

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

OAS steps up moves against Venezuela's sovereignty
— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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‘Washington’s war footprint expands in Middle East’

BY JIM BRADLEY

“U.S. War Footprint Grows in the Middle East With No Endgame in Sight,” declared a front-page headline in the March 29 *New York Times*. These escalations aim to defend the political and economic interests of Washington’s capitalist rulers in that increasingly unstable region — at the expense of millions of working people.

There is an array of competing capitalist regimes and military forces seeking to do likewise. The bloody Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad — backed by Moscow, Tehran, Hezbollah and other Shiite militias — as well as Ankara, Riyadh and other Gulf monarchies, and Israel all claim they have interests to defend in the area.

All these regimes share one common foe — the 30 million Kurds spread across Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The Kurds are the largest nationality worldwide without their own state.

They all claim their motivation is
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Socialist Workers Party kicks off spring campaign

Help expand reach of ‘Militant’, raise funds!



Militant/Sarah Katz

Osborne Hart, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, greets striking Spectrum-Time Warner Cable worker at IBEW Local 3 solidarity rally April 5.

BY MARY MARTIN

The first weekend got the Socialist Workers Party’s seven-week spring campaign off to a good start. The drive will present the party, the *Militant* newspaper and books on working-class politics from Pathfinder Press to working people on their doorsteps, strike picket lines and social protests. It focuses on finding workers and youth who want to read and discuss how to defend the interests of the working class as we expand the readership for the SWP’s paper and books.

The campaign runs together with the Militant Fighting Fund, a drive to raise \$112,000 to keep getting the *Militant* out and around. Quotas for the campaign taken by branches of the SWP and Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom are listed in charts below and on page 3.

A team of three SWP members — Ilona Gersh, Leroy Watson, and Betsy Farley — drove from Chicago to the working-class suburbs of St. Louis April 1 and joined the picket line of striking workers at Holten
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Views on ending US hostile policy to Cuba debated at NY conference

BY STEVE CLARK

NEW YORK — “Sometimes people think that because the United States and Cuba established diplomatic relations in 2014, everything is OK,” said Ana Silvia Rodríguez, Cuba’s deputy ambassador to the United Nations. But the differences between the U.S. and Cuban governments “are still huge. We need to keep insisting the United States end the blockade and return our territory, which is occupied against the will of the Cuban people. The work of the solidarity movement is very important.”

“We have no way of knowing what the U.S. government will do,” Sandra Ramírez, director of the North American department of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), added. “But we know what we will do. We will continue to defend our sovereignty and our socialist
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Build May Day protests! Join fight for Amnesty now!

The following statement was released April 5 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

Join me in building protests and strikes on May Day this year against deportations and immigration raids! Join me in demanding amnesty for all undocumented workers in this country! President Barack Obama put more

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

undocumented workers in jail for immigration “offenses” than any president in U.S. history. Stepping up the anti-immigrant demagoguery, President Donald Trump is driving forward on the same course. The rulers the Democrats and Republicans serve seek to pit worker against worker, claiming undocumented workers take “American” jobs.

A worker at the Hunts Point Produce Market in New York put it well as I talked to him after the “Day Without Immigrants” strike here Feb. 16. When it comes to immigrant workers, “Obama was a wolf in sheep’s clothing and Trump is a wolf in wolf’s clothing.”

U.S. bosses need immigrant labor,
Continued on page 9

Workers look for road forward amid liberal hysteria, Trump presidency

BY SETH GALINSKY

As the administration of Donald Trump enters its third month, the “American carnage” being visited on working people he described in his inaugural address, including “rusted-out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape,” continues with no end in sight.

And many in the fractured Democratic Party, liberal bourgeois press and the middle-class left are stepping up attempts to obstruct Trump in hopes of forcing him out of office before the end of his term.

“Donald Trump is a despicable man and an awful president who deserves whatever he gets,” columnist Charles Blow wrote in the *New York Times* April 3. “He is crude, a liar, a bully and a cheat.”

“It is not clear to me that America — and indeed the world — can survive a full-term Trump presidency.” The remedy Blow likes? Impeachment.

As part of their stop-Trump-from-being-able-to-govern effort, Democrats are preparing to filibuster the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. This is extremely
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Unionists on strike against Spectrum cable rally in NY

Quebec unionists march to support striking Steelworkers

Campaign to sell ‘Militant’ subscriptions and books April 1–May 23

Country	Militant quota	Book quota
UNITED STATES		
Albany	60	60
Atlanta	65	65
Chicago	80	80
Denver	25	25
Lincoln	20	20
Los Angeles	110	110
Miami	35	35
New York	135	135
Oakland	80	80
Philadelphia	50	50
Seattle	70	70
Twin Cities	50	50
Washington	50	50
Total U.S.	830	830
Prisoners	15	
UNITED KINGDOM		
London	50	50
Manchester	45	45
Total U.K.	95	95
CANADA		
Montreal	40	40
Vancouver	30	30
Total Canada	70	70
New Zealand	40	40
Australia	35	35
Total	1,085	1,070
INTL GOAL	1,100	1,100

Native American activist Red Fawn Fallis fights frame-up

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

DENVER — In a show of solidarity with the fight to free Red Fawn Fallis, imprisoned awaiting trial on frame-up charges for her participation in the Standing Rock protests, over 80 people turned out to an art auction at the Corazon Gallery March 24 to raise funds for her defense. Fallis, 37, is a community leader of the Oglala Lakota Sioux, a member of the American Indian Movement and a fighter for sovereignty for the Standing Rock Sioux in North Dakota. She grew up in Denver.

She was among 141 protesters arrested Oct. 27 when police forcibly removed them from their encampment on tribal treaty land in the path of the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline.

All were released except Fallis, who is being held on federal felony charges of civil disorder, discharging a firearm in relation to a felony crime of violence and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. She says she is not guilty of any of the charges.

As the police attacked, Fallis, who volunteered at Standing Rock as a trained medic, was aiding fellow “water protectors” injured by the cops’ mace and rubber bullets. Saying she was “being an instigator and acting disorderly,” police targeted, tackled and threw her to the ground. The cops claimed that while almost a dozen officers were piling on top of her, she somehow got a gun and fired three shots at police, none of which hit anyone. The state of North Dakota charged her with attempted murder.

The state later dismissed this charge

so that the U.S. government could file the federal charges. Facing a maximum sentence of life in prison and a minimum of 10 years, her trial is set for July 17.

“Red Fawn is my niece. I spoke to her last night and she wants you to know that she loves you and she’s staying strong,” Glen Morris, a well-known fighter in the Colorado American Indian Movement and an associate professor at Colorado University, told the gathering. “We learned one thing from Standing Rock, that a new generation has been born. I haven’t seen this since Wounded Knee. It is scary to them and they want to make her an example.”

Fallis’ mother, Troylynn Star Yellow Wood, participated in the American Indian Movement’s 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee in South Dakota.

“Eleven cops were on top of her, it took 11 to arrest her,” said Morris. “In her arrest affidavit the police said she was an instigator and an inspiration to the youth. That’s why she’s in jail. If they think that we are going to let that happen to Red Fawn, what they did to Leonard Peltier, they are wrong.”

Peltier has been in federal prison since 1975. He was framed up for the shooting death of two FBI agents in a confrontation on the Pine Ridge Reservation and there is a long-standing campaign to win his freedom.

Fallis was recently moved to the Heart of America Correctional Center in Rugby, North Dakota, near the Canadian border.

“We will have a caravan up to North Dakota and fill the courtroom for the



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

Terrell Ironshell, center, speaking at March 24 art auction at Corazon Gallery in Denver to raise funds for the defense of Red Fawn Fallis, framed up following protests to defend land and water rights of Standing Rock Sioux in North Dakota against Dakota Access Pipeline.

trial,” said Morris. “We will let them know the world is watching.” Sun Rose, 30, the curator of the art auction, grew up with Fallis. “When Red Fawn was put in jail, people were coming to us and asking what can we do,” she told the *Militant*. “We had three venue spaces donated for auctions. We will have another one in June.”

Much of the art was donated by Native American and local artists, and many of the pieces depict Fallis as a fighter.

A large delegation from the Indigenous Youth Council, formed by young protesters at Standing Rock, came to the event and performed a Native American chant.

“They want to make Red Fawn an example,” Terrell Ironshell, co-founder

of the council, told the crowd. “Red Fawn always encouraged us at Standing Rock. She would say, ‘you don’t have to be afraid of the government. This is our land.’ This is not just about Standing Rock. It is about our rights as humans, as Americans and as an indigenous people.”

For more information and to send a contribution, write to the Red Fawn Legal Defense Fund at Bruce Ellison Law Offices, 328 East New York St., Suite 5, PO Box 2508, Rapid City, SD 57709. Mark it for the Red Fawn Fallis Legal Defense Fund Account.

And write to Red Fawn at: Red Fawn Fallis (Inmate), Heart of America Correctional Center, 110 Industrial Road, Rugby, ND 58368.

Capitalism’s World Disorder

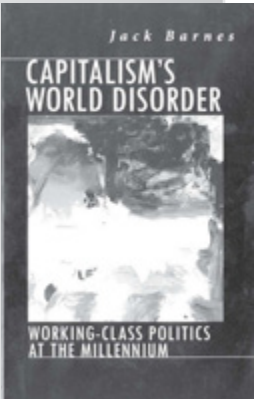
Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

by Jack Barnes

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality and military assaults accelerating around us are not chaos. They are the inevitable product of lawful and understandable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us is not inevitable. It can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world.

This book has been written to bring closer that future. \$25

Available at locations listed on page 4, or at pathfinderpress.com



THE MILITANT

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Militant/Clay Dennison

Steelworkers picket Idaho silver mine March 18 against bosses’ concession demands.

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SWP spring campaign

Continued from front page
Meats in Sauget, Illinois. United Food and Commercial Workers Local 655 members have been on strike for two weeks there against their bosses’ concession demands. Ten strikers got copies of the *Militant*.

The socialist workers then went to nearby Granite City, Illinois, where U.S. Steel idled a mill last year, laying off 2,000 workers. Knocking on doors near the plant, they found real interest in discussing the crisis workers face today. In one block they sold three subscriptions and a copy of *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes.

The book is one of three — along with *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People*, also by Barnes, and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible? A Necessary Debate Among Working People* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters — on special offer with a subscription.

Watson and Farley met Jill Turner on her doorstep. Turner, whose husband works for a nonunion construction outfit, said neither of them has health insurance. “It’s not that we don’t want health care, it’s that we can’t afford it!” she said. “And then you get hit by the government with a \$1,000 penalty the first year and \$2,000 the second year for not having insurance.”

“We have to fight to make health care a basic right guaranteed for all, not a profit-making business,” Farley said. “That’s what the Socialist Workers Party stands for.”

“The only thing Trump had to offer workers during the presidential campaign was a promise of jobs,” Turner said when the discussion turned to U.S. politics. “Now that he’s in office what has he done? Nothing. He just wants to blame everything on the Mexicans.”

Turner said her ex-husband was from Mexico. “He was deported, now he may never see his two children again,” she said. “He lived here since he was 16 years old. All he ever did was work and care for his family, and for that he was thrown out of the country.”

Watson said the SWP calls for amnesty for all immigrants here without papers, and an end to raids and deportations.

“That’s the only way to unite the working class and stop the bosses and their government from using the divisions they foster between native-born and immigrant workers to lower wages and working conditions for all,” he said.

“My husband will be excited to read this too, we talk about this kind of stuff all the time,” Turner said, signing up for a 12-week introductory subscription.

Members of the SWP in Seattle took the party-building campaign to longshoremen at the ILWU union hall. Ten longshoremen picked up the *Militant* and kicked in several dollars extra to the Militant Fighting Fund. And two got copies of *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

Pat Scott, a Walmart worker, joined Mary Martin, SWP candidate for mayor of Seattle, and John Naubert to knock on doors near the store in Federal Way. Many people recognized her because they shop where she works.

“We’re with the Socialist Workers Party and want to talk to you about what working people can do about the crisis we face,” she told them. “Take a look at our paper.” A number picked up a copy and a few asked Scott to come back after payday to get a subscription.

One of the aims of the party-building drive is to win more people to join in introducing the party and its program to workers.

On April 2, a team of four traveled to Sunnyside, where they joined a march and rally sponsored by the United Farm Workers to commemorate the life and work of César Chávez, a founder and leader of the union in the 1960s and ’70s. Similar actions were held in California, Oregon and Texas. Nine marchers got *Militant* subscriptions.

Maria Garcia joined the action from Pullman. “We need to stand in solidar-

Puerto Rican university students rally against cuts



Comité Boricua en la Diáspora

Marching behind a banner saying, “Why don’t the guilty ones pay?” some 1,000 students from the University of Puerto Rico protested at the Convention Center in San Juan March 31 against the crippling cuts Washington’s Financial Oversight and Management Board seeks to impose on the university, its teachers and students. The cuts aim to generate funds to help the government of the U.S. colony pay its \$70 billion debt to wealthy bondholders.

The fiscal board, called “La Junta” in Spanish, was meeting for the first time in Puerto Rico, following several sessions in the U.S. The board — which was appointed by President Barack Obama with dictatorial power to overturn any economic or financial decision made by the Puerto Rican government — is demanding \$450 million in cuts out of the university.

“The government’s proposal is to close about five of the 11 campuses from now to 2021,” university student Verónica Figueroa Huertas told the *Militant* in a phone interview April 2. “People are having a difficult time right now and what the government is planning to implement will affect our lives even more. For me, the motivation of this fight is not just about dollars and cents, it’s about social justice.”

Three days earlier hundreds of students organized by the General Council of Students began a campus occupation and boycott of classes. “Our fight has received support from professors and other campus workers,” Figueroa said.

The working class is the central target, with cuts demanded in jobs, health care and pensions, as well as a freeze on wages of government employees until 2020.

Teachers rallied at the Department of Education offices in Hato Rey March 31 against plans to slash public school funding. “We came to tell you clearly that we are increasing our fight,” Puerto Rico Teachers Federation (FMPR) President Mercedes Martínez told Caribbean Business. “On May 1 we’re going to the streets and this is just the beginning of a united fight.”

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

ity with all immigrants and especially those who work as hard as those in the fields,” she said. She got a subscription and a copy of *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* The SWP members also went door to door in Sunnyside, getting four more subscriptions.

Lea Sherman, director of the Militant Fighting Fund, reports there has been an increase in contributions given by work-

ers on their doorsteps. In New York one team of party members campaigning in the Bronx collected \$27. “We’re asking people to send their contributions in now,” she said.

To join in the campaign or to order books and papers to use to sign up others or to contribute to the fund, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you, listed on page 4.

<i>Militant Fighting Fund</i>	
April 1 - May 23 \$112,000	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Albany	\$4,100
Atlanta	\$10,725
Chicago	\$11,850
Denver	\$750
Lincoln	\$350
Los Angeles	\$8,450
Miami	\$3,200
New York	\$16,600
Oakland	\$13,700
Philadelphia	\$3,600
Seattle	\$7,300
Twin Cities	\$4,100
Washington	\$7,350
Total U.S.	\$92,075
CANADA	
Montreal	\$5,100
Vancouver	\$3,000
Total Canada	\$8,100
NEW ZEALAND	
AUSTRALIA	
UNITED KINGDOM	
London	\$2,450
Manchester	\$925
Total UK	\$3,375
Total	\$109,300
Should be	\$112,000

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JACK BARNES \$15

Seattle protest hits attacks on immigrants, Jews, Muslims

BY EDWIN FRUIT

SEATTLE — Several dozen protesters, including supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Mary Martin for mayor of Seattle, lined up across from Pier 91 at Elliott Bay here to protest the planned appearance of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly April 1.

Protesters spoke out against stepped-up raids by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, picking up immigrant workers for deportation. Speakers at the action denounced recent scapegoating and attacks on Jews and Muslims. Event organizers said Kelly canceled his visit when he heard about the protest.

Martin was one of the speakers at the rally. “I call for amnesty for all immigrants who live in the U.S. In addition I call on the unions to organize all the unorganized, including immigrant workers,” she said. “I have visited the mosques and synagogues that have been vandalized and threatened in the Seattle area and join them in denouncing such attacks.”

“This is a big issue for the working class as a whole. We must unify the working class so we can all fight together against the attacks of the bosses and their government today,”

Martin said. “Through these experiences, we will break from the bosses’ two-party system and find the road to take political power ourselves.”

A number of people at the protest told Martin they liked what she had to say and thanked her for running for office.

“It’s not about me, or what I will do,” she told them. “It’s about how the working class gets transformed through its experiences, increasingly conscious of the class reality of this capitalist dog-eat-dog society, and confident to lead the vast majority to power — like they did in Cuba in 1959.”



Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle mayor, speaks with Jessie Rowell, at April 1 protest against planned appearance by Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly.

SWP: ‘End threats, sanctions against NKorea’

BY TERRY EVANS

Pyeongyang test-fired an unarmed missile off its east coast April 5 that flew for nine minutes before falling harmlessly into the Sea of Japan.

President Donald Trump, who is scheduled to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping April 6, threatened, “If China is not going to solve North Korea, we will.”

“All options are on the table,” a widely quoted but unnamed White

House official added. Deputy White House National Security Adviser K.T. McFarland predicted that North Korea might “be able to hit the U.S. with a nuclear-armed missile by the end of the first Trump term.”

From the *New York Times* to the Anchorage, Alaska, *Dispatch News*, the test was front-page news in the big-business press. The *Washington Post* called the 40-mile flight “scary.” Officials in Tokyo and Seoul de-

nounced it.

But the high-tension response was widely out of whack, when the test flight is compared to what Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul have done and are continuing to do to North Korea.

“We reaffirm our commitment to the Korean people’s fight to reunify their country and to end the partition that Washington, with Moscow’s complicity, imposed by bloody force at the end of World War II,” Steve Clark wrote in a Feb. 13 greeting sent to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on behalf of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. The occasion was Pyongyang’s Feb. 16 national holiday.

“Washington itself deploys the most massive and deadly submarine, naval, air, and ground-based ballistic missile systems,” Clark said. “Defense Secretary James Mattis visited Seoul and Tokyo to reaffirm the Pentagon’s commitment by the end of 2017 to have in place in South Korea the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile batteries and espionage station, which poses a threat to workers and farmers in Korea, China, and across Asia and the Pacific.”

“End all economic and banking sanctions against the DPRK. US troops, ships, planes and THAAD missiles and radar systems out of Korea,” Clark wrote. “For a Korean Peninsula and Pacific Ocean free of nuclear weapons. Korea is one!”

Arkansas plans to execute 8 men in 10 days in April

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The state government in Arkansas says it will execute eight prisoners in just 10 days, beginning April 17. The eight men — four Black and four Caucasian, many of whom have been on death row for at least 20 years — will be the first put to death there since 2005. This move comes amid declining support nationwide for capital punishment.

“This planned mass execution is grotesque and unprecedented,” the Arkansas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty protested.

In February the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the inmates’ arguments challenging Arkansas’ execution statutes. The state high court then promptly ended a stay on execution, leading Gov. Asa Hutchinson’s office to set the dates.

The governor rushed to set all eight killings in April because the state’s supply of midazolam, which is supposed

to render inmates unconscious while two other drugs are injected to paralyze and kill them, expires at the end of the month. Use of midazolam has led to a number of cruelly botched executions with prolonged torture for the recipients. In Oklahoma, Clayton Lockett writhed in pain for the next 43 minutes after receiving the drug.

State governments executed 20 prisoners in 2016, the lowest level in 25 years. And trial juries have imposed fewer death sentences than for decades. However, the number of inmates on state death rows has not declined. As of last July there were 2,905, according to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. California, which has not carried out an execution in 11 years, had the largest number on death row last year — 741

inmates.

“I call for an end to the death penalty,” Lisa Potash, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor in Atlanta, said in a public statement April 4. “The rulers use this to intimidate workers, African-Americans and others, seeking to deter us from speaking out and fighting against the brutal attacks on our jobs, our social conditions and our political rights.

“These attacks are the result of the growing economic and political crisis of their capitalist system,” Potash said. “The propertied rulers fear that we will resist, that we will fight to take political power.”

According to polls by Pew Research Center and Gallup, 40 percent of the U.S. population opposes the death penalty, the highest figure in 44 years.

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—**MILITANT
LABOR
FORUMS**—

ILLINOIS
Chicago
Revolutionary Cuba: Example for Workers and Youth Worldwide.
Speaker: Betsy Farley, Socialist Workers Party; Samir Qaisar, participant in 12th May Day International Brigade to Cuba. Fri., April 14, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 2018 S. Ashland Ave. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

UNITED KINGDOM
Manchester
Film Showing of “All Guantánamo Is Ours.” Speaker: Hugo Wils, Communist League, participant in upcoming Young Trade Unionists May Day Brigade to Cuba. Fri., April 21, 7 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. M1 2EH. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

NY: Unionists on strike against Spectrum cable rally against cuts

NEW YORK — Hundreds of workers on strike against Spectrum-Time Warner Cable and their supporters rallied April 5 outside the company's midtown offices here, demanding the bosses back off the concession demands they are insisting on. The company wants to stop paying into the union health and pension fund and to lay off union workers and replace them with lower-paid nonunion contractors.

"If you don't fight you don't win," Edward Dandridge, a technician, told Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York mayor, who joined the protest.

The 1,700 warehouse workers, engineers and service technicians, members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3, went on strike March 28. Their contract expired four years ago.

—Sara Lobman

Quebec unionists march to support striking Steelworkers

SALABERRY-DE-VALLEYFIELD, Quebec — More than 400 people marched and rallied here March 29 in support of United Steelworkers on strike against CEZinc, one of the world's largest zinc refineries. The 371 members of Local 6486 walked out Feb. 12 against company demands for pension cuts.

Among those marching were USW members from Lafarge Cement and Resco where workers were on strike last year.

A highlight of the action was the arrival of some 20 members of the Council of National Unions (CSN) who work for Glencore, a co-owner of CEZinc, in Rouyn-Noranda, some 435 miles north.

"We're here in support, in solidarity. We have the same pension plan, the same employer, a big multinational company," Stéphane Larente, who has worked in the mine at Rouyn-Noranda for 10 years, told the *Militant*.

"Companies all over Quebec are at-



Militant/Sara Lobman

Members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers on strike against Spectrum cable company rally in New York April 5 against company demands to cut pensions, medical care.

tacking our pension plans so solidarity helps strengthen our fight," said Christian Dupuis, a 25-year bridge crane operator at Samuel & Fils in Laval. He and some 60 other workers have been on strike since early February to defend

their pensions.

"We are fighting to preserve conditions that generations before us fought to win," Local 6486 President Manon Castonguay told the rally.

—Beverly Bernardo

OAS steps up moves against Venezuela's sovereignty

BY RÓGER CALERO

The Cuban government and mass organizations there have been speaking out against the campaign by Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro to expel Venezuela from the organization. This is part of a broader effort to replace the government headed by President Nicolás Maduro.

On March 14 Almagro demanded that Maduro call elections within 30 days, free people that Almagro says are political prisoners, replace the country's Supreme Court with judges who meet Almagro's criteria of being "independent" — that is, politically opposed to the Maduro government — and reinstate laws passed by the opposition-controlled National Assembly that had been overturned by the court.

Since the election of Hugo Chávez in 1998, on the heels of mass popular mobilizations, the Venezuelan government's close ties to revolutionary Cuba and its refusal to bow to Washington's dictates on trade and foreign policy have drawn the ire of U.S. imperialism.

On March 28, the OAS met to hear Almagro's report despite opposition from the governments of Bolivia, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Barbados and Dominica, as well as Venezuela.

Leading up to the OAS meeting, President Maduro said Almagro was "rekindling the darkest pages of the OAS history."

"The OAS confronting Venezuela today is the same one that has endorsed aggression and military intervention, the same one that has kept a complicit silence about serious democratic and human rights violations in the entire hemisphere," said a March 29 statement from the Cuban Foreign Ministry, referring to the OAS' sordid history in the Americas.

In 1962, at Washington's insistence, the OAS expelled Cuba to punish Cuban workers and farmers for overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and their decision to build a socialist society. In 1976 it showed its support for the bloody dictatorship in Chile of Gen. Augusto Pinochet, which had overthrown the elected government of Salvador Allende, by holding

its meeting there. Pinochet is just one of a long line of U.S.-backed dictatorships that the OAS championed.

In 2009, in the face of Washington's growing isolation in the region due to Cuba's exclusion, the OAS invited Cuba to return. The revolutionary government has no interest in having a relationship "with an organization that has served the purposes of domination, occupation and aggression by the United States, and as a platform to attack and plunder Latin America and the Caribbean," Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez restated in 2012, reported Cuban newspaper *Escambray*.

Ahead of the March 28 meeting the governments of the United States, Canada and 12 Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico, signed a statement echoing Almagro's accusations against the Maduro government. But expulsion should only be used "as a last resort," it said.

Washington's ultimate goal — like the regional powers in Latin America vying for the capitalist economic and political

interests of their own propertied rulers — is to replace the Maduro government with one more to their liking without provoking deeper political turmoil, economic breakdown and social explosion in Venezuela, and in the region. Washington and pro-imperialist forces in Venezuela are stepping up pressure against the Maduro government as the world capitalist economic crisis is having a devastating impact on the country's ability to continue financing social programs at home and extending assistance to other countries. They are counting on the deepening social and political crisis and frustrations over the growing shortages of basic goods and medicines to further undermine support for Maduro and the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).

After Chávez was elected, his supporters won 122 of 128 seats in the National Assembly. Today opponents of Maduro's government have a "supermajority."

On Feb. 13 the U.S. Treasury Department announced sanctions against Ven-

ezuela's Vice President Tareck El Aissami, accusing him of allegedly being involved in drug trafficking activities. The measure by the Donald Trump administration was the result of an investigation initiated under President Barack Obama. In 2015, the Obama administration ordered sanctions against seven other Venezuelan officials. President Maduro has denounced the measure as an attempt to discredit his government and lay the ground for further intervention.

In a move that gave Almagro and other supporters of imperialist intervention more of a handle, the Venezuelan Supreme Court suspended the powers of the National Assembly March 29. The court said it would exercise legislative power instead.

The next day the governments of Colombia, Chile and Peru recalled their ambassadors to Venezuela. The Mexican government also criticized the move.

In the face of stepped-up calls for

Continued on page 9

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 17, 1992

With the April 1 announcement that it would begin hiring scabs to break the five-month strike by the United Auto Workers union, the Caterpillar company has now declared war on the labor movement.

For the first time since World War II a major corporation has decided to go all out to inflict a crushing blow on the UAW. Caterpillar hopes to open another rout of the labor movement, more devastating than that which occurred in the first half of the 1980s when two-tier contracts, wage give-backs, speed up and other concessions became widespread.

Millions of working people can be organized into this fight. Union locals should send reinforcements to the picket line and bring back reports to public solidarity meetings.



April 17, 1967

The Cuban people are making vigorous efforts to shape their own socialist destiny.

To accomplish this aim, an educational process is going on throughout Cuba on the need to shape a socialist man capable of living in a cooperative society. A deep-going struggle is being waged against the development of a privilege-seeking, politically conservative bureaucracy.

At the same time efforts to raise productivity are being geared around moral incentives rather than personal material gain.

Leaders of the revolution are taking the position that people will contribute the most if they are convinced that society as a whole will benefit from their efforts and not simply that they will gain in an individual sense.



April 18, 1942

In the final analysis Bataan fell for the same reason that Malaya and the Dutch East Indies fell: the failure to mobilize and arm the native people to fight against the Japanese. The Philippine Islands have been under American rule for over 40 years.

The imperialists feared the subject people as much, if not more, than they feared the rival imperialists. The Filipinos have always fought to rule their own destinies.

The Filipinos have shown no eagerness to fight and die for the difference between the old masters and the new.

Bataan will fall again — to the Filipinos, to the people to whom Bataan belongs. And no foreign ruling class — not Japanese, nor American, nor any other — will be able to take it away from them again.

Join May Day brigade, learn about the Cuban Revolution

BY TERRY EVANS

“The U.S. government still maintains an embargo against our country and illegally occupies Guantánamo,” Miguel Fraga, first secretary of the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., told some 35 people at a potluck dinner to raise funds for people in the area going to the 12th May Day International Brigade to Cuba, April 24-May 8.

Washington is “against our revolution’s example,” he said. “Your solidarity, being part of the May 1 celebration in Cuba, we appreciate.”

Fifty people have signed up for the first ever U.S. contingent of the brigade. “Interest has exceeded expectations and applications are still coming in,” Steve Eckardt, co-coordinator of the Chicago Cuba Coalition, which is organizing the U.S. contingent, told the *Militant*, April 3 “One highlight will be taking part in the massive May Day rally in Havana.”

The Federation of Cuban Workers is organizing working people across the island to turn out May 1 “in defense of socialism,” dedicating this year’s mobilization “to Cuban youth, who today, more than ever, stand as the continuators of those who, almost 60 years ago, changed the course of our homeland’s history to make Cuba a free and independent nation, an example of sovereignty, dignity and heroism for the world.”

Brigade members will spend the first week at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp in Artemisa province, joining Cubans in agricultural work, meeting with activists in Cuba’s mass organizations, and traveling in the area to learn more about the revolution. They’ll go to Havana for May Day and an International Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba the next day. Then they’ll visit Villa Clara and Cienfuegos provinces, meeting with Cuban groups and touring revolutionary historical sites.

“We’re encouraging brigade members in Chicago to read about the revolution before they get there,” Eckardt said. “And on April 8 we’ll show the film ‘Maestra’ at another fundraiser.”

The movie interviews participants in the 1961 Cuban literacy campaign.

Thousands of volunteers, many of them young women, traveled across the country teaching 700,000 adults how to read and write, transforming their capacities to participate in the unfolding revolution. The campaign also transformed the young people who led it.

“This is a tremendous opportunity to meet Cubans and hear what they say,” explained John Batres, a brigade member from Los Angeles at a fundraising event April 1 hosted by the Central American Cultural Center there. “It’ll put us in a better position to talk to others about the revolution when we come back.”

Organizers of the event showed the film “All Guantánamo is Ours.” Occupied against the will of the Cuban people since 1898, the Guantánamo base — now home to Washington’s most notorious military prison — has been used as a foothold against the revolution since 1959. Some brigadistas will spend their last week in Cuba taking part in



Above, Granma; inset, Militant/Arlene Rubinstein
Hundreds of thousands of workers join May Day march in Havana, 2016. Inset, Joshua Parks, left, talks with Miguel Fraga, first secretary of Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., at April 1 fundraiser. Parks will join U.S. contingent on this year’s march as part of International May Day Brigade to Cuba.

the Fifth Seminar for Peace and for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases in Guantánamo province. Participation is both a protest against the U.S. base and opportunity to discuss how to build the fight to demand the U.S. get out.

To find out more, contact the Chicago Cuba Coalition at (312) 952-2618 or email: ICanGoToCuba@gmail.com.

Deborah Liatos and Arlene Rubinstein contributed to this article.

‘US war footprint expands in the Middle East’

Continued from front page

the ouster of the Islamic State, a reactionary terrorist army put together by factions from al-Qaeda and former military officers from the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, ousted by Washington’s 2003 invasion. IS took control of huge swaths of territory in both Iraq and Syria, stepping into a vacuum left by Washington’s inability to bring an end to the yearslong wars it has intervened in there.

For months, the U.S. rulers have used their air power and a growing number of military “advisers” on the front lines to spearhead the drive of the Iraqi army, Kurdish peshmerga forces and others to expel Islamic State from Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq that it seized in 2014.

The U.S. military confirmed March 27 that hundreds more paratroopers are being sent to Mosul from the 1,700-strong 82nd Airborne stationed in Iraq and Kuwait. Current U.S. troop

levels in Iraq stand at about 5,000.

Already more than 300,000 Iraqis have fled the fighting in Mosul and many more remain trapped. Hundreds of civilians have been killed by U.S. airstrikes there.

In Syria, Washington is expanding its use of air power, artillery and boots on the ground, preparing to lead the attack on the city of Raqqa, Islamic State’s self-proclaimed capital. The key ground force — despite fierce opposition from Ankara — is thousands of Syrian Democratic Forces fighters, led by the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG).

The Trump administration has made it clear that Washington has dropped any pretense that its goal is to force Assad to give up power.

Assad and his father before him have ruled for decades. In 2011, mass mobilizations hit the streets, demanding political rights and the ouster of the regime. Assad responded with brutal repression, killing thousands and imprisoning more, leading to civil war.

More than 100,000 people have been arrested or physically disappeared since the protests began. Thousands were taken to special military-run hospital facilities where they were tortured and killed.

Preparations for attack on Raqqa

For months Ankara has sought to seize a place as a bigger player in the wars, allying with Washington or Moscow in an effort to exert its interests. Accompanied by Syrian refugee forces trained in Turkey, Ankara launched an invasion of Syria in 2016, called Operation Euphrates Shield, at first with Washington’s blessing. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said their goal was to push back Islamic State as part of the “war against terror.”

But the real goal was to stop YPG forces, which control a substantial Kurdish region in the east on Turkey’s border and were seeking to link up with another Kurdish area around Afrin in the west. The Turkish invasion cut between the two areas and Ankara demanded the YPG pull back from Manbij to east of

the Euphrates River.

But Washington decided YPG military forces were decisive for its offensive in Raqqa. The YPG has proven itself to be the most effective fighting force in Syria. The Pentagon sent troops to Manbij, flying the U.S. flag. And the YPG struck a deal with Moscow and the Assad regime to put Syrian government troops in small towns in front of Manbij in the way of Ankara’s forces.

Ankara was forced to recognize reality. On March 29, the day before Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was due in Turkey to meet with Erdogan, the Turkish government announced that Operation Euphrates Shield was over.

Two days later Ankara explained this didn’t mean it was withdrawing its troops from Syria.

“This is a settling of the status quo, where Turkey is confined to this Euphrates Shield while the U.S. and Russia continue with their war plans,” Aaron Stein from the Atlantic Council told the *Financial Times* March 29.

At the same time a bitter dispute has broken out around Kirkuk in Iraq. The city and surrounding area has been controlled and protected militarily by the peshmerga forces of the Kurdish Regional Government since 2014, when Iraqi army forces fled as Islamic State began its sweep into the country. Iraqi Kurds consider Kirkuk their historical capital. The area is rich in oil reserves.

The KRG began flying the Kurdish flag over the city last week. Both Baghdad and Ankara responded with howls of protest.

“Do not enter into a claim it’s yours or the price will be heavy,” Erdogan said April 4. “Bring down that flag immediately.”

Erdogan says he is speaking in the interests of both Arab and Turkmen residents of the area.

“Turkey fears territorial gains by some Kurdish groups in Iraq and neighboring Syria could fuel Kurdish separatist ambitions inside Turkey,” Reuters commented.

Stop the deportations and raids! AMNESTY NOW! Join May 1 protests!

In the face of deportations of undocumented workers, rallies, marches, strikes and school boycotts are being organized across the country on May Day. The Socialist Workers Party is joining in the actions and calling for amnesty to unite the working class.

Alabama For info call (205) 603-4400

Burlington, Vt. 12 p.m. assemble 294 N. Winooski Ave

Chicago 11 am assemble at Union Park, Ashland and Lake

Fresno, Calif. 3 p.m. Cedar and Kings Canyon, then march

Hartford, Conn. April 29 1 p.m. State Capitol North Steps

Los Angeles 11 a.m., MacArthur Park, march to City Hall

Lawrence, Mass. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. 200 Common St.

Milan, Missouri To be announced

Milwaukee For more info (414) 643-1620

New York City 5 p.m. Foley Square

Seattle 11 a.m. Judkins Park, march at 1 p.m.

White Plains, NY 4 p.m. Westchester Gov’t Bldg

Send information on actions in your area to:
themilitant@mac.com

Cuba conference debate

Continued from front page revolution. That is not open to negotiations.”

Rodríguez and Ramírez were speaking to the opening session of a March 25-26 conference here of more than 200 people from 17 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom, and three provinces of Canada.

The conference, held at the Fordham University Law School, was organized to advance the fight to demand that the U.S. government end its 55-year-old economic war against Cuba; get out of Guantánamo, Cuban territory that Washington has occupied since 1898; and end all efforts aimed at “regime change” in Cuba.

In addition to North American participants, a sizable delegation from Cuba, headed by Anayansi Rodríguez, Cuba’s ambassador to the United Nations, joined the two days of deliberations. This included Miguel Barnet, president of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and a member of Cuba’s Council of State; UNEAC Vice President Luis Morlote; Ramírez and Yanela González, also from ICAP; and five leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women and of the National Union of Jurists, who had just taken part in the 61st session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

Rafael Cancel Miranda, a Puerto Rican independence leader imprisoned for more than a quarter century by the island’s U.S. colonial rulers, was welcomed by a standing ovation, as was Andrés Gómez, coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Cuban-American organization based in Miami that this year is marking its 40th anniversary of activity in support of the Cuban Revolution.

Workshops’ range of topics

The gathering was opened Saturday morning by Ike Nahem on behalf of the host Cuba Sí coalition in New York City. In addition to the two plenary sessions that morning, there were some 20 workshops Saturday afternoon covering a wide variety of topics.

A workshop on how the United States occupied Guantánamo Bay fea-

tured remarks by Myrna Méndez López of Cuba’s National Union of Jurists, and a showing of the documentary “All Guantánamo Is Ours.”

There was a workshop on “Race in Cuba: an Introduction,” and another on “The Cuban Revolution and the African-American Community.” Several took up health care in Cuba and Cuba’s medical missions around the world. The latter heard a presentation by Rolando Vergara, first secretary at Cuba’s U.N. mission, who helped organize the 2014-15 Cuban medical mission to combat the Ebola epidemic in Liberia.

The workshop on “Cuba’s Socialist Revolution and Women’s Equality” featured leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women, including Yanira Kúper, FMC international relations secretary; Yamila González Ferrer, vice president of the National Union of Jurists; Alicia Campos, Latin America and Caribbean Coordinator of the Women’s International Democratic Federation; Maritzel González, from the FMC International Relations Department; and Myrna Méndez López from the University of Santiago Law School.

Together with “Race in Cuba,” the FMC workshop, chaired by Nalda Vigezzi, co-chair of the National Network on Cuba, and Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press, was one of the largest of the afternoon events. More than 30 people attended.

Joshua Colón, a leader of Universal Justice, a student organization at Fordham University Law School, led a workshop reporting back from a trip the group had recently taken to Cuba. Universal Justice helped secure facilities for the weekend conference.

A workshop on “The Police in Cuba” included presentations by Sharonne Salaam and Juanita Young. Salaam is the mother of Yusef Salaam, one of five teenagers convicted in 1989 on frame-up rape charges and exonerated in 2002. Young’s son Malcolm Ferguson was



Jon Flanders

Anayansi Rodríguez, Cuba’s ambassador to UN, addresses opening session of March 25-26 conference of more than 200 people, organized to advance fight to demand: “Washington, end the economic war against Cuba now! Get out of Guantánamo now!” In closing remarks next day, Rodríguez said: “We learned from Fidel that a socialist revolution must maintain firmness in principles.”

killed by New York police in 2000. She and other relatives of victims of police killings visited Cuba in May 2016 at the invitation of the FMC and ICAP.

Other workshops took up Cuba’s internationalist support to African freedom struggles; work around passage of legislation before the U.S. Congress, and resolutions by city councils, and state legislatures; “Technology and Digital Media Support”; “Rhythms, Resistance and Revolution”; and “Democracy in Cuba.”

The Saturday conference session was capped by a well-attended public meeting at the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Center in Harlem. In addition to two excellent musical performances, speakers included Ambassador Anayansi Rodríguez, Sandra Ramírez, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Andrés Gómez and Juanita Young. (See last week’s issue of the *Militant*.)

The closing plenary on Sunday morning focused on action proposals representing the spectrum of activities those present are engaged in.

Lively debate

From the opening of the conference, debate and discussion helped bring clarity to counterposed political perspectives for the work of the solidarity movement.

- Organizing to extend knowl-

edge of and solidarity with the Cuban Revolution among broader and broader layers of the population increasingly open to learning the truth about Cuba, versus focusing on Democratic and Republican politicians and U.S. companies seeking profitable trade and investment deals in Cuba.

- Placing demands squarely on the U.S. government to *immediately* and *unconditionally* end its policies aimed at undermining Cuba’s socialist revolution and its government, versus promoting a negotiations “process,” in which Washington is pressing for concessions by the Cuban government in exchange for “full” normalization.

- The importance of civil debate and discussion of different viewpoints among solidarity forces, versus race-baiting and innuendos that some Caucasian participants, especially males, “aren’t really who they say they are,” thus preventing one or another person from getting a hearing because of their skin color or sex.

After remarks by Ramírez to the opening plenary session — chaired by August Nimtz, a University of Minnesota professor and leader of the Minnesota Cuba Committee, and Erin Feeley-Nahem, a leader of the Cuba Sí coalition in New York and one of the principal conference organizers — the floor opened for questions and discussion on perspectives for work. Ramírez and the two U.N. ambassadors joined in with answers and comments along the way.

Isaac Saney, co-chair of the Canadian Network on Cuba, spoke about the dangers of recent remarks by Canada’s foreign minister about stepped-up pressure on Cuba “to transform its political system.”

John Waller, national coordinator of the IFCO/Pastors for Peace annual caravan to Cuba, said that opponents of Washington’s policies need to recognize that “we need to be reaching out to many places in the U.S., including so-called Red States, to Little Rock, to Kansas City, to Des Moines.” The first contingents of this year’s caravan will visit 30 states in April, he said.

Andrés Gómez denounced Washington’s “policy of constant aggression against the Cuban people since 1959,” which he said has resulted in more than 3,900 deaths in Cuba and

Continued on page 8

Example of the Cuban Revolution for today



To Speak the Truth: Why Washington’s ‘Cold War’ Against Cuba Never Ends

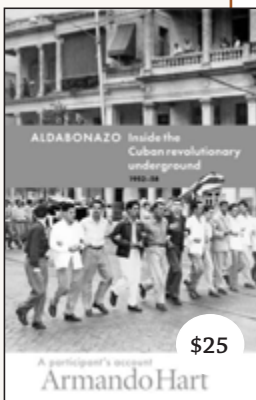
By Fidel Castro, Che Guevara
In speeches before UN bodies, Guevara and Castro address the peoples of the world, explaining why Washington fears the example of the socialist revolution and why its effort to destroy it will fail.

Aldabanazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground

By Armando Hart
Also in Spanish,

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution

By Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
Also in Spanish



Jon Flanders

Andrés Gómez, a leader of Antonio Maceo Brigade, Cuban-American group based in Miami, denounced U.S. “policy of constant aggression against the Cuban people since 1959.”

See distributors on page 4 or visit:

www.pathfinderpress.com

Cuba conference debate

Continued from page 7

2,000 physically incapacitated people. The “terrorists who carried out these actions live mainly in Miami and Puerto Rico today,” he said, “and they have had immunity by U.S. authorities.”

Gómez pointed to the April 1979 assassination in Puerto Rico of Antonio Maceo Brigade member Carlos Muñoz Varela. “No one has been arrested for this crime,” Gómez said, “and the U.S. government and FBI know full well who carried it out and who paid for it.”

Bob Guild, vice president of Marazul Charters and a founder of the new travel association RESPECT, discussed the work being done to promote trips to Cuba “that respect its sovereignty and the will of the Cuban people to determine their own destiny.”

Questions were raised from the floor about how to respond to propaganda about the “Ladies in White” and other so-called dissidents in Cuba, and why the Cuban national baseball team agreed to play against Israel in the World Baseball Classic earlier in March instead of boycotting events in which Israeli athletes compete.

Out Now! or negotiations

Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and president of Pathfinder Press, noted that “what Washington is out to achieve with what it calls ‘normalization’ is the overthrow of Cuba’s socialist revolution.”

She pointed to the words of President Barack Obama in December 2014 when he announced the decision to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba: that the policies pursued by the U.S. government for decades had failed to achieve that objective, so “it’s time to try something different.” The course has shifted, she said, but the U.S. rulers’ objective remains the same.

“We need to focus our demands on the U.S. government,” Waters emphasized, “to end the economic war against Cuba *now*, get out of Guantánamo *now*, and end all subversive programs *now*.”

“That’s the basis,” she said, “on which we can and must educate and broaden support for the Cuban Revolution among working people and other layers of U.S. society.”

John McAuliff, executive director of the Fund for Reconciliation and Development, countered that activists in the U.S. need to orient to elected officials and companies who are interested in doing business with Cuba. Such efforts to advance normalization of relations would be helped, he said, if the Cuban

government moved toward multiparty elections and greater sway for market relations.

The featured speaker at the second plenary session Saturday morning was Ras Baraka, the Democratic Party mayor of Newark, New Jersey, who announced he was leaving for Cuba the next day at the head of a trade delegation. The panel, which included Afro Latin Jazz Alliance Executive Director Marietta Ulaia, was organized by Rosemary Mealy, a member of the New York Cuba Sí coalition and board member of IFCO/Pastors for Peace.

In her remarks, Mealy said there had been an “ideological struggle” among those planning the conference, and only the panel she had initiated was truly aimed at “strategies to broaden the ‘left agenda’ into other political and economic arenas.”

To exemplify what she meant by “broadening,” Mealy noted that organizers of the panel had invited Congresswoman Yvette Clarke from New York, the office of Sen. Patrick Leahy from Vermont, the internet monopoly Google, and representatives of Stonegate Bank in Florida, the first U.S. bank issuing credit cards for use in Cuba. All sent regrets. Mealy added that the business group Engage Cuba, which she said calls for “gradual normalization,” had also declined. Engage Cuba includes the National Association of Manufacturers and international corporations such as Honeywell, Procter & Gamble, Starwood hotels and others.

“We’re not naïve,” Mealy told the conference. “We know some of these forces are trying to overturn the revolution. But others just want to end the embargo. If the Cubans can deal with them, then why can’t we?”

“We may not like working with these forces,” she added, “but we have to pull up our pants and do it,” since “incremental normalization” can lead to “full normalization.”

Baraka argued for those present to be “pragmatic” and get involved in “practical politics,” that is, Democratic Party politics, as the way to bring change.

“We have the second largest port in the United States in Newark,” Baraka said, “and we’re looking forward to increasing trade with Cuba.” He said he would try to pick up some “best practices” in Cuba to improve health care and education in Newark.

Race-baiting

Broad and educational discussion in the workshops allowed many conference participants an opportunity to raise questions and exchange views. But discussion in several was cut short by incidents of race-baiting that were never answered by conference organizers.

Some 35 people attended the “Race in Cuba” workshop, chaired by August Nimtz. The featured speakers were Cuban leader Miguel Barnet and Yanela González of ICAP. Barnet, author of the world-renowned novel *Biography*



Kathleen Rhem

U.S. navy base at Guantánamo, Cuba, on territory occupied against the will of the Cuban people since 1898. Conference in New York demanded immediate and unconditional U.S. withdrawal from Guantánamo.

of a *Runaway Slave*, has long been a leading voice in Cuba promoting consciousness that, despite the revolution’s unprecedented gains over more than half a century in eradicating the legacy of racist discrimination against Cubans who are Black and mestizo, more needs to be done.

During the discussion, while Barnet was answering a question, he was interrupted by a New York Haitian rights activist and union official, who shouted from the floor, “Sir, I think you should sit down, so we can hear this Black woman speak.” It’s one thing to tell a story, he went on, “but part of the story is what people who have experienced it themselves have to say.”

Later in the workshop, this individual apologized to Barnet for his conduct. But the incident marred the rest of the gathering, as word of what had happened spread, and the insult to the Cuban delegation was never brought before the conference as a whole and repudiated.

Above all, this default in not responding to the attempt to silence someone because of the color of their skin (and it wasn’t the only such incident during the conference) dealt a blow to reaching out as broadly as possible to all layers of the population in the U.S. and Canada with education about Cuba’s socialist revolution and activity to defend it.

Actions discussed at closing plenary

The final plenary session Sunday morning, chaired by Isaac Saney and by Gail Walker, executive director of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, opened with recorded video greetings to the conference from Gerardo Hernández, thanking all those present for the work they had done to win freedom from U.S. prisons for the Cuban Five and to defend the Cuban Revolution.

Miguel Barnet was introduced to a standing ovation to bring a message to the gathering. Welcoming the words by Hernández, Barnet said the return of the remaining three imprisoned heroes to Cuba in December 2014 was a victory “that belongs to you also, because you worked very hard for that occasion.”

“On behalf of Cuban writers and artists and of the Cuban people,” Barnet thanked participants “for your sincere solidarity.” Cuban leader Fidel Castro had taught him and many others, he said, “that solidarity is the banner of socialism and humanism.” Addressing the purpose of the conference, Barnet added, “How can we normalize relations if the embargo is not lifted right away?

That is our biggest aim, and I am sure it is also yours.”

The Sunday session focused on discussion and adoption of a number of action proposals. These include a coordinated day of local protest actions in October to coincide with the annual vote in the U.N. General Assembly against the U.S. economic, commercial and financial embargo. A motion to support the Sept. 11-16 National Days of Action Against the Blockade in Washington, D.C., was also adopted. The conference supported efforts by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba to organize activities against the blockade on the 17th of each month.

Participants heard reports on upcoming trips to Cuba that enable people from North America to learn about the revolution first hand, and voted to support these efforts. In addition to the annual IFCO caravan and Venceremos Brigade this year, for the first time, a delegation of workers and youth from the U.S. will participate in the annual International May Day Brigade to Cuba sponsored by ICAP. Following a May 2 solidarity gathering in Havana organized by ICAP and the CTC, the Cuban trade union federation, people from the U.S., Canada, Latin America, Europe and elsewhere will participate in the “Fifth Seminar for Peace and for the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases” protesting the continued occupation of Guantánamo. (See article on page 6.)

A last-minute motion proposed from the floor urging support for two congressional bills, one aimed at lifting restrictions on U.S. residents traveling to Cuba and another proposing to end some measures that are part of Washington’s prohibitions on trade with Cuba, was adopted as part of the package but never debated.

It was also agreed to organize another national Cuba conference in North America two years from now, if circumstances warranted.

During the discussion of these actions, there was further debate on the political focus and demands of work in solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.

Mark Ginsburg from Washington, D.C., proposed adding an explicit call on the U.S. to get out of Guantánamo to one of the action proposals that had not included it. His suggestion was agreed to by consensus.

Mary-Alice Waters made a proposal to stop using the term “full normalization” as one of the demands on the U.S. government included in various action

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Militant/Paul Mailhot

Miguel Barnet, president of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and member of Cuba’s Council of State, speaks at conference. “How can we normalize relations if the embargo is not lifted right away,” Barnet said. “That is our biggest aim, and I’m sure it is also yours.”

Build May Day protests! Amnesty now!

Continued from front page

and the semilegal status they're pushed into, to create a superexploited layer of the working class and boost their profits. They work overtime to pit native-born workers against immigrants to push down the wages and working conditions of us all.

The fact is U.S. workers are less anti-immigrant, less racist than ever before. Millions of workers who have come here from Mexico, Central America, Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere have now worked and lived side by side with native-born workers for decades.

"When your kids are such good friends at school, people are getting to know each other better," a worker in Denison, Iowa, where packinghouses attracted immigrant workers in droves, told the *New York Times* March 28. "They're trusting each other, wanting to be around each other."

This means the capitalist rulers have a problem,

and we're in a stronger position than ever to unify the working class, to fight and win amnesty.

Obama and Trump both claim the focus is on deporting immigrants who are "criminals." That's why we say, "We are workers, not criminals." And for that small number of undocumented workers with a "record" — just like some of our U.S.-born co-workers — we say "no double jeopardy." Amnesty for all!

The only road to build a fighting union movement is for our unions to say to our brothers and sisters, "We don't want to see your papers. We say, let's fight together."

The Socialist Workers Party urges you to help make the May Day protests as successful as possible. Talk with your co-workers. Can you go on a "Day Without Immigrants" strike at your workplace May 1? Can you organize or join protest actions in your area?

Unite the working class. Amnesty now! See you May 1.

Workers look for road forward

Continued from front page

rare in U.S. bourgeois rule, not used even when the Democrats bitterly opposed Ronald Reagan's nomination of Robert Bork in 1987.

Democrats' opposition to Gorsuch has nothing to do with his views or his qualifications. As *Politico* noted in January before Gorsuch was nominated, "Senate Democrats are going to try to bring down President Donald Trump's Supreme Court pick no matter whom the president chooses."

In fact, many Democratic Party officials acknowledge that as possible nominees for the Supreme Court go, Gorsuch would be far from the worst.

If the Democrats filibuster, the Republicans, who hold 52 seats, are expected to take what is known as the "nuclear option" — suspend the rules and move to confirm Gorsuch with a simple majority.

Sanders seeks to take over Democrats

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who had the Democratic Party presidential nomination stolen from him by the party machine, has been stumping for his "Our Revolution" campaign. At a Boston rally March 31 he said the party should be based on the working class, not the "liberal elite." His goal is to keep workers bottled up in the Democrats, one of the bosses' two parties.

Although he called the president a "fraud," Sanders admitted that Trump won because Americans are struggling economically, frustrated, angry and "living in despair."

"If you sit home and think Donald Trump won because all of the people who voted for him are racists or sexists or homophobes, I think you got it wrong," Sanders said. He won because he "developed proposals" that addressed the carnage workers face.

But it's not the class that votes for the party, but the class the party votes for that determines its character. And the Democrats do the bidding of the ruling rich.

Bipartisan anti-immigrant policy

For all his demagogic rhetoric, Trump has mostly continued the same anti-worker policies that were carried out by the Obama and previous administrations.

But deporting undocumented workers is increasingly unpopular among U.S.-born workers.

The shift in views among working people and broader sections of the population comes through in a March 28 article in the *Times*, "In Steve King's District, Iowans Begin to Question His Anti-Immigrant Views."

Congressman King is notorious for his racist attitude toward immigrants. But many people the *Times* interviewed in Sioux County, which went overwhelmingly for King and Trump in the last election, say they disagree with King on deportations.

Evan Wielenga, manager of a farm co-op in Orange City, told the *Times* he used to believe all the undocumented should be deported, but had a change of heart.

"Some of these kids were born in the U.S. These

families had lived here 10 years, and all of a sudden, Dad's gone. Mom's gone," Wielenga said, referring to the impact of Immigration and Custom Enforcement raids. "When you think of it from that perspective, what's the lesser of two evils?"

"When our kids are such good friends at school, people are getting to know each other better," said Libbie Schillerberg, from Denison. "They're trusting each other, wanting to be around each other."

Despite the fact the Trump administration's effort to bar visitors from six majority Muslim nations is bottled up in court challenges, they are moving forward with planning steps for "extreme vetting" of refugees, immigrants and tourists, the *Wall Street Journal* reported April 4. That would include government access to their email, Facebook and other social media accounts.

"We want to say for instance, 'What sites do you visit? And give us your passwords,' so that we can see what they do on the internet," Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly told Congress in February.

The new rules would apply even to visitors from the 38 countries that participate in the Visa Waiver Program, which includes some of Washington's closest allies, such as the U.K., Japan and Australia.

The White House is planning to put in place an "ideological test," interrogating people about their political views. This wouldn't be the first time, the *Journal* said, noting that communists and other foreign-born working-class militants have been excluded from the U.S. in the past.

Venezuela sovereignty

Continued from page 5

violating Venezuelan sovereignty, several mass organizations in Cuba spoke out, including the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), the Federation of University Students and the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP). "Once again the Yankee Ministry of Colonies violates the sovereignty of one of our peoples," said ANAP on March 31, adding that the OAS was seeking to use "foreign intervention to re-establish a shameless regime."

On March 31 the pro-imperialist opposition parties in Venezuela organized demonstrations against Maduro. According to the *Financial Times*, there were some scuffles between students and national guardsmen outside the Venezuelan Supreme Court. More clashes took place April 4.

On April 1, following a meeting convened by Maduro of the Defense Council — a body made up of top ministers and politicians including the head of the armed forces — Maduro announced that he had spoken to the Supreme Court judges and convinced them to reverse their decision to dissolve the National Assembly.

Seth Galinsky contributed to this article.

Cuba conference

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proposals because it "feeds the misconception, broadly held in the U.S. today, that relations have already been normalized and all that's needed is to expand something." Normalization means end the economic war against Cuba, get out of Guantánamo, and end the subversion programs, "Now!" she added.

That proposal sparked opposition.

"Normalization is a process," said Rosemary Mealy. "If we take out the word 'full,' you're denying that a process is already underway."

"How can you have normalization of relations when you still have a blockade?" Andrés Gómez responded to Mealy. "How can you have normalization of relations, when the terrorists who have caused so much death and harm to the Cuban people are still free and have not been brought to justice?"

"There is no normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba at this time," Gómez said. "There is a resumption of diplomatic relations. *That's all there is.* ... Relations have not even *begun* to be normalized."

Waters' motion was adopted by a vote of 29 to 25.

Another debate centered on a proposal supported by Ike Nahem, Isaac Saney and Steve Eckardt of the Chicago Cuba Coalition that a national speakers bureau be established to organize tours by Cubans and others in North America.

"We're all for speaking tours on the Cuban Revolution, but the NNOC is already a national organization with affiliates across the country," said Cheryl LaBash, a National Network on Cuba co-chair.

"There is nothing to be gained by this conference establishing another national structure" as opposed to broadening the one that exists, said Steve Clark of the Socialist Workers Party, urging participants to vote against such a proposal.

"To organize national tours is excellent," added Sandra Ramirez. "But it's not necessary for this conference to create a steering committee in order to do that. There is already a national structure, the NNOC, which has functioned for many years."

The motion to encourage speaking tours was agreed to, but the proposal to establish a new national body was withdrawn.

'We will continue to defend our principles'

The conference closed with remarks by U.N. Ambassador Anayansi Rodríguez. She pointed to the example of the Cuban Revolution's historic central leader Fidel Castro, "because we learned from him that a socialist revolution, to be true to itself, must maintain firmness in principles."

"There should be no doubt," Rodríguez said, "that we will continue to defend these principles today and in the future, whatever the situation may be."

"And we are deeply convinced that in this battle, which is not over, we will continue to count on your firm support."

Sara Lobman, Willie Cotton and Paul Mailhot contributed to this article.

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US hands off Syria! US troops out of Mideast!

The following statement was issued April 7 by Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York Osborne Hart.

The 59 deadly Tomahawk missiles that U.S. military warships rained down on a Syrian government airfield April 6 will further escalate Washington's decadeslong wars in the region.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

I demand stop the bombing! Get Washington's troops out of the Middle East now!

Washington's wars against Iraq and the war in Afghanistan — the longest in U.S. history — both continue today. The administration of Donald Trump has been building on the course of the Barack Obama administration before him, increasing the number of troops in both countries, as well as in Syria.

The course is bipartisan. Washington's missile attack yesterday won applause from Democrats, New York Sen. Charles Schumer and Hillary Clinton, as well as the *Washington Post*.

Washington's attack has escalated the war and will lead to further slaughter of the toilers in Syria and the Middle East. The capitalist rulers who determine U.S. imperialist moves at home and abroad hold their economic and political interests paramount. Washington's access to resources, markets and investment — and the prevention of any revolutionary action by workers and farmers in the region — guides their actions.

Announcing the attack, Trump cynically called on "all civilized nations to join us to end the slaughter and bloodshed in Syria," cynically ignoring the deaths of more than 1,000 civilians and others in U.S. bombing raids there over the past year. It is Washington's wars that have provoked and prolonged the combat across the region, including creating the vacuum that led to the rise of the reactionary Islamic State.

President Trump claims the missile strike is a response to a murderous chemical weapons attack on civilians days earlier. There is substantial evidence, including the direct testimony of survivors of the gas bombs, that the dictatorial Bashar al-Assad regime was responsible. The chemical attack presented Washington an opportunity on a silver platter to escalate their intervention.

Washington's claims to moral authority are an affront to working people everywhere. The U.S. ruling class is the only



Militant/Sarah Katz

Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York mayor Osborne Hart, right, joins strike support rally for workers at Spectrum-Time Warner Cable April 5.

power to ever target civilians with nuclear bombs. It has used napalm and all kinds of weapons of mass slaughter, enforced its stifling and destructive economic embargo against Cuba for decades to make Cuba's workers and farmers pay for their socialist revolution, and on and on.

Working people in the Middle East suffer from the carnage of the ongoing wars. The toilers in Syria organized massive popular mobilizations for political rights and against the regime in 2011, but were put down in blood. Since then, over 400,000

Continued on next page

Washington escalates war in Syria, Mideast

BY JIM BRADLEY

Washington deepened its widening military intervention in the Middle East and Syria's six-year-old civil war April 6 by launching 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles from U.S. warships in the Mediterranean against Assad's Al Shayrat air force base. They charge that the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship in Damascus used chemical weapons against civilians in the opposition-held town of Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib province, last week.

"Tonight, I ordered a targeted military strike on the air base in Syria from where the chemical attack was launched," President Donald Trump told reporters at his Mar-a-Lago estate in

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US hands off Syria! US troops out of Mideast!

Continued from front page

have died and 11 million people, more than half the population, have been driven from their homes.

Working people in Syria need to find a road forward, but foreign imperialist intervention is a deadly obstacle to the fight for liberation.

Workers in the U.S. are facing carnage as well. A “new normal” of permanently lower employment, attacks on health care, pensions, safety on the job, political and social rights, and from the rulers’ cops and criminal “justice” system marks life under today’s capitalist crisis. The employers and their government are seeking to boost their profit rates on our backs.

Among the hardest hit are workers who are drawn into service in the imperialist military, maimed and scarred and left to their own devices when they return.

Washington’s attack on Syria is also intended as a warning to North Korea. U.S. government spokespeople have made it clear Washington is ready to use military might to move unilaterally to inflict pain and suffering on the people there if they see the opportunity.

The capitalist rulers — and their Democratic and Republican parties alike — have *their* foreign policy, to defend *their* dog-eat-dog capitalist private profit system by all means.

Working people need *our own* internationalist policy of solidarity with workers struggling worldwide. We need our own political party. That is what the Socialist Workers Party is fighting to build.

Join us to condemn Washington’s assault on Syria. Join protests against their wars. And demand the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops and military from Syria and the Middle East.

Washington escalates war in Syria, Mideast

Continued from front page

Florida, where he is hosting a summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump said that Assad’s repression has created a refugee crisis that “continues to deepen, and the region continues to destabilize, threatening the United States and its allies.”

But the destabilization is the result of Washington’s wars in the region — Iraq three times, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen and more.

Thirteen people were killed by the missile strikes, including five soldiers on the base and eight civilians near the facility. Four children were among the civilian deaths. The U.S. military said the strikes damaged and destroyed aircraft, support infrastructure and equipment at the base.

Moscow and Tehran immediately joined their ally in Damascus condemning the U.S. strikes. They claimed Assad’s planes bombed a chemical weapons warehouse controlled by opponents of his regime.

Eyewitness reports from the site of the bombing in Khan Sheikhoun said Syrian planes dropped bombs April 5 releasing gas, causing what medics on the ground described as symptoms

of nerve gas poisoning. They also reported evidence of chlorine gas. Almost 80 people died including 27 children. Over 500 were injured, many are in critical condition. A few hours later, regime jets bombed one of the hospitals where victims of the gas attack were being aided.

According to the World Health Organization, autopsies on victims sent to hospitals in Turkey showed clear evidence of death caused by a nerve agent like sarin.

Since being bolstered by Moscow’s air power and ground forces from Iran, Hezbollah and Shiite militias, the Assad regime has combined murderous bombing with sieges to starve and batter opposition-held areas. They then offer what they call “reconciliation” deals to get the fighters to surrender their territory. Then they are allowed to go to Idlib province.

Now Assad is using his air power — and chemical weapons — to pound rebel areas there. These attacks are heinous crimes. Toilers in Syria have no revolutionary party. Worldwide solidarity, political space and the development of such a party are the only road forward for working people in Syria and the region.

Declarations of support for Washington’s attack came from Democrats and Republicans alike in the U.S. and from the rulers of capitalist powers around the world. Liberal newspaper editors implacably hostile to the Trump administration, hailed the missile attack.

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