International Women’s Day, organized by the Manchester Kurdish Cultural Centre here.

“Across northern Syria, women comprise more than one-third of the Kurdish fighting forces,” Tirsén said. “I campaign door to door in working class areas, talking with people and showing them the Militant newspaper. And I must say, when you mention the Kurdish women combatants to anyone, especially women, you get a broad smile in response. “Your light has strengthened the confidence of workers around the world,” she said. “It gives us the confidence that we, ordinary working people, can fight and change history. We can fight for a homeland, like the Kurdish people are doing. And we can fight for a government of our own, a government of working people, the strongest weapon we can have, as the Cuban Revolution shows.”

— Dag Tirsén

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Battles at local level

“It doesn’t look like we will get a quick settlement at Marathon,” Dave Martin, vice president of Steelworkers Local 8-719 on strike at the company’s Catlettsburg, Kentucky, refinery told the Militant. “At the negotiating session the company refused to agree to no re-gression. They are proposing to take away major things in the contract. We filed unfair labor practice charges and a federal mediator is coming.”

“At the hotel where the negotiations took place we had a rally of over 100,” Martin said. “We had guys in the front and the back when the company came out for lunch. They huddled at the door and didn’t want to come out. We yelled, ‘We want a fair contract!’ And we were still there when they came back from lunch. Then they told us we would lose.”

“Our biggest concern is that BP proposes to expand the management rights section of the contract to remove the bargaining rights of the local.” Dave Danko, president of Steelworkers Local 7-1, representing more than 1,000 BP refinery workers here, told the Militant. In clauses like this, the bosses claim sole rights to determine conditions in the refinery. “The company will be able to dictate what we do and eliminate our input over working conditions. They want to make us a union in name only.”

“We have been supporting us and they haven’t given up. At the LyondellBasell refinery in Houston the company broke off negotiations with Steelworkers Local 15-227, claiming the “union needed a cooling off period.” Joshua Lege, an officer of the local, told the Chronicle that this was a “stalling tactic.”

“The company forced us to picket right next to the highway, and they removed our portable toilets from company property. We even confronted a serious union-busting back-to-work campaign.”

“We refused to accept a contract unless it included all of our previous gains, like seniority, bidding rights and union safety reps,” Clark said. “The solidarity and support we’ve received on the picket lines, at rallies and in the union hall has been tremendous. We can’t do this alone.”

Clark said he and some other workers are concerned about the pattern contract language on “stalling” and “fa- tigue.” “It leaves the final decision up to the company,” he said.

“Strike has united us”

Many workers say they feel stronger because of their experiences in the strike.

“We’ve worked for nonunion contrac-tors before,” said Caleb Rabalais, a member of Local 13-1 on strike against Shell in Deer Park. “Sometimes the bosses treat you like you’re just a mem-ber, not even human. They say, ‘If you don’t like it, hit the road.’ There’s a long line of people who will take your place.” But now I’ve seen what it means to have a union to stand up together and defend the safety and dignity of every mem-ber.”

In Martinez, California, more than 100 people took part in a family day March 14 at the main gate of the Tesoro refinery where Steelworkers Local 5 is on strike. Hot dogs were provided and games for the kids. “We may not have completed the strike yet, but we’ve ac-complished a lot. The strike has united all of us union members in different re-fineries here,” CriFF Reyes, a picket cap-tain, told the Militant.

“When this is over, we’ll have to go to other pickets,” John Anderson, a striker at Tesoro in Anacortes, Wash-ington, told the Militant March 16. “Look at the farmworkers who have been taken advantage of. We’ll have to help them.” The bulletin board at Steelworkers Local 12-591 headquarters in Anacortes is covered with soli-darity messages from other unions. Members of the local spoke at an In-ternational Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 19 meeting in Seattle the week before.

Patti Iyama, a retired refinery worker in Martinez, California; Mark Simon in Houston; and John Naubert in Ana-cortes, Washington, contributed to this article.
London rally: ‘Release Ukrainian pilot jailed in Russia’

Militant/Anne Howie

LONDON — A couple hundred people — Ukrainians, Russians and others — joined a demonstration outside the Russian Embassy in London March 1 to demand the release of Nadiya Savchenko, Ukrainian helicopter pilot imprisoned in Russia, and to demand prosecution of those who killed Boris Nemtsov, a Russian opposition politician shot down in Moscow two days earlier.

“It’s important to show the world is not against ordinary Russians. We have a common enemy,” said Nadia Pylypyuk. She is part of the London Euromaidan group that has organized protests and events in support of the massive popular uprising in Ukraine last year and in defense of Ukrainian sovereignty.

OLOF ANDRA PROPPÉ AND ANNE HOWIE

The striker's have a soup kitchen, reminiscent of those set up in the Maidan, with "all the flavors and emotions of the Revolution of Dignity, which gives us strength to fight," said Benjamin Tymoshenko, vice president of the Trade Union Association of Civil Aviation Flight Personnel, the Confederation of Free Trade Unions reported. He warned that the government was risking its own existence by "betraying the Maidan."

"The situation in the rail sector is very bad as well," Simvolokov said. The Militant. Rail workers are currently taking the government to court because "they’re trying to cut pensions and end the right to early retirement, which they won previously because it’s a very dangerous job," he said. "They’re also trying to get one person to do the work of two," some- thing rail workers in North America are quite familiar with.

Steelworkers are on strike against Tesoro, 11 oil workers have subscribed to the Militant, 60 have bought single copies and two bought books — Absolved by Solidarity, featuring painting and commentary by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five; and Socialism on Trial by James P. Cannon. The latter title outlines the revolutionary program of the working class, as presented on the witness stand by Cannon, then national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, during the 1941 frame-up trial of leaders of the Minneapolis labor movement and the SWP for "seditious conspiracy."

During a visit to New York of a leadership delegation of the Federation of Cuban Women to speak at the United Nations and at a number of community events, several subscriptions to the Militant were sold, as well as 20 copies of Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution, five copies of Women and Revolution and a range of other Pathfinder publications. Militant distributors around the world are stepping up efforts to sell subscriptions to workers and farmers involved in labor and social struggles, and are organizing teams to knock on doors in working-class neighborhoods in cities and small towns, in preparation for a spring drive to boost circulation.

Join us in getting the Militant around. Contact one of the distributors listed on page 8.
NY McDonald's workers protest unsafe conditions on the job

NEW YORK — Safety! Respect! More money in my check! chanted some 50 McDonald’s workers and their supporters, part of the Fight for $15 movement, as they marched and rallied at the restaurant across from the Empire State Building here March 17. The action was called to focus public attention on unsafe working conditions they face and to publicize April 15 actions planned by fast-food workers nationwide.

Marie Yolanda Jean-Louis, 65, who works at McDonald’s in Nantucket, New York, spoke at the rally about hazardous work on the grill. She was one of several workers who carried posters with photos of burns they sustained at work.

“We’re fighting for $15 an hour and a union and a first-aid fund,” Rosa Rivera told the rally, “the bosses tell you to put ketchup or mustard on a burn.”

Protesters carried placards reading, “BOSTON uniion school bus drivers fight against boss frame-up” as they gathered in the drivers’ room inside company headquarters that workers have unlimited access to, according to the contract. Charges against Kirschbaum were filed three days later.

Photographs and a video presented by the defense showed Griffin as well as Boston police and union members together on company property with no signs of turmoil.

Nearly 100 drivers and supporters attended the three-day trial in Dorchester District Court.

“The company charged him for nothing!” driver Jean Paulas told the Militant.

The ruling virtually eliminates a per-
son’s right of appeal to federal courts together on company property with no signs of turmoil.

“The four leaders need to come back to work,” said Paulas. Bus drivers continue to work without a contract. The union rejected the company’s proposal for a negotiating session March 3, the day the trial opened.

Ted Leonard and Sarah Ullman

Chicago Teamsters win contract after six-month strike

CHICAGO — Workers at Golan’s Moving and Storage in Skokie, Illinois, just north of here, won a six-month fight for a contract in early February.

Bus drivers at one company continued to work without a contract. The union rejected the company’s proposal for a negotiating session March 3, the day the trial opened.

— Maggie Trowe

Teaching assistants strike at two Toronto universities

March 30, 1990

On March 5 the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a sweeping decision that provoked little public debate or outcry. The ruling virtually eliminates a person’s right of appeal to federal courts to review the constitutionality of state criminal convictions. This right was made law by Congress in 1867 during the period of “radical reconstruction” when the struggle of freed slaves and their supporters helped extend many democratic rights in the South.

For death row inmates the consequences are devastating. The ruling will guarantee and quicken the execution of innocent people. A reported 500 innocent death row in state prisons across the United States, whose cases are in various stages of appeal to federal courts.

— Tony Di Felice and Susan Berman

Chicago Teamsters win contract after six-month strike

Chicago Teamsters win contract after six-month strike

CHICAGO — Workers at Golan’s Moving and Storage in Skokie, Illinois, just north of here, won a six-month fight for a contract in early February.

— Maggie Trowe
**Cuba spurned FBI bid to swap Assata Shakur for Cuban Five**

**BY MAGGIE TROYE**

Former FBI Director Louis Freeh recently revealed that the agency tried unsuccessfully in 1996 to swap some or all of the Cuban Five for American political prisoner Assata Shakur, a former Black Panther who was granted political asylum in Cuba in 1984.

In two interviews with the North Bergen, New Jersey, Record, Freeh demanded Cuba extradite Shakur now.

Shortly before the attempted swap, the FBI had arrested the Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labanino, Fernando González and Antonio Guerrero — in South Florida on trumped-up charges, including conspiracy to commit espionage, because of their actions in defense of the Cuban Revolution. The Five were railroaded to jail and served 14 to 16 years in U.S. prisons.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013 and Fernando González in February 2014. Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labanito and Antonio Guerrero were released in December 2014 in exchange for the release of a U.S. spy of Cuban origin, as the two countries announced steps to resume diplomatic relations.

Freeh told the Record that shortly after the arrests, with the agreement of then-Attorney General Janet Reno, he sent a message through a third party to the Cuban government proposing Washington release one or more of the Five in exchange for Cuba’s return of Shakur, the paper reported in a Feb. 28 article.

What was the Cuban government’s answer? “The response was no response,” Freeh told the Record.

Shakur, formerly Joanne Chesimard, was active in the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s and later in a group called the Black Liberation Army. On May 2, 1973, the car she was traveling in was stopped by cops on the New Jersey Turnpike and a shootout took place. Shakur was gravely wounded. The FBI claimed she shot two troopers, wounding James Harper and killing Werner Foerster.

Zayd Shakur, who was in the car with her, was shot and killed by Harper.

Shakur was charged with killing Foerster and Zayd Shakur. At the trial her lawyers presented physical evidence that she hadn’t fired a weapon and was shot with her hands in the air.

In 1977 she was found guilty on eight counts, including first- and second-degree murder, by a jury that included no African-Americans. She was sentenced to life plus 33 years. Two years later she escaped from prison.

Since the announcement last December that Cuba and the U.S. would seek to reestablish diplomatic relations, some capitalist politicians and media have insisted Washington pressure for Shakur’s extradition, including a Washington Times editorial Dec. 29 titled “U.S. Must Demand Cuba Return Cop-Killer Assata Shakur.” New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie sent a letter to President Barack Obama urging him to make Shakur’s return to the U.S. a condition for establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Joséfina Vidal, head of the North American Bureau of Cuba’s Foreign Ministry and the leader of Cuba’s delegation negotiating with the U.S., responded to a question from the press Dec. 22 by making it clear Cuban revolutionary government had no intention of sending Shakur back to the U.S. “Every nation has sovereign and legitimate rights to grant political asylum to people it considers to have been persecuted,” she said.

Shakur was put on the FBI’s Most Wanted Terrorist list in 2013, with a $25 million bounty on her head, half from the FBI and half from the state of New Jersey. She is the only woman on the list of 30 individuals, all except one connected with al-Qaeda and other jihadist organizations.

For further reading

**US tour builds solidarity for 43 ‘disappeared’ in Mexico**

**BY SETH GALINSKY**

Hundreds of thousands have joined protests in scores of cities and towns across Mexico, and hundreds in the U.S. as well, demanding the Mexican government reveal the truth about the “disappearance” of 43 student activists from the Teachers College in Ayotzinapa across Mexico, and hundreds in the U.S. as well, demanding the Mexican government reveal the truth about the “disappearance” of 43 student activists from the Teachers College in Ayotzinapa across Mexico.

On March 16 a delegation of 12, including family members of the 43 students, some of their classmates and human rights activists, began a speaking tour in the United States with meetings in San Antonio, El Paso and McAllen, Texas, to win solidarity and support for their fight to get out the truth.

Deviations into the caravans — one each for the West Coast, East Coast and the South and Midwest — they will visit more than 40 U.S. cities over the next month.

“The 43 students are the face of the tens of thousands of disappeared in Mexico,” Julio César Guerrero, national coordinator of the caravans, told the Militant from San Antonio, March 17. “They are an illustration of the impunity and violence in Mexico.”

The students were attacked by the municipal police in Iguala, Mexico, on Sept. 26, 2014. Two were shot and killed by cops and masked gunmen that night and the tortured body of another student was found the next day. The police captured 43 of the students who have not been seen since. Three other people were killed by the police: a bystander and two people traveling from a soccer game when the cops mistook their bus for one carrying the teaching students.

The Mexican government claims the case has been solved. They blame it all on the corrupt, drug-trafficker-infiltated, heavily discounted prices. There are tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel throughout Mexico, and Cubans supplies Cuba with the majority of its crude oil at.

Must Demand Cuba Return Cop-Killer

**Cuban 5 stand up for Venezuela at Havana event**

A crime against Venezuela is a crime against Latin America,” said René González, speaking for the Cuban Five, who were present at a March 15 “We’re all Venezuela” concert at the University of Havana that attracted thousands of people protesting U.S. threats and sanctions against Socialist Venezuela. All Revolutionary Set, Venezuelan Ambassador to Cuba, also spoke, thanking the Cuban people and their revolutionary leadership for “extraordinary solidarity” with the Venezuelan people.

On March 9 President Barack Obama declared Venezuela a “national security threat,” ordering sanctions against the country, and ordered additional restrictions against seven officials, blocking or freezing their property and interests in the United States and denying them entry. The two countries have not had full diplomatic representation since 2008, though the U.S. remains Venezuela’s largest trading partner, and Venezuela is the fourth-largest supplier of crude petroleum to the U.S.

There are tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel throughout Venezuela, and Cubans supplies Cuba with the majority of its crude oil at heavily discounted prices.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez visited Caracas March 14 to show the Cuban Revolution’s solidarity with Venezuela. The time for the U.S. “to treat Latin America like its backyard has ended,” he said. “The U.S. government needs to understand that it can’t handle Cuba with a carrot nor Venezuela with a stick.”

**— MAGGIE TROYE**

Cuban students demand full truth and justice for the 43. AP Photo/Rebecca Blackwell

For more information on the tour visit www.caravan43.com.
Cuban women speak in NY

Continued from front page

March 15 panel of Cuban representatives and fighters against police brutality in U.S., held at church in the Bronx. From left, Hawa Bah, Tanya Brown-Dickerson, Ariel Hernández of Cuba’s U.N. mission, Maritza González of Federation of Cuban Women, translator Sergio Gómez and Juantita Young, Insofit, audience at event.

Hawa Bah, whose son was killed by the New York police two years ago, and Cynthia Howell, whose aunt died in a raid on her apartment that police later said was the wrong address, also spoke. The next day Baez hosted a meeting at her church in the Bronx where family members of victims of cop killings joined a panel along with Maritza González of the FMC and Ariel Hernández, first secretary of Cuba’s U.N. mission.

Bach described how her son Mohamed Bah was shot to death when she called an ambulance because he was ill and police showed up instead. Tanya Brown-Dickerson, a school bus driver from Philadelphia, said her son Brandon Tate-Brown was beaten and shot to death by police in Bridgeton, New Jersey, also spoke along with her son Sean. Their family has organized several protests since Jerryce’s death in December. Juanita Young, active in the fight since her son Malcolm Ferguson was killed in 2000, said, “I’ve been doing this for 15 years and the stories keep getting worse.” She participated along with Baez last October in an event of more than 200 demanding freedom for the Cuban Five. She welcomed the FMC delegation and said that even with the victory of the Five, “I would still like to meet their mothers.”

“While listening to these mothers I was recalling events from our history,” González responded. Before 1959, during the fight to overturn the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista regime, “every day people in Havana woke to find youth killed in the streets by the dictatorship. Of course the mothers couldn’t just cry. Some joined the revolutionary struggle.”

After the revolution won, the U.S. government supported counterrevolutionary acts that took many lives, she said. These attacks happened “because we wanted to determine our destiny, because we made a socialist revolution 90 miles from the United States.”

Before leaving New York, the Cuban delegation is also scheduled to speak at John Jay College and meet with the executive board of Service Employees International Union Local 1199.

The Militant March 30, 2015 7
Capitalists’ private interests collide with needs of billions

Below is a selection from an Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory by Ernest Mandel, one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for March. The book explains the contradictions inherent in capitalism since its revolutionary emergence out of small-scale commodity production, such as the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands, economic crises caused by overproduction, the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall, and by overproduction, the tendency of capitalist mode of production and the Fundamental Contra...
EDITORIAL
US hands off Venezuela! No sanctions!

Workers here and around the world should raise their voice in opposition to President Barack Obama’s executive order authorizing a rational emergency response in respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Venezuela and imposed through the actions of the late Chavez’s government.

The propitious rulers in the U.S. are especially upset since that the Chavez government’s attempt to replace the U.S. as Latin America’s dominant country, its predictable and well-executed U.S. administration since has worked to bring down the Bolivarian government in Venezuela, backing the failed military coup in 2002 and other efforts to overthrow Chavez.

The Venezuelan government has already angered Washington and Wall Street when it launched Petroleo de los Pueblos, providing Cuba and 13 other Caribbean countries with oil at preferential prices and weakening the stranglehold of the U.S. oil barons. When Venezuela helped launch the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in 2011, as a counter to U.S. Imperialism, it has continued imposing its will on the governments and peoples of Latin America, deepening Washington’s determination to topple the regime.

Ghana Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, in Caracas on the eve of an emergency meeting of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America in response to Washington’s threats, hit the nail on the head when he declared for the U.S. “to treat Latin America like its backyard has ended.”

Since 1959, when Cuban workers and farmers made a revolution 90 miles from U.S. shores, the propitious rulers’ state policies against Cuba and the Cuban government, every U.S. administration since has worked to bring down the Bolivarian government in Venezuela, backing the failed military coup in 2002 and other efforts to overthrow Chavez.

Washington hopes its economic and political pressures and threats of further sanctions, exacerbating the deepening economic crisis in Venezuela, will enable the pro-U.S. opposition parties there to unseat the government of Nicolás Maduro and end its collaboration with Cuba. The U.S. rulers have proven time and again that they don’t respect Venezuela’s sovereignty.

Washington’s foreign policy grows out of its domes- tic policy — to make workers pay so the U.S. rulers can maintain their capitalist system and its profits. We agree with the Cuban government, which said last week, “Nobody has the right to intervene in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. . . Just like Cuba was never alone, Venezuela won’t be either.”

Working people in the U.S. and elsewhere should join revolutionary struggles there and elsewhere. “U.S. hands off Venezuela!”

The victory winning freedom for the Cuban Five and decisions by the U.S. and Cuban governments to open discussions on re-establishing diplomatic relations, as well as Washington’s weakening the stranglehold of the U.S. oil barons, have spurred interest in many titles on the Cuban Revolution. Volunteers in Greensboro, North Carolina, made their first sale in years to an independent bookstore after showing the owner clippings from the New York Times on Cuba. Among the books the owner bought were Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five: I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived; and The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free — all titles on the successful fight to free the Five.

As protests spread across the country against cop killings of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, volunteers stepped up efforts to promote Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Power for Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes. As a result, the book sold significantly more than in the preceding spring sales effort. Broadening availability of this book remains a priority in the current effort. Recently, a New York museum that specializes in Black history and politics bought 10 copies in English and six in Arabic as part of an order for Black History Month. A large bookstore in Washington, D.C., featured Malcolm X Talks to Young People in its February newsletter. The book “is getting lots of attention and is the most popular book in this newsletter (per the number of clicks),” the bookstore’s buyer told Pathfinder volunteers. “Spread the word to your colleagues.”

Most of Pathfinder’s titles address key questions in today’s political struggles. 50 Years of Covert Operations in the US explains the history of U.S. government spying and attacks against social- ists and unionists. The Jewish Question and Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It explains the history of U.S. government spying and attacks against social- ists and unionists. The Jewish Question and Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It explains the history of U.S. government spying and attacks against social- ists and unionists.

‘Militant’ Volunteers’ Fund

The ‘Militant’ fund makes it possible to send socialist-party-style, un expenditures are bills. To donate, either cash or a money order payable to the Militant and earmarked ‘Prisoners’ Fund’ to 328 W. 37th St., 11th Floor, New York, NY 10018.