

SWP drive on for ‘Militant’ subscriptions, books, fund

BY MARY MARTIN

The Socialist Workers Party’s nine-week fall circulation drive to increase readership of the *Militant* and books by party leaders is off to a good start.

At the heart of the effort is knocking on workers’ doors to discuss the carnage being visited on workers, ranchers and farmers by the bosses and their government as they try to place the cost of the deepening crisis of their capitalist system on us. And the SWP’s perspectives for how workers can meet these attacks and chart a course for the working class to take political power.

In addition to branches of the SWP, members and supporters of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.K. are using the drive — from Sept. 16 to Nov. 21 — to introduce the communist movement, its paper and books to working people where they live and in protests and strike picket lines they participate in.

The drive runs concurrently with the SWP’s \$100,000 fall fund to fi-

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Fall campaign to sell ‘Militant’ subscriptions and books Sept. 16–Nov. 21

Country	Militant quota	Book quota
UNITED STATES		
Albany	95	95
Atlanta	85	85
Chicago	115	115
Colorado	30	30
Lincoln	30	30
Los Angeles	135	135
Miami	45	45
New York	180	180
Oakland	125	135
Philadelphia	70	70
Seattle	105	105
Twin Cities	75	75
Washington	80	80
Total U.S.	1,170	1,180
Prisoners	20	
UNITED KINGDOM		
London	65	65
Manchester	60	60
Total U.K.	125	125
CANADA		
Montreal	60	60
Vancouver	45	45
Total Canada	105	105
New Zealand		
	50	50
Australia		
	45	45
Total	1,515	1,505

After storm, Cuban people and their gov’t rebuild

BY SETH GALINSKY

Mobilizing thousands of volunteers, Communist Party members, mass organizations and units from the army, the revolutionary Cuban government is making rapid progress in repairing damage caused by Hurricane Irma and preparing to take on the serious challenges that remain.

While Irma caused more severe and widespread damage in Cuba than in most of the United States — and less than in some Caribbean islands like Barbuda and the U.S. colony of the Virgin Islands — workers and farmers in Cuba have a big advantage. Since the overthrow of U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959, opening the door for Cuba’s socialist revolution, Cuba’s working people run the government. As Cuban President Raúl Castro said, they ensure that “no Cuban family is left on its own.”

Their revolution, and the way the Cuban people met the storm, is a powerful example for workers worldwide to emulate.

More than 1,738,000 people were evacuated in advance of the storm by Civil Defense committees, minimizing the loss of human life. The com-

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1000s march to back workers in 6-month-long Spectrum strike

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — Thousands of workers turned out Sept. 18 for a march and rally in support of 1,800 members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3 who have been on strike against deep concession demands from cable giant Charter Communications/Spectrum for nearly six months. Their last contract expired more than four years ago.

The company says they’re offering a big pay raise,” said Gavin Cabrera. “But then they say that we should have to pay for our medical insurance and make our own payments to the pension fund. And they want to get rid of seniority. They’re not even willing to negotiate at this point. They just want to bust the union.”

Cabrera said that the company had sent out letters to the striking workers saying they could return to work, but they wouldn’t be guaranteed their

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Kurds press fight to vote on independence



Sept. 14 rally in Zakho, Kurdistan, in favor of independence from Iraq, one of many held in the Kurdish region. Washington and most capitalist governments in Middle East want to block vote.

Kurds mobilize for ‘yes’ in September 25 vote

BY JIM BRADLEY

As the campaign for the historic Sept. 25 Kurdistan Regional Government’s independence referendum unfolds, tens of thousands of Kurds in Iraq and in the Kurdish diaspora are taking to the streets in demonstrations and rallies to support their decades-long fight to establish their own country. Many of the actions took place just as Washington issued a Sept. 15 statement declaring its opposition to the referendum.

“The United States does not support the Kurdistan Regional Government’s intention to hold a referendum later this month,” the White House said, claiming that the vote would distract from the joint Kurdish-U.S. fight to defeat Islamic State and stabi-

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Back Kurds right to self-determination!

The following statement was released Sept. 20 by Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

The Socialist Workers Party urges working people in the United States and around the world to help initiate and join meetings and demonstrations in support of the Sept. 25 independence referendum called by the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq.

During Washington’s 1991 war in Iraq, the Kurdish people came to “center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims but

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Washington protest demands US hands off Venezuela, Cuba

BY OMARI MUSA

WASHINGTON — Thirty people joined a protest in front of the White House Sept. 14, demanding the U.S. government end its interference in domestic affairs in Venezuela and the sanctions it has imposed on the country and some of its leaders. The action was initiated by the D.C. Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and supported by several area groups.

“We are here to tell the U.S. government to immediately end its threats against the Venezuelan government and people,” said James Harris, speaking for the coalition and the Socialist Workers Party. “We support

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Washington apple pickers win strike over abusive conditions

Pacific Blue Cross workers ratify contract, push back concessions

Million march for Catalonia referendum

BY JIM BRADLEY

The Spanish capitalist government of Mariano Rajoy in Madrid says they are pulling out all the stops to prevent the people of Catalonia from voting on an independence referendum Oct. 1. “I will do whatever is needed, without ruling anything out, to prevent it,” Rajoy said Sept. 7.

Madrid is threatening to bring criminal charges against over 700 mayors in the autonomous region of Catalonia, including the mayor of Barcelona, Spain’s second largest city, if they provide facilities or aid for the referendum called by the Catalan National Assembly.

Catalonia President Carles Puigdemont will also face charges if the referendum proceeds.

Catalans — like those in Spain’s Basque country — have historically faced national oppression under Spanish rule. Under the lash of the capitalist economic crisis, the rulers in Madrid have stepped up assaults on Catalan rights and use of the Catalan language.

Prime Minister Rajoy, the Spanish federal courts and Spain’s King Felipe have all declared the referendum illegal, saying the Spanish Constitution, adopt-

ed in 1978, asserts Spain is indivisible.

Police have raided print shops and other facilities in the province looking for voting boxes, ballots and pro-independence literature to seize and destroy, so far unsuccessfully.

Madrid’s threats deepened after a Sept. 11 pro-independence demonstration of a million people in the Catalonia capital of Barcelona demanding the right to hold the referendum.

“It’s about defending what we believe in, which is independence,” Helena Casador, a 23-year-old student from Tarragona, told the *Guardian* at the demonstration. “It will go ahead because people are prepared to defy the state.”

“We will vote,” more than 700 mayors chanted in Barcelona Sept. 16, backed by hundreds of flag-waving independence supporters.

Polls show an overwhelming majority of Catalans support holding the referendum, whether or not they support Catalonia’s independence.

The question on the ballot reads, “Do you want Catalonia to become an independent state in the form of a republic?” There are about 5.5 million eligible voters out of a population of 7.5 million.

Decades of struggle, economic weight

The Catalans with their own national identity, language and customs, have lived for more than 1,000 years in a region on the Mediterranean coast in northeast Spain. Under a long series of feudal monarchies based in Madrid, Catalans have faced ongoing repression aimed at making them “more Spanish.”

In the 19th century, Catalonia was at the forefront of Spanish industrialization, creating a strong working class.

In 1931 a mass revolutionary move-

ment rose against the dictatorial government in Madrid and led to the creation of a Spanish republic. An autonomous Catalan regional government and demands for self-determination arose out of these struggles.

Backed by the fascist regimes in Berlin and Rome, reactionary Gen. Francisco Franco led the old army in the bloody Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939, defeating Stalinist, anarchist and centrist forces that prevented the toilers from carrying out a thoroughgoing revolution. During the civil war the revolutionary Catalanian masses fought on the republican side against the fascists.

Franco’s dictatorship lasted until his death in 1975. As trade unions were crushed and revolutionary organizations banned, so too was Catalan autonomy, with language and culture suppressed. Many nationalist-minded Catalan activists were executed or forced into exile.

On the heels of the fall of the dictatorship, a new Spanish Constitution was adopted in 1978 recognizing Catalans as a “nationality.” It established Catalan and Spanish as the two official languages of Catalonia. But in 2010 the Spanish Constitutional Court reversed this, holding there was no legal basis for considering Catalonia a nation and that the Catalan language should not take precedence in the region.

For Spain’s capitalist rulers the stakes are high in their drive to block the referendum and beat back pro-independence forces. Catalonia makes up 16 percent of Spain’s population and its industrial activity — based on chemicals, automobile manufacturing, energy, metal, pharmaceuticals, electronics and other goods — generates about 20 percent of Spain’s gross domestic product.

The bourgeois political parties that



Reuters/Albert Gea

Barcelona, Sept. 11. A million people rallied for referendum on Catalonian independence. Banner reads “Yes!”

are currently leading agitation for Catalanian independence call for immediate entry into the European Union. The rulers in Madrid bitterly oppose this, fearing it would throw Europe’s fourth largest capitalist economy back into crisis. This adds further to the growing instability and coming apart of the pipe dream of an “ever increasing union” of Europe.

The defeat of national oppression in Catalonia can help advance the class struggle there, in the Basque country and Spain.

Join Mothers March for Justice for Mohamed Bah

Student from Guinea, West Africa, shot and killed by New York police five years ago.

Mon., Sept. 25, 12-5 p.m.

Gather 11 a.m. at 124th St. and Morningside Ave.

New York City

THE MILITANT

Protest attacks on Rohingya in Myanmar

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya, a Muslim nationality, are fleeing attacks by Myanmar’s military. For decades they’ve faced government persecution, including being denied citizenship and restricted to tent camps. The ‘Militant’ backs their fight.



Reuters/Mohammad Ponir Hossain
Rohingya cross into Bangladesh, fleeing military assaults and oppression in Myanmar.

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

‘Militant,’ books, fund drive

Continued from front page

nance the party’s ongoing work. The chart on the front page shows the quotas taken by SWP and Communist League branches. On page 4 is a chart showing fund goals SWP branches have adopted.

Dan Fein reports a team of SWP members and supporters from Chicago went to Louisville, Kentucky. “We went door to door introducing the Socialist Workers Party,” he said. “We found that a number of workers wanted to talk about the demonstrations against police brutality taking place in St. Louis.”

After discussing the party’s program for awhile, Ronnie Herman a 39-year-old chef from the Philippines, got a subscription to the *Militant*. “Keep up the good work,” he told us, “it’s important what you’re doing.”

Overall workers we talked to got two *Militant* subscriptions, 10 single copies and six of the books the party is offering at a special discount, said Fein.

The books are *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?* and *The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes; *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?* by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters; and “*It’s the Poor Who Face the Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System*” by the Cuban Five, five Cuban revolutionaries who spent up to 16 years in U.S. prisons for their actions in defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Ron Poulsen from the Communist League in Australia reported that he and three other members of Communist Leagues in Australia, Canada and New Zealand made a trip to the Philippines Sept. 12-18 during the Manila International Book Fair and were hosted at the Polytechnic University there by members of PUP SPEAK — Students Party for Equality and Advancement of Knowledge. PUP SPEAK won last year’s student council elections, ousting a Maoist current that had controlled the office for three decades.

Over two days, PUP members and other university and high school students who came by our table bought a total of seven introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* and 15 campaign books.

A total of 66 other books and pamphlets on the communist program, the Cuban Revolution and writings by revolutionary leaders also were sold at the book table.

Members of the Communist League in Vancouver, British Columbia, report they had some rewarding experiences talking politics with working people in the Surrey area in the Lower Mainland.

“We went door to door in a working-class town in Surrey and sold six books,” Carlita LaBlanc said. “One health care worker asked us to come back so she could get a subscription. She had asked us how she could contribute to what we were doing, and decided that getting the paper and showing it around to friends and workmates was the way to go.

“We learned about a rally in support of the independence referendum in Kurdistan an hour or so before it began on Sunday. We joined in and two participants got subscriptions,” she said. “It was a lively and upbeat event with music and dancing, despite the rain.

“Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, will be coming through here this week, returning from a trip to the Philippines,” LaBlanc said, “and he’ll join us in campaigning in the region here for a few days.”

Members of the Communist League in London went door to door in the suburb of New Addington Sept. 16, selling five *Militant* subscriptions and two books.

CL members Ólöf Andra Proppé and Ögmundur Jónsson met Patrick Collins, a retired alarm fitter, and they discussed



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Students at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines in Manila crowd around book table Sept. 17 to discuss and buy communist literature on U.S., world politics and Cuban Revolution.

the recent opening of the government inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire and social disaster that killed at least 80 people. “There used to be more publicity — what they were doing, what they weren’t doing — but now it’s out of the news,” Collins said. “They refused to have any victims on the panel.”

“The inquiry is designed to keep people off the streets, to make out that the capitalist rulers will take care of everything,” Jónsson said. “To win the demands for permanent rehousing, financial assistance and fire safety protections residents need, working people have to rely on our own capacities to fight for them. What’s behind this is capitalist profiteering and contempt for working people.”

Collins said that he thinks millions of

workers are getting angry about worsening conditions and “people will explode at some point.” He got a subscription to the *Militant* and *Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?*

League members were enthusiastically received at a Sept. 17 demonstration in London in favor of the independence referendum called by the Kurdish Regional Government. In addition to seven subscriptions, Jónsson said, they sold 28 copies of the *Militant* featuring a centerspread on the Kurdish struggle in Iraq, as well as four other books.

To join in the circulation drive or to contribute to the Party Fund, contact the nearest office of the Socialist Workers Party or Communist League listed on page 8.

Brigade will bring solidarity, aid to Cuba after storm

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

On Oct. 1 delegations from around the world will arrive in Cuba for the two-week “In the Footsteps of Che” International Brigade. Initiated by the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), the brigade is organized around the legacy of Ernesto Che Guevara, who fell in combat 50 years ago helping to lead a guerrilla struggle against the military dictatorship of René Barrientos in Bolivia. Guevara was a central leader of the Cuban Revolution, of its revolution-

ary government, and of efforts to aid workers and farmers worldwide to follow its example.

“Many brigadistas have asked if the Che Brigade will continue after the Hurricane Irma damage,” began a Sept. 24 letter sent to the over 70 members of the U.S. delegation. “The answer is YES! One week from today we will be in Havana.”

In fact, the solidarity the brigade will bring to Cuba is especially important in the wake of the devastating impact of Hurricane Irma and the

recovery work that the Cuban people are organizing throughout the country. The Category 5 hurricane pounded Cuba’s entire northern coastline for 72 hours. The storm’s heavy rains and powerful winds extended across an unusually large area, something Cuba hasn’t seen for a long time.

There is no better way to walk “in the footsteps of Che” than for brigadistas to join hundreds of thousands of Cuban workers and farmers volunteering to help clean up and rebuild after the damage inflicted by the hurricane.

“Che was the creator of volunteer labor,” Fidel Castro said.

Brigade members will see firsthand how the revolution Cuban working people made equipped them to mobilize to prepare for the oncoming storm days in advance, including a massive evacuation. Brigadistas will return to the U.S. better armed to explain how the response of Cuba’s government and people is the polar opposite of the capitalist rulers in the U.S. and the imperialist overlords in the Caribbean. Cuba’s response was “no one is left on their own,” while in Florida and Texas workers were told to take care of themselves.

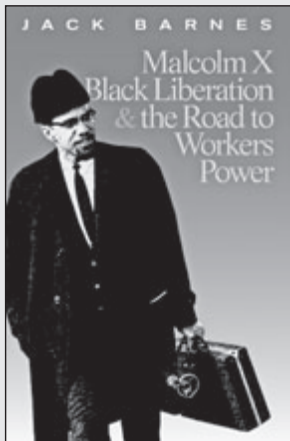
They will return in a stronger position to win new support for ending the U.S economic war against trade with Cuba and the end of Washington’s occupation of the notorious military base and prison on Guantánamo.

In cities across the U.S. brigade members are discussing what they can do when they return to share with people what they learned. The 12 bri-

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MILITANT SUBSCRIPTION & BOOK SPECIALS

**Malcolm X, Black Liberation,
and the Road to Workers Power**
by Jack Barnes
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These books just \$5 each with a Militant subscription
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Are They Rich Because They’re Smart?
Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes

The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record
Why Washington Fears Working People
by Jack Barnes

Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?
A Necessary Debate Among Working People
by Mary-Alice Waters

**“It’s the Poor Who Face the
Savagery of the US ‘Justice’ System”**
*The Cuban Five Talk About Their Lives Within the
US Working Class.*

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To subscribe or purchase books at these prices,
contact Socialist Workers Party or Communist League branches listed on page 8.

As Raúl Castro said, ‘In Cuba, no one is left behind’

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

WASHINGTON — “As our President Raúl Castro has said of these days — in Cuba no one is left behind,” José Ramón Cabañas, Cuban ambassador to the U.S., told a meeting at the Calvary Baptist Church here Sept. 14, reporting on the way Cuban workers and farmers were mobilizing to cope with the effects of Hurricane Irma, which wreaked havoc all across the island. “This has been our practice always, starting from the Granma,” he said.

The Granma was the yacht that carried Fidel and Raúl Castro, Che Guevara and other Cuban revolutionaries from Mexico to Cuba to begin the revolutionary war against the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1956.

As the revolutionaries approached Cuba, ex-navy lieutenant Roberto Roque fell overboard. “The Granma’s search lights were turned on for the first time, when it was more dangerous than ever,” Cuban revolutionary Faustino Pérez wrote in his account published in the book *Diary of the Cuban Revolution*. “Never willing to give up, Fidel ordered one more search.”

“We miraculously rescued him,” Pérez said. “His strength, his ability, his level headedness, as well as Fidel’s faith and the efforts of his comrades had saved his life.”

The same attitude of solidarity and discipline characterize Cuba’s approach in preparing for Hurricane Irma.

The meeting of 125 capped the “Days of Action against the Blockade,” organized by the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity.

“Cuba is sharing our doctors with the Caribbean,” said Leima Martínez, a representative of the North American division of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, describing how, in spite of extensive hurricane damage in Cuba, the revolution has sent medical personnel to help throughout the hard-hit region.

“I’ve been asked why Cuba sends doctors to other countries. Are we exploiting them?” Martínez said. “No, we share what we have, not what’s left over. That solidarity that we share is part of our culture.”

“We need you to come to Cuba, to share your experiences and struggles,” Martínez said, adding the Cuban people look forward to solidarity from people

in the U.S. Over 70 people from the United States will be joining the “In the Footsteps of Che” brigade to Cuba, Oct. 1-15, and will learn firsthand how Cuba’s revolutionary government and people organize to rebuild after Irma.

Yoandris Ruiz, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists of Camagüey, was also part of the Cuban delegation.

Dr. Jesús de los Santo Renó Céspedes, head of pediatrics at the National Institute of Oncology and Radiology in Havana, joined a panel of speakers to discuss Cuba’s health care system.

He reported on the effect of Washington’s economic war against the Cuban Revolution, including how Washington tries to make it difficult for the Cuban government to provide health care.

Cuba’s pharmaceutical industry strives to advance the treatment of cancer, especially in children, Renó said. “There was a drug that we had a lot of success with that was available in Mexico, but for \$500 a tablet,” he said. “In India, it was available for \$200. But the U.S. bought this company. We constantly face the need to find providers, or the medical raw materials to make medicines, because of Washington’s blockade.”

Stephen Frum presented greetings from National Nurses United. Also speaking were three graduates from the Latin American School of Medicine, a Cuban school that provides free medical education to young people from Latin America, the U.S. and around the world; as well as Dr. Margaret Flowers, co-director of Popular Resistance.

The September 11-16 activities included campus meetings at American University, Howard University, Georgetown University School of Medicine and the University of Maryland, as well as lobbying against the embargo.

Thousands protest acquittal of cop in St. Louis



Reuters/Lawrence Bryant

Thousands of working people and youth have taken to the streets to protest since St. Louis District Court Judge Timothy Wilson acquitted former cop Jason Stockley Sept. 15. Stockley was charged with first-degree murder after killing 24-year-old Anthony Lamar Smith on Dec. 20, 2011. Prosecutors said that Stockley, who is Caucasian, shot Smith five times as he sat in his car after a 3-mile 80 mph high-speed chase, and then planted a gun in his car.

Stockley claims the chase followed a drug transaction. The dashcam video shows the cop saying, “We’re killing this [expletive], don’t you know?” just before he shot Smith, who was African-American.

Minutes after the verdict, protesters marched for hours downtown. That evening some 1,000 people marched to the home of St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson. On Sept 17, Anthony Lamar Smith’s mother, Annie Smith, above center, joined the protests, including a demonstration of 1,000 at police headquarters. Protesters chanted, “Stop killing us,” “No justice, no peace,” “Whose streets, our streets,” and held up “Black Lives Matter” signs. The following day a march was organized downtown to the Municipal Courts Building and students demonstrated at Kirkwood and University City high schools.

But at night, after the protests ended, some people began breaking windows and vandalizing property. This opened the door for the cops on Sept. 17, when they roughed up and arrested protesters, bystanders and journalists. As they moved in, the cops mockingly chanted, “Whose streets, our streets.”

A year ago, the U.S. Department of Justice, under former President Barack Obama, concluded there was insufficient evidence to pursue federal civil rights prosecution of Stockley, but withheld this information from the public until Stockley’s trial was underway.

Smith’s killing took place just a few miles from Ferguson, where thousands of working people took to the streets to protest the August 2014 cop killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown.

— JANET POST

DC protest demands, ‘US hands off Venezuela!’

Continued from front page

the basic right of Venezuelans to sovereignty and independence. We oppose the U.S. government’s attempts to impose regime change.”

The government of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela, along with revolutionary Cuba, has been in the vanguard of offering solidarity and aid to Caribbean countries battered by Hurricane Irma.

After the storm damaged or destroyed some 95 percent of the buildings on Barbuda, Venezuela delivered aid and helped evacuate people from the island. “The large international countries have not done anything,” said Ronald Sanders, the country’s ambassador to the U.S., adding that the only government “to come forward with practical, positive assistance so far has been the government of Venezuela.”

Venezuela was also the first government to send humanitarian aid to Cuba, with an air force jet delivering over 7 tons of mattresses, water and canned food on Sept. 12. “Cuba was always with Venezuela in the most difficult times,” Blanca Eekhout, Venezuelan Minister for Women and Gender Equality, said at Havana’s José Martí International Airport. “That is why we are permanently committed to its people and revolution.”

Maurice Carney, a leader of Friends of the Congo, said that the U.S. govern-

ment has been in the business of regime change around the world for decades. “It was with U.S. government support that the nationalist government of Patrice Lumumba was overthrown in 1961,” he said. “Neither the former colonial power Belgium nor the U.S. wanted this rich country to develop its independence and sovereignty.

“Cuba sent 120 internationalists to participate in the fight to break imperialism’s grip on the Congo,” he said. “As some of you may know, those Cuban internationalists were led by Ernesto Che Guevara.”

This reporter noted two young women smiling at the protesters. They were both from Guyana, a country neighboring Venezuela. They said thank you for the voices against what the U.S. government does in Latin America.

The majority of the protesters were familiar with the long-standing solidarity between Venezuela and Cuba. They carried signs demanding, “End the U.S. blockade against Cuba” and “U.S. out of Guantánamo!”

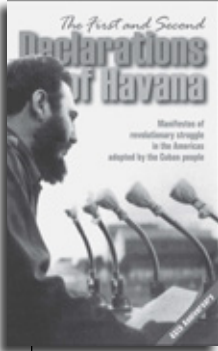
Supporters of the Latin American and Caribbean Network and Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front also spoke, saying every attack on Venezuela has the Cuban Revolution as its target as well.

The next day *Venezuela is Hope*, a

newsletter put out by the Venezuelan embassy, printed a briefing featuring a photo of the protest.

“The Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the U.S. appreciates the support by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, DC Metro Solidarity Coalition, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, and other social movements,” who held “a demonstration of solidarity against sanctions and interventionist policies of the U.S. government against the Venezuelan people,” it said.

The First and Second Declarations of Havana



Nowhere are questions of revolutionary strategy in the Americas addressed with greater truthfulness and clarity than in the First and Second Declarations of Havana, adopted

by million-strong assemblies of the Cuban people in 1960 and 1962. \$10 Also in Spanish, French, Greek, Farsi, Arabic

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Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund Sept. 16 - Nov. 21	
Area	Quota
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Atlanta	\$11,200
Chicago	\$12,000
Colorado	\$700
Lincoln	\$300
Los Angeles	\$9,400
Miami	\$3,500
New York	\$17,000
Oakland	\$14,500
Philadelphia	\$4,200
Seattle	\$8,200
Twin Cities	\$4,800
Washington	\$7,250
Other	\$1,200
Total U.S.	\$99,250
Should be	\$100,000

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Apple pickers in Washington win strike over abusive conditions

QUINCY, Wash. — Nearly two dozen apple workers here who struck W&L Orchards for three days in September over abusive working conditions were back on the job Sept. 15, winning their three main demands. The orchards are operated by Larson Fruit Co. in Selah.

The farmworkers are from Mexico, working on temporary permits known as H-2A visas. The company agreed to reinstate three workers who were fired after they complained about their working conditions, to remove an abusive supervisor, and to recognize a five-person committee to discuss workers' issues with the company.

All the workers have joined Familias Unidas por la Justicia, the independent farmworkers union in Washington. "The union is getting calls from farmworkers from all over the state, including other workers on H-2A visas, because the union's stand in defense of all farmworkers is becoming well known," union President Ramón Torres told the *Militant* at the picket line Sept. 12.

The rehired workers told the *Militant* about their abuse. Jorge described being forced to use broken ladders for picking apples, and when he fell off one and broke his arm, he was denied medical care. Jose said he fell ill in the winter from working in the cold wet orchard. The supervisor told him if he didn't keep working he would face deportation. Juan said he asked for a second break after having worked 12 hours, but the supervisor just told him, "Get used to suffering." Now, Juan said, the company will "have to get used to us demanding our dignity."

— Mary Martin

Pacific Blue Cross workers ratify contract, push back concessions

BURNABY, British Columbia — After nine weeks on the picket lines, Pacific Blue Cross workers here ratified a contract Sept. 10 turning back concessions the company had demanded. Some 600 workers, members of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1816, were locked out July 7 in response to several work stoppages protesting attacks on health care, pensions and wages.

"We won because of our solidarity and because we stayed strong," striker Donna Fournier told the *Militant* after the ratification meeting.

"We've taken strike votes before as part of the bargaining process," said Vanda Sudic, with 27 years at the com-

pany, "but we've never had such antagonistic treatment."

Solidarity was key to the gains made, picket captain Norm Jennings said. "A lot of people who were on the fence about being in a union turned a corner and are now solid supporters of the labor movement."

The six-year contract preserves retirees' benefits and includes wage increases of 1.5 percent the first year, 1.75 percent for the second year and 2 percent for each of the final four years, the union told the press.

Pacific Blue Cross, a private health insurance company that claims to be "not-for-profit," made \$11 million in profits last year.

— Joe Young



Militant/Barry Fatland

Apple workers picket W&L Orchards in Quincy, Washington, Sept. 12 during strike against abusive working conditions. Farmworkers joined union and forced company to back down.

Charges tossed in frame-up of engineer in Phila. crash

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA — Municipal Court Judge Thomas Gehret threw out criminal charges against Amtrak engineer Brandon Bostian here Sept. 12. The 34-year-old rail worker, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, faced multiple charges stemming from the derailment of Amtrak 188 on May 12, 2015.

Eight people died and more than 200 were injured when the train derailed on the curve at Frankford Junction. The train, en route from Washington, D.C., to New York, had been traveling at over twice the 50 mph speed limit there. Bostian has been on administrative leave without pay since the accident.

Rail bosses, the press and capitalist politicians like then Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter tried to frame Bostian, the train's engineer, for the deaths and destruction. But it was Amtrak bosses' push to cut costs that led to the disaster.

After a four-hour hearing, Judge Gehret said he found no evidence the engineer engaged in criminal activity. The Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office has not said whether it will appeal.

In a May 2016 report on the disaster, the National Transportation Safety Board said Bostian was likely distracted by reports coming over the train's radio about a nearby SEPTA commuter train that had been hit by projectiles. The engineer has sued Amtrak, saying he was

knocked unconscious when similar projectiles hit his train. He suffered a concussion and a head gash and does not remember the derailment.

As the statute of limitations was running out in May 2017, the Philadelphia attorney general refused to press charges, saying there was no evidence that Bostian acted with criminal intent. Family members of one of the passengers who died convinced state authorities to file criminal charges.

The Amtrak crash and other accidents before and since, like the deadly derailment in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, in 2013, have underscored the demand by rail workers and their unions — as well as many other working people — for two rail workers on every locomotive.

One week after the Amtrak derailment, Dennis Pierce, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, and John Previsich, president of the SMART Transportation Division, issued a joint statement pointing squarely to what caused the deadly derailment — decisions by both Congress and Amtrak bosses that mandated a single crew member on the railroad's engines. "Safe transportation service demands a crew of at least two fully trained and qualified employees in the control cab of every train," they said.

When Amtrak was created in the 1970s, locomotive cabs were required to have at least a two-member crew. But in

the name of cutting costs and boosting profits, both Congress and the railroad's bosses changed the rules to run their trains with just one engineer.

Under public pressure, Amtrak installed a Positive Train Control system, which uses sensors and computer systems to monitor train speed and slow or stop trains if they exceed speed limits on much of its highly traveled Northeast Corridor. But it hadn't been installed on the Frankford Junction northbound tracks where Train 188 derailed.

Congress responded to the continuing series of train disasters by mandating Positive Train Control be installed on all rail systems nationwide by the end of 2015. When the rail bosses dragged their feet, the deadline was extended for another three years. As of the end of 2016, rail management had put the system on only 24 percent of their tracks in passenger service and 16 percent in freight.

The bottom line is that "no technology can replace the level of safety provided when two crew members are on board and can serve as a check and balance to one another," said the statement by the two rail union officers after the Amtrak crash.

In January 2016 the Federal Railroad Administration finally proposed that trains have two crew members, but said railroads could apply for exemptions. And there is still no set date to implement this.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 2, 1992

ORANGE, California — It is 5:00 a.m. and the Carpenter's union hall is already filling up with workers. Pretty soon shouts of "vámonos" (let's go) ring out and workers begin to pile into pick-up trucks and campers. This is the way each day starts for many of the more than 3,500 drywall construction workers who are striking to win a union.

Every day hundreds of workers go out to construction sites ranging from north of Los Angeles to San Diego. Their goal: to shut down the sites and convince the approximately 3,000 drywall workers who are still working to join their strike.

This is a strike being led and organized by the drywallers themselves. After three months on strike, they have contracts, including benefits and better wages, with eight companies.



October 2, 1967

NEW YORK — Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers candidate for President, assailed the latest Organization of American States anti-Cuban agreement as one more move by Washington to subvert the legitimate government of the Cuban people.

"It is an incredible reminder of Hitler's big lie technique," Halstead said Sept. 26, "for Washington to talk of the need to act against governments which interfere in the affairs of other countries. Is there any government in the world that can match the U.S. record in doing precisely that?"

Insofar as Cuba is concerned, Halstead said, it not only has the right but the revolutionary duty to give every possible aid to those who struggle against tyranny in Latin America.



October 3, 1942

Oral argument on the appeal of the Minneapolis labor "conspiracy" trial of 18 Socialist Workers Party and CIO members will be heard on Nov. 5 in the Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis.

Attorneys Osmund Frankel of the American Civil Liberties Union and Albert Goldman will present the argument for the defense.

The defense contention is that the Smith "Gag" Act, under which the Minneapolis defendants were found guilty is unconstitutional. The defense also argues that the Socialist Workers Party does not advocate violence, but simply predicts that the capitalist minority will not permit the majority to take power and will use violence to prevent the majority from doing so, and workers should defend their right to take power.

Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs



The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle. First in a four-volume series.

The other books are: *Teamster Power*, *Teamster Politics*, and *Teamster Bureaucracy*.

Also available in Spanish, Swedish, Farsi.

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Capitalism turns Harvey, Irma into social disasters

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

While hurricanes Irma and Harvey have come and gone, the resulting social disaster — a product of capitalist social relations that values profit over human needs — takes a mounting toll on lives and conditions facing working people in Florida, Texas, and large parts of the Caribbean, including U.S., British, French and the Dutch colonies there. And now working people in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Caribbean face additional damage from Hurricane Maria.

“It will be a new and different normal for this entire region,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said Aug. 28, spelling out quite bluntly what workers who already facing disastrous conditions must accept.

The owners of capital and their governments have only one message: “You’re on your own” — whether you or your family decided to evacuate or not.

Little or nothing was done by government officials to help those in most dire need. At the Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills nursing home in South Florida eight residents died from heat over 100 degrees after their air conditioning failed. Broward County officials were aware of the situation, but didn’t consider the nursing home a “critical” infrastructure, so no action was taken. Evacuations didn’t start until patients were dead and dying three days later.

There were 81 nursing homes still without power Sept. 13, days after the hurricane passed through, the Florida Health Care Association reported.

Your ability to evacuate or not showed the real class divisions under capitalism. In Tampa Bay, Wilman Hernandez, a hotel dishwasher, wasn’t even able to get his family to an area shelter. His repeated attempts to get information from “311” about the shelters went unanswered, he said on Telesur TV.

A different scenario played out in the affluent coastal residence of Rio Vista, where residents spent thousands of dollars chartering private planes, or purchasing generators and other means of keeping power and pumps on.

Millions of gallons of sewage and wastewater have been bubbling up across Florida — as they did in Houston and other parts of Texas — exposing Florida’s deteriorating infrastructure. This includes some 30,000 gallons of raw sewage pouring into a public park in Miami-Dade County; sewage backed up into water ponds and some houses in Orlando; and 200 gallons of fuel that spilled into Lake Reedy in Frostproof.

State law requires sewage pumping stations in Florida to withstand “25-year floods.” When electricity went out, these sewage systems, which are old and low-lying, couldn’t pump out the wastewater.

In Houston, where flooding levels were much worse, mounds of debris from about 126,000 damaged homes line the streets three weeks after Hurricane Harvey hit. Across Texas, the debris “could reach 200 million cubic yards — enough to fill up a football stadium almost 125 times,” reported Reuters. Tens of thousands still haven’t been able to return to their flood-ravaged homes. In many, sewage and other contaminants have left them permanently uninhabitable.

Nowhere have government officials

mobilized the forces to deal swiftly with this social crisis, destroying the lives of tens of thousands. At best they hope to get some paltry compensation by and by.

Mobile homes were hit hardest by Hurricane Irma, most of which are uninsured. Not built to withstand hurricane conditions, these often are home for workers making the lower wages bosses increasingly hand out today and seniors seeking cheaper housing for retirement in Florida.

Bill Quinn, a carpenter, went back to the Florida Keys to check whether his trailer sustained damage. He found was that it was gone — blown completely apart. He found his kitchen sink sitting next to U.S. Route 1. The same thing happened to many of his neighbors.

Caribbean countries devastated

Hurricane Irma devastated a number of imperialist colonies in the Caribbean, including the British colonies of Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands; St. Martin/St. Maarten, an island split into colonies of France and the Netherlands; and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The entire population of former British colony Barbuda was evacuated.

Only in Cuba, with a revolutionary government in power, was the population mobilized to organize evacuation from dangerous areas prior to the storm’s arrival and take steps to immediately



AP photo/Desmond Boylan

Cuban workers, revolutionary government mobilize to clean up, rebuild in Havana Sept. 11 after hurricane batters the island. Cuba’s revolution puts human needs first, not private profit.

begin reconstruction efforts.

Instead of taking steps to mobilize the needed aid and reconstruction resources, the imperialist powers rushed more troops to these islands to enforce “law and order.” London announced Sept. 14 it was deploying an additional 260 soldiers and cops to boost the 1,000 military personnel already sent to the region. Paris is doubling its troop deployment to the region to 2,200, and the Netherlands sent more troops as well. “A lot of people are stealing water and biscuits,” complained Paul De Windt, publisher of the *Daily Herald* in St. Maarten Sept. 10.

In the U.S. Virgin Islands nearly 5,000 troops, including 600 Marines,

are on the ground in St. Thomas, watching over private property where many wealthy mainlanders have summer digs and distributing some ready-to-eat rations.

While the capitalist governments have been slow to provide assistance, volunteers have sprung into action, using boats to help residents get out of ravaged areas. “So many boats came to aid that the locals began to call it the ‘Puerto Rican Navy,’” St. John resident Nils Erickson told the *Washington Post*.

U.S. authorities on the Virgin Island have turned back boats with evacuees and refugees from neighboring islands, including from the hard-hit British Virgin Islands.

After storm, Cuban people and their gov’t rebuild

Continued from front page

mittees made sure shelters — from community centers to caves — were comfortable and adequately provisioned. Students went door to door to persuade and help anyone in a danger zone who was hesitating, to evacuate. Tens of thousands of electrical and construction workers moved into action as soon as the storm died down.

At the height of the hurricane, 100 percent of electric power — except for generators in some essential buildings — was shut down. Some key power plants were severely damaged and more than 3,600 electrical poles came down. But as of Sept. 16, 87 percent of the population had some electricity restored.

‘Solidarity is needed’

“What is needed now is solidarity, and for every Cuban that means offering whatever you have for your neighbor even if that means dividing it up so that a little bit gets into the hands of many,” wrote *Guerrillero*, the newspaper of Pinar del Río province, one of the less affected areas of the country.

“No one should be upset because trucks with food from the countryside are being sent out of this province since at others times this has been done for us,” the paper added.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces in Cuba is helping to lead the way. *Granma* reported Sept. 17 that brigades of 20 or 30 soldiers together with people from the Ministry of Construction and neighborhood organizations are going block by block cleaning up Cienfuegos.

The challenges are formidable. In addition to the electrical grid, tens of

thousands of homes were damaged — 24,000 in Camagüey province alone. Dozens of oil wells, sugar refineries and more than 100,000 acres of banana, sweet potato, grapefruit, oranges, sugar cane and other crops, as well as chicken coops and feed lots for pigs and cattle were hard hit.

Farmworkers and peasants are organizing to salvage as much as possible of banana and citrus crops that were knocked to the ground. To replace lost vegetable and fruit production, farmers are planting seeds with shorter growth cycles that can still be harvested this year.

The Federation of Cuban Women, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution and other mass organizations held a national cleanup mobilization Sept. 17. They were joined by the army, various government ministries and workers from state-owned industries.

‘We knew we were needed’

Juventud Rebelde reported Sept. 17 that as soon as the storm ended a large number of students headed to the University of Havana to begin cleaning up. “Nobody called us or went looking for us, but we all got there early because we knew that our support was needed. We’ve been working at the university and nearby areas ever since,” said student Karla Santana Rodríguez.

The government announced Sept. 18 it was subsidizing 50 percent of the materials needed to rebuild or repair damaged homes. Low interest or zero interest loans are available. And those who can’t afford loans can get materials for free.

Some individuals have taken advantage of the situation for themselves at the expense of the social solidarity of the working class. There were reports of price-gouging, hoarding and a few cases of people taking computers from schools and circuit breakers from evacuated homes.

On Sept. 16 the assistant attorney general of Cuba announced that “hoarding, speculation, illicit economic activities, illegalities and infractions that harm what is costing so much effort” will be dealt with severely.

Troupes of musicians, actors and other entertainers have taken to the road to boost people’s spirits.

Vanguardia, newspaper of Villa Clara province, featured the tour of the Sergio Corrieri artistic brigade, which is giving performances in Caibarién and other hardest hit towns.

As people gathered, not everyone was enthusiastic. “They were surprised with the arrival of the musicians, actors, clowns and magicians,” and when the Juan Campos Group began playing a popular song, the paper said, “like magic the spirit of the tired-out ones revived.”

“The hurricane did not break the spirit of resistance of Cubans,” Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez said at the United Nations Sept. 18.

Rodríguez pledged that Cuba would “cooperate, within our modest possibilities, with our fellow peoples who have been affected by the hurricane.” The nearly 800 Cuban volunteer health care workers who were in fellow Caribbean countries before the storm are pitching in and others from Cuba have volunteered to join them.

Kurds press fight for vote

Continued from front page

lize liberated areas in Iraq and Syria. “Holding the referendum in disputed areas is particularly provocative and destabilizing,” the statement said, referring to Kirkuk and other cities outside the KRG territory recognized by Baghdad that have substantial Kurdish populations.

“Referendum is a tool, not an objective. The objective is independence,” Kurdish Regional Government President Masoud Barzani told 20,000 cheering independence supporters wearing the green, red, white and yellow colors of Kurdistan’s flag in the Zakho international soccer stadium Sept. 14.

Hours before the rally Barzani met with representatives from Washington, London and the United Nations who pressed him to cancel or at least postpone the vote because it’s “not the right time” and instead consider an “alternative” they presented. Barzani told the crowd they would look the proposal over, but if their “objective is to just delay the referendum, the referendum will not be postponed.”

The imperialist rulers’ alternative proposal included pushing the referendum back two years “until a meeting in the United Nations discusses the Iraqi file, including the Kurdistan Region and the independence referendum.”

Rallies have taken place in other Kurdistan cities, as well as in Brussels, New York, London, Beirut and Washington, D.C.

Some 6 million Kurds and other nationalities living in the Kurdish region in northeastern Iraq — including those living in territory contested by the Iraqi government — are eligible to vote. The most hotly contested area is Kirkuk, where Baghdad lays claim to the oil-rich province. Hundreds of thousands of Kurds living in some 50 countries around the world can cast a vote by email.

Kurds, supporters of their right to their own state, and bitter opponents like the capitalist rulers in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey expect a vote for independence would pass overwhelmingly. The Kurds propose that following the referendum negotiations take place with Baghdad and other governments in the region on how to carry out the decision in an orderly and peaceful manner.

Centuries of struggle and betrayals

Washington’s arrogant and condescending demand that the Kurds put off their vote reflects the longstanding hostility of the U.S. capitalist rulers to the struggle of the over 30 million Kurds for their own state.

From the seventh century on, Kurds have resisted all efforts to subjugate them or wipe out their language and culture. They were denied a homeland, despite promises, in the post-World War I imperialist carve-up of the Middle East by the British and French rulers. They have continued to face efforts by the capitalist rulers in the region — with the complicity of Washington and other imperialist powers — to deny them self-determination.

Since World War II tens of thousands of Kurds have been massacred,

jailed and uprooted. Time and again the Kurds have been betrayed and used as bargaining chips and cannon fodder by Washington, Moscow and competing Mideast rulers protecting their own interests in the region.

Over the past 30 years the Kurds have been able to take advantage of the political and military space opened up for their struggle as the imperialist order in the Middle East has begun to unravel. This process — reflected in the ongoing wars in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Afghanistan that Washington is unable to win — is rooted in the fact that U.S. imperialism lost the Cold War.

When the Stalinist police state governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe imploded in the 1990s, Washington lost the central power it relied upon to control and suppress revolutionary movements of working people, including in the Middle East.

The combination of a weakened U.S. imperialism, the impact of the unending world capitalist economic crisis, and the coming apart of Iraq and Syria in ongoing wars and factional battles between Shiite and Sunni, has given the Kurds a historic opportunity to advance their struggle.

They have established Kurdish-controlled autonomous regions in both Iraq and northern Syria. And they have forged impressive fighting forces — the peshmerga in Iraq and the People’s Protection Units (YPG) in Syria — that have been most effective in taking on the reactionary Islamic State in both countries.

Washington has been forced to rely on the two Kurdish forces to battle IS and seeks to counter Tehran’s moves to establish a contiguous land route it can control from Afghanistan through Iran, Iraq and Syria to the Mediterranean.

Kurds feared by capitalist rulers

The capitalist rulers in Ankara, Baghdad, Tehran and Damascus — which sit on some 15 million, 6 million, 8 million and 2 million Kurds respectively — all live in fear of their Kurdish populations winning independence.

If the Kurds “eventually break

Kurds in US rally for independent Kurdistan



Militant/Seth Galinsky

WASHINGTON — Almost 1,000 Kurds and supporters of their fight for self-determination rallied here Sept. 17 to support the Sept. 25 referendum to declare independence for the Kurdish region in Iraq. Similar rallies took place this weekend in London, New York, Atlanta, Beirut and elsewhere.

Washington, and all the capitalist regimes in the Middle East except Israel, have been pressuring the Kurdistan Regional Government to cancel the referendum. Tehran-backed Shiite militias have carried out attacks on independence supporters in so-called disputed areas where local governments have scheduled to join in the vote.

“I came to show our support for the referendum and to show our pride in being Kurdish. We are not Iraqi, Iranian, Turkish or Syrian. We are Kurdish,” Helen Osman, a 21-year-old college student born in Nashville, Tennessee, told the *Militant*. Some 30 million Kurds — the largest nationality worldwide without its own homeland — are spread across the four countries.

“There are many thousands of others like me, who lost their fathers, husbands and brothers,” said Beyaz Mohamad, referring to assaults carried out by the Saddam Hussein dictatorship in Iraq between 1986 and 1991. “We will not stop our fight for a homeland.” Mohamad left Kurdistan in 1988. She lived in the Diyarbakir refugee camp in Turkey before coming to the U.S.

“If we don’t declare independence now, no one will support us after Daesh [Islamic State] has been defeated and the U.S. doesn’t need us anymore,” said Hassan Godany, who came to the action from St. Louis.

“South Kurdistan will become a beacon for Kurds everywhere,” protest organizer Zana Hussain told the *Militant* at the 1,000-strong London rally, referring to an independent Kurdish state in Iraq.

The mood of the Washington rally was celebratory and confident with colorful banners, music and dancing until it closed.

— JAMES HARRIS

away from Baghdad, it would be the most significant redrawing of borders within the Middle East since the creation of Israel in 1948,” said *Daily Sabah*, the pro-government Turkish newspaper and opponent of the referendum. “It will split Iraq, tearing away a Switzerland-sized chunk, including key oil resources, leaving the remainder with an Arab population split between a Shiite Muslim major-

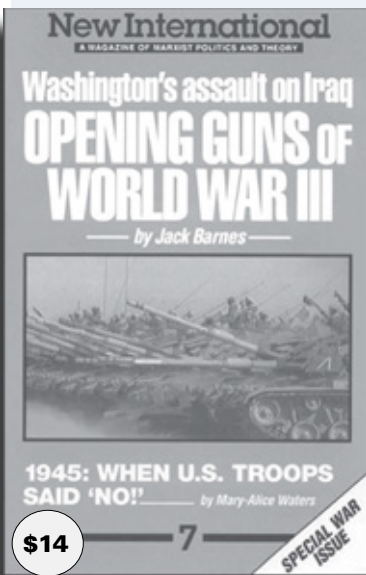
ity and Sunni minority.”

“We have to ramp up our efforts to prevent the referendum and independence from happening,” said Hadi al-Amiri, secretary general of the Badr Organization, an important wing of the multiparty Shiite al-Shaabi paramilitary force. “Civil war” ignites when “complicated matters become out of control.”

Tehran-backed paramilitaries have conducted attacks on supporters of the Kurdish referendum in areas outside the KRG, especially in villages where the local council has voted to join in the vote.

The only government in the region that has declared its support for an independent Kurdistan is the Israeli government, which argues Kurdistan could become an island of stability in an unstable area and act as a political and military counterweight to Tehran’s growing influence.

Recommended reading . . .



“The Kurdish people have come to the center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights. The U.S. rulers have alternately doled out aid with an eyedropper to Kurdish nationalist groups, and then abruptly cut off this backing, depending on Washington’s shifting relations with regimes in the area.”

— Jack Barnes

Also in issue #7 of *New International* magazine

Communism, the Working Class, and Anti-Imperialist Struggle: Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War, two documents with an introduction by Samad Sharif.

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US moves against Cuba ‘crash against our revolutionary spirit’

Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy 1975-80 by Fidel Castro is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. This excerpt is from "We Do Not Negotiate Principles," a speech Castro gave to the National Assembly of People's Power in Havana, Dec. 24, 1977, on relations between Cuba and all five U.S. presidents since the revolution in 1959. Forty years — and five more administrations: Reagan's, Bush I's, Clinton's, Bush II's, and Obama's — came and went, all with the same aims, to overthrow Cuba's socialist revolution. The demands to end Washington's economic war against Cuba and get the U.S. out of Guantánamo are still being fought for today. And the revolution is still standing, as Castro, the central leader of the revolution who died last year, said in 1977. Copyright © 1981 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Fidel Castro speaking in Havana. Castro said working people in Cuba stood up to U.S. attacks because they have "a government of the workers, by the workers and for the workers," while U.S. has "a government of the bourgeoisie, by the bourgeoisie, for the bourgeoisie."

rialists have no moral basis from which to defend that kind of policy against us.

Truthfully speaking, we've emerged victorious from this struggle.

Soon, very soon, the revolution will be nineteen, and we could well say that it is still attending kindergarten — kindergarten! [Applause] It is still of kindergarten age. All the imperialists' efforts to destroy the revolution crashed ignominiously against the firm resolve of our people, the revolutionary spirit of our people, the dignity of our people, the heroism of our people. They underestimated the Cuban people and thought they could easily toy with, threaten, destroy, and demoralize them. All the Yankee might — to put it bluntly — wasn't enough to achieve their aims. Five administrations maneuvered against us: Eisenhower's, Kennedy's, Johnson's, Nixon's, and Ford's. Five presidents came and went, but the revolution kept standing! [Applause]

There's a new administration in power. As we've said before, there've been some positive gestures. ...

But let's look at the essentials: what's the essential thing? The blockade. The blockade is still on. What's immoral about this United States policy is that they're trying to use the blockade as a weapon for negotiation to deal with us.

And speaking of gestures, we have leveled no blockade on the United States, so we can't reciprocate by lifting a blockade against the United States that is nonexistent, and we hope that this

National Assembly will not level an economic blockade on the United States. There's none. They're the ones who must make the gesture of lifting the blockade!

We can't make the gesture of giving back a piece of the territory of Florida because no piece of Florida is occupied by our soldiers. However, there's a piece of our territory occupied by their soldiers. [Applause] ...

What moral basis can the United States have to speak about Cuban troops in Africa? What moral basis can a country have whose troops are on every continent, that has, for instance, over twenty military bases in the Philippines, dozens of bases in Okinawa, in Japan, in Asia, in Turkey, in Greece, in the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany], in Europe, in Spain, in Italy, and everywhere else? What moral basis can the United States have to use the argument of our troops being in Africa when their own troops are stationed by force on Panamanian territory, occupying a portion of that country? What moral basis can the United States have to speak about our troops in Africa when their own troops are stationed right here on our own national territory, at the Guantánamo naval base? [Applause] ...

Historically, it'll always be on record that while our role is a highly honorable role, the role played by imperialism is a shameful one. Since the African peoples trust us, they have requested our cooperation. And not only are we helping

the governments of Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and other governments in Africa, but we're also helping the liberation movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. [Applause] We're helping them now and we'll go on helping them! [Applause] And no matter what they do, the imperialists have already lost the battle in southern Africa.

Ours is a transparent, clear policy. We do not negotiate principles; we can't be intimidated by any campaigns or any pressure whatsoever. ...

If we are ever going to have relations, these relations must be based on mutual respect and equality, and we are ready to have them, knowing full well that we have and will continue to have two radically different regimes.

Aside from this, we learned what human rights are when we eradicated crimes and economic and social injustice committed every hour, minute, and second; when we eradicated gambling, prostitution, discrimination, begging, and unemployment; when we created the people's power, the true power of the people; when we laid the foundations of this beautiful revolution, in which there has been complete identification between the masses, the party, and its leadership. This indeed is democracy; this assembly, indeed, represents democracy; these discussions, indeed, are democratic. [Applause] What they have in the United States is a government of the oligarchy, by the oligarchy, and for the oligarchy, whereas our government is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, the government Lincoln spoke of. In the United States they have a government of the bourgeoisie, by the bourgeoisie, and for the bourgeoisie, whereas in our country we have a government of the workers, by the workers, and for the workers. [Applause]

Regarding political matters, the United States would have much to learn from us. We, however, have nothing to learn, politically, from the United States. They belong to a class society, to the political prehistory of humanity, and we to the new history of humanity, for, as [Karl] Marx stated, when the regime of exploitation of man by man disappears, the real history of human society will begin. [Applause]

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AUSTRALIA

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CANADA

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FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

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UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 2nd Floor, 83 Kingsland High St., Dalston. Postal code: E8 2PB. Tel: (020) 3583-3553. Email: clondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

How are our relations with the United States coming along? Well, they're progressing somewhat. Naturally, first of all, imperialism has been dealt a great number of blows of all kinds, such as Vietnam, Watergate, and others. Its economic blockade and its attacks against us have been discredited and are untenable before the eyes of the world. The impe-

September **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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—SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT—

Back Kurds right to self-determination!

Continued from front page

as courageous and determined fighters for national rights,” Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes wrote in “The Opening Guns of World War III” in *New International* no. 7. The establishment of the KRG was an unintended consequence of that war.

The Kurdish people are determined to take advantage of a historic opening provided by the unraveling of the post-World War I and World War II order in the Middle East, including artificial and arbitrary borders imposed on the toilers as part of the imperialist victors’ war spoils.

They see an opening to forge a Kurdish state despite the fierce opposition of Washington, its imperialist allies, Moscow and virtually all the capitalist regimes in the region.

The propertied rulers in the U.S., today’s dominant imperialist power, fear the Kurds’ battle for independence. So do the rulers in Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran, where most of the over 30 million Kurdish people live, the largest nationality in the world without a state.

This is because every step forward for the centurieslong struggle of the Kurdish people for self-determination anywhere opens the door to new advances, inspiring Kurds wherever they live and others fighting imperialist domination, oppression and exploitation.

“This is the opportunity for Kurds of Iraq to win independence,” Ismail Ajam, an Azerbaijani Turk who lives in Iran, told members of the Communist

League, a sister party of the SWP, at a London demonstration in support of the referendum Sept. 17. “This will have a good effect on the oppressed in Iran — on Kurds, Arabs, Baluchis, Turkmen and on Kurds in Syria and Turkey. It will give confidence to others in the Middle East.”

The ruling families also fear the over 1 million Kurds forced to emigrate to other countries, many fleeing Saddam Hussein’s murderous attacks on Iraqi Kurds, repression of the Turkish government, or because of the impact of Washington’s seemingly endless wars in the region. They are now part of the working class in the U.S., Germany and elsewhere, joining the class struggle there. These workers will win broader support for the right of Kurds to determine their own future and at the same time their experience and confidence strengthen the fighting capacity of the working class wherever they are.

Holding the Sept. 25 referendum, and the overwhelming vote for “Yes” to independence that will inevitably result, will open a new stage in the Kurdish struggle in the Middle East. And it will strengthen the fight of the Catalan people for self-determination against Spain’s capitalist rulers, the Puerto Rican people’s fight against U.S. colonial tyranny and battles against national oppression elsewhere.

The Kurds have a powerful example on how to win and defend national independence in revolutionary Cuba. Cuban workers and farmers, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26th Movement, overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship, expropriated the Yankee overlords and overturned capitalist exploitation.

Thousands march to back Spectrum strikers

Continued from front page

jobs, which have been taken by new hires. He added that over the past months some union members had crossed the picket line at the Brooklyn depot where he works.

Charter purchased Time Warner Cable in 2015 and renamed it Spectrum. The company raked in some \$3.5 billion in profits last year.

Many other unionists turned out, including hundreds of IBEW electricians and construction workers, hotel workers, laborers, sanitation workers, teachers,

retail workers and nurses. The protest began with a rally in Brooklyn, then marched over the Brooklyn Bridge and ended with a rally in Lower Manhattan. Speakers included AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Marcel Feliu, a member of the Laborers International Union of North America, bumped into the rally when he got off his job building scaffolding. “I stopped right away to show my support,” he said. In dangerous work like I do, the unions are very important. That’s why we need to organize all the workers who don’t have unions.”

“Whatever the outcome of this fight, I will be much better at reaching out to other workers who are on strike,” said Michael Traisi, a picket captain on Staten Island. “I’ve always voiced support for other unions, but now I realize you need to organize to help.”

Traisi also explained how the union is “trying to reach out to some of the new people Spectrum has hired to cross our picket lines. They’ve been told a lot of lies about us.”

Errol Lawrence, a shop steward in Woodside, Queens, worked at Verizon for many years. “I left because they had too many strikes,” he said laughing. “What we need is a major labor movement.



Militant/Sara Lobman

Members of IBEW Local 3 on strike against Spectrum Cable in N.Y., supporters march over Brooklyn Bridge Sept. 18 against bosses’ concession demands.

Che brigade to bring solidarity, aid to Cuba

Continued from page 3

gade members going from Chicago are planning a news conference the day after they get back to report on their experiences and call for the solidarity Cuba needs, especially in face of the hurricane. The Cuba Solidarity Committee there is organizing a public meeting on Oct. 28 on what the brigadistas learned about the Cuban Revolution today.

Similar meetings are being organized in Denver, New York and other cities.

In addition, actions are planned in several cities for Nov. 1, when the United Nations will vote on a motion demanding an end to the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. In Chicago, the protest is set for the Federal Building beginning at 5 p.m.

If you’re interested in learning more about such brigades, or in scheduling a speaking engagement by a returning brigadista on Cuba’s revolutionary response to Hurricane Irma, contact the Chicago Cuba Coalition at (312) 952-2618 or ICanGoToCuba@gmail.com.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Communist League: Stop frame-up against Harding, Labrie!

The following statement was issued Sept. 10 by Philippe Tessier, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, to build solidarity with locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train controller Richard Labrie. The trial of the two unionists on frame-up charges for the derailment of a runaway train began Sept. 11.

It has been more than four years since 47 people were killed July 6, 2013, in the town of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, by an oil train derailment, explosion and fire that destroyed the core of the town, released 1.5 million gallons of crude oil into the lake and contaminated 560,000 tons of soil.

Instead of implementing measures to ensure rail safety, the rail bosses, Ottawa, the cops and the courts have framed up locomotive engineer Tom Harding and train controller Richard Labrie, members of the United Steelworkers. They, along with rail company official Jean Demaitre, each face 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death. If convicted the penalty could be life in prison. The joint jury trial in Sherbrooke is scheduled to last three months.

Harding was the one-person “crew” on the 72-car train approved by Transport Canada in 2012 under then federal Minister of Transport Denis Lebel, which supported the company’s drive to cut crew costs to increase profits regardless of the consequences to our health and safety.

When fire broke out on the train, Harding’s offer to check out the situation was refused: the company wanted him to sleep and return in a few hours to continue the run. When the train ran amok and exploded, Harding risked his life to aid firefighters in moving a number of unexploded tankers, avoiding further destruction and making him a hero in the eyes of many in Lac-Mégantic and beyond. Rail workers and their unions in Canada have taken strike action and spoken up repeatedly against the dangerous working conditions being imposed on them.

The stakes are high for working people everywhere in the outcome of this trial. A conviction of the two rail workers would not only be a horrendous injustice, it would encourage the bosses and their governments in their reckless productivity drives aimed at saving the crisis-ridden capitalist system on our backs. Their profit system is in a deepening long-term worldwide crisis of declining production and trade. In rail and industries all across the board the bosses push fewer workers to produce more in a shorter period of time for less pay and benefits regardless of the consequences. We have to organize to strengthen our unions to fight together for workers control of safety on the job.

An acquittal of Tom Harding and Richard Labrie would show the rail bosses they can’t get away with blaming the workers for their profit-driven disasters and strengthen the struggle for safety on the job. It would strengthen the ongoing struggle of the working people of Lac-Mégantic to force Ottawa to build a rail bypass around the town. More than ever Tom Harding and Richard Labrie need the solidarity of working people, our unions, and environmental, church and other social organizations behind a united and loud demand to put an end to this frame-up now!

You can come to Sherbrooke and sit in on the trial to show your solidarity with the rail workers or send a message in support of Harding and Labrie to USW Local 1976/Section locale 1976, 2360 De Lasalle, Suite 202, Montreal, QC Canada H1V 2L1, with copies to Thomas Walsh, Attorney, 165 Rue Wellington, N., Suite 310, Sherbrooke, QC Canada J1H 5B9. E-mail: thomaswalsh@hotmail.com.

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