Marchers snap up ‘Militant,’ books as drive hits final week

BY TERRY EVANS

The Socialist Workers Party candidates in Kentucky — Amy Huk for governor and Samir Hazboun for lieutenant governor — and campaign supporters joined 150 demonstrators at the federal courthouse in Louisville May 21 to protest against growing attacks on women’s right to choose to have an abortion. The action was one of hundreds across the country.

Many young participants, energized by the protest, stayed after the rally, waving signs and eliciting support from people driving by. Six subscriptions to the Militant and four books on revolutionary politics were sold there.

A quick, and incomplete, tally shows 48 subscriptions to the paper and 33 books by party leaders and other revolutionaries were sold at actions across the country.

“We join those around the world who have been standing up for a woman’s right to choose abortion,” SWP member Deborah Liatos told 200 people at an abortion rights protest in Louisville.

Continued on page 3

Say no to US rulers’ threats against Iran, US hands off!

BY TERRY EVANS

The U.S. imperialist rulers’ threats and sanctions against Iran are a danger to working people here and across the Middle East. Washington sees the increased military and political sway the Iranian rulers have carved out in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen as the biggest obstacle to its imperialist interests in the region, and is determined to find ways to push Tehran back.

“If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran,” President Donald Trump said May 19, while saying he didn’t want a war. This follows threats by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that Washington would hold Tehran responsible for any actions taken by militias the Iranian rulers organize in countries across the region.

U.S. authorities ordered a partial evacuation of staff at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad May 15, citing threats against them from Tehran-backed forces in Iraq, which the Iranian government denied. A May 19 rocket strike near the embassy, that no group took credit for, was denounced by Iraqi militias organized by the Iranian rulers.

Continued on page 9

Tens of thousands demand women’s right to abortion

Protests erupt against new state restrictions

BY JANET POST

Tens of thousands protested in hundreds of demonstrations across the country May 21 in support of women’s right to choose abortion. It was the largest outpouring of people taking to the streets to defend abortion rights in more than a decade.

Carrying signs like, “My body, my choice” and “Defend women’s right to choose,” women and men of all ages enthusiastically marched and rallied in small towns, big cities and rural areas from coast to coast.

Protests began shortly after the Alabama legislature passed a law criminalizing nearly all abortions May 14.

“I’m mad, I’m angry and I am here for the long run,” 20-year-old student Brynleigh Davis said at a rally of hundreds May 19 at the state Capitol.

Continued on page 7

Amnesty International joins fight against Florida prison censorship

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Florida prison system’s Literature Review Committee has overturned the ban on two of three recently impounded issues of the Militant, but US gov’t steps up attacks against sovereignty of Venezuela, Cuba

BY SETH GALINSKY

In the wake of the failed U.S.-backed coup attempt in Venezuela April 30, the U.S. government continues to tighten its economic noose around the country, hoping to bring down the government of President Nicolas Maduro. Washington is also stepping up its economic war against socialist Cuba.

It’s working people who are paying the price for the U.S. rulers’ squeeze

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Inside

Cop commander after killing of Eric Garner: ‘Not a big deal’

SWP Active Workers Conference set for June 13-15

Montreal rally protests bill to ban religious symbols at work

Working people in North Korea hit hard by US gov’t sanctions

Continued on page 2
The Militant Library reported on the banned *Militant*, Woodfox explained the prison system is designed to “break a man’s spirit.”

Far from promoting violence, Woodfox and others helped fellow prisoners recognize their own humanity. In his book and at his public meetings, Woodfox describes how he and fellow inmate and Black Panther Herman Wallace formed an “anti-rape squad” at Louisiana State Prison, where rape and violence — often with the acquiescence if not open endorsement of prison officials — were routine.

They took new inmates under their wing, protected them and oriented them on how to avoid confrontations and violence in prison. And what they did made life inside the prison — notorious for its brutality — a little more humane.

Many of the Militant’s subscribers behind bars have written in to make sure the paper knew about the censorship. “It’s crazy, they think it’s OK to beat and mistreat us,” wrote one. “But it’s not OK for us to read about it.”

“The Militant’s got rejected for exposing the truth,” he added.

Another Florida prisoner, who is filing his own appeal of the ban, wrote, “The prison system fears what the Militant is exposing about the government as well as the prison system.”

“Thanks for your unconditional support of our right to receive your newspaper,” wrote another prisoner.

Woodfox’s tour and book have been written about extensively in the “mainstream” media, the Militant’s lawyer, David Goldstein, from the civil liberties firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Kinsky & Lieberman, noted in his appeal of the impoundment.

The Militant will never stop defending our constitutional right to reach our subscribers behind bars and the right to read the views of our choice,” said Militant editor John Studer. “And we find increasing interest in the Militant’s working-class political outlook and our readership is growing.”

The Militant has some 140 subscribers in prisons across the country, and offers reduced rate subscriptions to prisoners. Those who can’t afford it can request a free subscription.

“The fight against impounding the Militant strengthens the fight against censorship of other periodicals and books,” Studer said. “Prisoners have the right to consider a wide variety of viewpoints, to make up their own mind, to be part of the world.”

The Militant is urging readers to join the fight. Get co-workers, your union, church groups and others to write a letter to Florida prison officials calling on them to overturn the ban.

The Militant
Vol. 83/No. 22
Closing date: May 22, 2019
Editor: John Studer
Editorial volunteers: Roger Calero, Terry Evans, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martin Kopp, Jacob Pariso, Brian Williams.
Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in June, one week in July, one week in August.
Business Manager: Valerie Johnson
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 244-4399
Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.
SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send $35 to above address.
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United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to C.L. London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4NN, U.K.
Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send E30 for one year by check or international money order made out to C.L. London at above address.
France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10350, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.
New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send NZ$55 for one year to P.O. Box 13857, Auckland 1645, New Zealand.
Australia: Send A$50 for one year to Suite 22, 30 Bridge St., Granville NSW 2142, Australia.
Submissions to the Militant may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.
Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

The Militant
Continued from front page
issue 15 from subscribers behind bars there, alleging the article “depicts, describes or encourages activities which might lead to the use of physical violence” and presents a “threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the prison.”

“There is nothing contained in the specified articles or pages from the banned issues of this publication that would amount to such a call,” Justin Mazolla, deputy director of research of Amnesty International USA, wrote to the Department of Corrections Literature Review Committee May 17.

The human rights group called for an end to the repeated “arbitrary impoundment” of the Militant in Florida.

Censorship of the socialist weekly “violates the UN Standard Minimum Rules on the Treatment of Prisoners, otherwise known as the Mandela Rules,” named for Nelson Mandela, who spent decades in prison in South Africa because of his opposition to apartheid, Mazolla said.

Woodfox’s book and his tour are shining light on demeaning and abusive conditions that are rampant in jails and prisons across the country. At the meeting at the Brooklyn Public
Amnesty for all immigrants in US!

“The Socialist Workers Party demands amnesty for all undocumented immigrants in the US — to help unify the working class and create better conditions to organize the unorganized and strengthen the trade unions,” Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for mayor of Dallas, told construction worker Everardo Guerrero when she knocked on his door in Venus, Texas May 8.

She showed Guerrero a picture of a federal detention center in the book The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. The image shows the wretched conditions that immigrants without papers are thrown into.

Maintaining “second-class status for immigrants is one of the ways the employers promote competition and conflict among workers in order to press down wages and conditions of the entire working class and further divide and weaken the unions,” Barnes says.

Guerrero described the low wages bosses paid him when he worked on a ranch just after arriving in the U.S. from Mexico years ago. He decided to get the Spanish edition of the book and a subscription to the Militant. He also kicked in $9 to the Militant Fighting Fund.

Militant Fighting Fund

The contribution was one of hundreds received by distributors of the paper around the country as they campaign door to door. Such contributions — for those who appreciate the paper’s unique coverage of working-class struggles and the road forward it presents — are the bedrock of the paper’s finances.

The annual Militant Fighting Fund is organized to win contributions from the Militant’s readership and other working people so the paper can meet its rising costs. Last week some $16,000 in fund contributions came in, bringing the total to $87,409. This puts the paper in a good position to collect the $27,591 needed over the next week to make the $115,000 goal. You can contribute online at www.themilitant.com.

Back fight against cop brutality!

“That stuff effects everyone!” factory worker Joshua Sorel told Harry D’Agostino and Alex Huñill after the socialist campaigners described a recent meeting against cop brutality in Albany, New York. Sorel said that he had had his own experiences with cop harassment. He got a Militant subscription when the two SWP members knocked on his door May 5 in North Adams, Massachusetts. Sorel urged them to stay in touch.

The paper has a long record championing fights against cop killings and explains how police brutality, the plea bargain road to prison, onerous bail terms and the entire capitalist justice system operates against the working class.

“During the eight years of the [Bill] Clinton presidency, between 1993 and 2001, the overwhelming majority of those incarcerated are workers, with ‘the law’ coming down disproportionately on those who are Black, Latino, or Native American,” Barnes adds. “Today fully one of every three young males who are Black is either in prison, in parole, or on probation. Lockdowns and solitary confinement, with their dehumanizing effects — designed to make you feel helpless and worthless — are increasingly the norm.”

If you want to help successfully complete the Militant, book and fund drive, contact the party branch nearest you, listed on page 8.

Campaign to expand reach of ‘Militant,’ books, fund

April 6 - May 28 (week six)

Country Sub quota Subs sold Books quota Books sold Fund gate Received
UNITED STATES
Albany 65 47 65 61 $5,600 $4,405
Atlanta 70 61 61 68 $9,750 $7,553
Chicago 85 66 70 70 $11,400 $8,980
Dallas 40 33 40 37 $2,500 $1,365
Lincoln 14 12 16 16 $250 $197
Los Angeles 85 56 77 150 $10,800 $6,322
Louisville 50 37 50 45 $2,800 $2,656
Miami 25 17 25 21 $1,500 $2,656
New Jersey 40 35 70 63 $3,500 $3,975
New York 80 61 80 121 $14,000 $8,790
Oakland 70 60 70 120 $13,000 $11,227
Philadelphia 25 18 25 29 $3,000 $2,150
Pittsburgh 15 5 15 7 $1,200 $300
Seattle 70 53 95 98 $10,000 $6,538
San Diego 35 24 35 39 $4,750 $3,835
Washington 40 34 40 54 $5,000 $4,573
Other 2,200
Total U.S. 809 668 991 1,079 $101,050 $76,978
Prisoners 25 29 0 0 $0 $0
UNITED KINGDOM
London 50 39 99 89 $2,500 $950
Manchester 35 29 45 49 $1,300 $161
Total U.K. 85 68 135 137 $3,800 $1,111
CANADA
Canada 70 49 80 73 $8,200 $6,532
TOTAL: 1,034 853 1,261 1,343 $116,950 $87,409
Should be 1,050 903 1,050 903 $115,000 $88,900

Four books above: $7 each, $5 with subscription.

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See distributors on page 8

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The Militant June 3, 2019
Cop commander after killing of Eric Garner: ‘Not a big deal’

BY JOHN STUDER

NEW YORK — “Not a big deal,” police commander Lt. Christopher Bannon commented when told by cops on the scene they had likely killed Eric Garner when they put him in a chokehold as they moved to arrest him on charges of selling loose cigarettes in 2014. The comment drew gasps when it became public May 16 during a long delayed police disciplinary hearing for New York police officer Daniel Pantaleo, the cop who choked Garner to death.

As he lay dying, bleeding in his neck and eyes, Garner cried out, “I can’t breathe!” 11 times. It became a rallying cry for protests in New York and across the country.

Even though a video by a bystander clearly shows Garner being strangled, neither a Staten Island grand jury nor the federal government ever filed charges against Pantaleo. The statute of limitations for any charges expires July 17, the fifth anniversary of Garner’s death.

“No big deal?” Gwen Carr, Garner’s mother, angrily told reporters outside Police Department headquarters where the hearing was being held. “If one of his loved ones was on the ground dead and someone came up to him and said, ‘It’s no big deal,’ how would you feel about it?” Carr has been attending the hearings since they began May 13.

On May 15 New York medical examiner Floriana Persechino, who performed the autopsy on Garner, testified that Pantaleo’s chokehold had enough force to be a “lethal force” that killed Garner. It was “leomicide,” Persechino said.

As always, the cop’s defense is to try to turn the victim into the criminal. In his opening statement to the hearing, Pantaleo’s attorney, Stuart London, said Garner triggered his own death. “The only reason [Pantaleo’s] hand went to the wind was due to Mt. Garner’s morbid obesity and the fact that he resisted arrest,” London said to the press.

“If he didn’t resist arrest we would not be here today.”

“It’s been five years,” Carr responded. “Five years we’ve been on the frontline, trying to get justice — and they’re still trying to sweep it under the rug.”

Other family members have joined Carr at the hearings. So has Iris Baez, whose son was also killed at the hands of the New York cops, and other opponents of police brutality.

When cop Justin D’Amico, Pantaleo’s partner, took the stand in his defense, he explained how he filed felony charges against Garner after he was dead to justify their moves to arrest him.

He said the two undercover cops saw Garner selling cigarettes from 100 to 200 feet away.

“Would it surprise you to learn that the actual distance is 328 feet?” Suzanne O’Hare, a lawyer for the N.Y. Civilian Complaint Review Board that is prosecuting Pantaleo, asked D’Amico. “More than a football field?” The cop said that would be correct.

O’Hare asked him why the two cops tried to make Garner stand up after he was unresponsive. “You did that because you believed he was playing possum?” she said. “Yes,” D’Amico responded.

As to the felony charges, O’Hare asked D’Amico, “You’re familiar that in order to be charged with that, it requires that you have 10,000 cigarettes, or 22,000 cigars, or 4,400 pounds of tobacco?”

The cop, who had testified he found four packs of Newports in Garner’s pocket, conceded that was the law.

Pantaleo testified it has been five years for even these administrative charges to be heard which can result in Pantaleo losing his job — the cops and judge don’t seem to be in any hurry to see a verdict.

After just a week of hearings, the court was recessed for four days because Pantaleo said he had scheduled vacation time. When the hearing resumed May 21, it only lasted three hours before another break, this time for two weeks or longer, because the cop’s defense team says a key witness won’t be available until then.

Carr and her supporters expressed outrage at the delays. “It’s a great burden, it’s a great amount of anxiety and emotional stress for them,” O’Hare told hearing Judge Rosemarie Maldonado. She claimed to agree, then cancelled hearings until June 5.

Carr told people outside the hearings that coming has been “very, very hard for me,” but that she’ll keep coming because “there is no other option” if she wants to see Pantaleo fired.

“I will be here every day,” she said, urging supporters to join her at the hearings. They’re held at police headquarters at 1 Police Plaza east of City Hall.

SWP Active Workers Conference set for June 13-15

BY JANET POST

“I want to go to the conference to meet workers who are excited and prepared for the struggles ahead. I’m excited for all the learning, of course — learning in community, across generations — there’s something so powerful about that,” Katlin Estill, a teacher in San Francisco, told the Militant.

Estill is one of over 300 working people and youth from the U.S. and around the world who will attend the June 13-15 Active Workers Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party.

The conference will include major talks by party leaders, classes and panel presentations.

Estill heard about the conference from party member she met on the May Day International Workers’ Day Work Brigade in Cuba this spring.

This year’s conference will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party in the U.S., combating out of the victory of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The SWP’s revolutionary continuity runs from that to the “Middle East and the Jewish Question: Acting on the Communist Program,” Clark was the author of the SWP’s 2017 statement “For Recognition of a Palestinian State and of Israel.”

Clark joined other members of the SWP and Communist League to participate in the International Book Fair in Baghdad in February and the 14th Erbil International Book Fair in the Kurdistan region of Iraq in April. On the second trip they were invited to present the party’s program and activities at a meeting of more than 100 unionists and others in Ainkawa in the Kurdistan region, sponsored by the Kurdistan Communist Party.

There will be two panel discussions focused on the work of the party today: “Tribunes of the People and the Turn to Industry,” which will be chaired by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters; and “Our Election Campaigns Drive the Wisconsin Turn,” chaired by SWP national campaign director John Studer. These will focus on how party members speak in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed and take the party’s program to the working class — from going door to door in working-class neighborhoods in cities, towns and countryside to its participation in the labor movement.

They will take up some of the central questions facing working people today: the generals’ wars abroad and threats against working people in Venezuela, Cuba and Iran, to the fight for amnesty for all immigrants in the U.S., to the working-class road forward in the fight for women’s emancipation.

“I have attended conferences in previous years and really appreciated what I learned,” said Pat Scott, a Walmart worker for 20 years in the Seattle area.

“Those who come want what’s best for workers, and discuss the unity and solidarity that is needed. The conference helps me envision what it could be like after a revolution.”

Other conference sessions will feature Q and A sessions on the main presentations, informal discussion at buffet-style meals and evening socials. The final session Saturday night will feature reports summarizing the political themes and discussions at the conference.

The next day organizers of the party will meet to discuss their work designing, getting printed and promoting Pathfinder literature; making book placements at colleges, bookstores and libraries; and raising funds for the work of the party.

For more information, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you, listed on page 8.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Speak Out! Defend a Woman’s Right to Choose. RuthFTAB, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 1, 7 p.m. 7803 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300, Tel. (202) 356-3580.
Continued from front page

— accept two-tier wages or watch campaign against the union. The bosses have run an ongoing scare tor. The extension runs out June 3.

The UE has represented genera-

wage scale. The unionists responded with a strike that won widespread support in the community.

After nine days on the picket line, the union and company bosses agreed to a 90-day extension of much of the old contract and workers returned to work. Negotiations have continued with participation of a federal mediator. The extension runs out June 3.

Since UE workers returned to the job, the company and local media bosses have run an ongoing scare campaign against the union. The bosses have said over and over that workers have just one choice to make — accept two-tier wages or watch their jobs be moved to other Wabtec plants.

The company also wants the right to subcontract work at will and to assign up to 10% of the jobs in the plant to temporary workers. And they are demanding new contract provisions that will weaken the union’s strength on the shop floor.

The bosses also demand “the unqualified right to establish and enforce minimum standards of production and quality for all operations and job functions” with no negotiations, and the right to transfer or fire anyone they claim doesn’t cut it.

Union officials also said they have made an offer that includes wage concessions that could save Wabtec millions of dollars over a four-year contract. It would allow bosses to start new workers at two-tier pay, but require “on call” to the current wage rates. The company said no.

Others at the rally included members of area UE Locals 610, 625, 667 and 690, the Northwest Pennsylvania Area Labor Federation, Erie County United Electrical Workers members and supporters rallied May 17, part of campaign to defeat Wabtec bosses’ demands for two-tier wages and other concessions. Contract runs out June 3.

United, Pittsburgh United, the United Steelworkers, Painters union, SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, as well as the Socialist Workers Party, Demo-

sions of solidarity can be sent to UE Local 506, 3923 Main St., Law-

The Militant June 3, 2019

Montreal rally protests bill to ban wearing religious symbols on job

BY KAREN LEROUX

MONTREAL — Several hundred people took part in a May 5 rally and human chain near City Hall here to protest the Quebec government’s pro-

Bouchera Chelbi, a teacher who wears a headscarf for religious rea-

THE MILITANT

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The Militant June 3, 2019 5
Campaign against Harvard dean is blow to political rights

IN THE name of defending women, student protesters and administration officials at Harvard University struck a siren call against political rights by stripping responsibilities from a long-standing faculty dean in the law school who took on the controversial job of joining the legal defense team for movie producer Harvey Weinstein.

Weinstein faces multiple accusations of sexual harassment and rape. All charges are vital to the working class — that one is innocent until proven guilty, no matter how heinous the charges may be; the right to speak and associate freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and the Sixth Amendment right to a lawyer who can provide vigorous counsel to those facing charges by the state.

On May 11 Harvard University announced that it was ending the appointment of Harvard Law School Professor Robinson as faculty deans of Winthrop House, a residence for 400 students who very quietly give strong support to the charges may be; the right to speak and associate freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and the Sixth Amendment right to a lawyer who can provide vigorous counsel to those facing charges by the state.

Sullivan is director of the Criminal Justice Institute at Harvard Law. In addition to teaching law, he is a longtime criminal defense attorney, who has been involved in a variety of high profile cases. He represented the family of Michael Brown, who was fatally shot by police in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014. He took on the case of former New England Patriots star Aaron Hernandez, who won acquittal after being charged with double murder. He organized a legal defense for those involved with Winthrop and of Robinson, as faculty deans of Winthrop.

Campaign against Sullivan

But when Sullivan announced in January that he was joining Weinstein’s defense team, a hue and cry went up by some that he was a political appointee demanding that he be ousted. In February two Harvard undergraduates wrote an op-ed piece in the campus newspaper titled, “Harvard, Reprovem Dean Sullivan,” claiming his presence “could be deeply traumatic” and that he does not value “the safety of students.”

Get three-part series on Korea

US out of Korea! An unknown history of Washington’s intervention in Korea

Students protest Feb. 11 for removal of African American Harvard law professor Ronald Sullivan as dean of Winthrop House. He was targeted for providing legal council to movie producer Harvey Weinstein. Inset, graffiti on college door.

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Campaign against Sullivan

But when Sullivan announced in January that he was joining Weinstein’s defense team, a hue and cry went up by some that he was a political appointee demanding that he be ousted. In February two Harvard undergraduates wrote an op-ed piece in the campus newspaper titled, “Harvard, Reprovem Dean Sullivan,” claiming his presence “could be deeply traumatic” and that he does not value “the safety of students.”

Sullivan is director of the Criminal Justice Institute at Harvard Law. In addition to teaching law, he is a longtime criminal defense attorney, who has been involved in a variety of high profile cases. He represented the family of Michael Brown, who was fatally shot by police in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014. He took on the case of former New England Patriots star Aaron Hernandez, who won acquittal after being charged with double murder. He organized a legal defense for those involved with Winthrop and of Robinson, as faculty deans of Winthrop.
Protests demand women’s right to choose abortion

Continued from front page

in Montgomery. Thousands marched across the state the same day.

The bill would prohibit all abortions, except in the case of imminent danger to the woman, and make it a Class A felony for doctors to perform one, punishable by up to 99 years behind bars.

“I am here because doing my job should not be criminalized,” OB-GYN Sarah Dillie told the press at the march of 2,000 in Birmingham. “I don’t think I should be called a felon for doing something that is part of comprehensive women’s health care.”

“I believe everyone should have health care,” 25-year-old Stephanie Barnett said at the Montgomery protest. “And women’s rights, reproductive rights, are health care.”

On the heels of passage of Alabama’s law, and of a series of other laws restricting abortion this year, the National Organization for Women and other women’s rights groups called for the May 21 nationwide protests. Co-sponsored by Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the American Civil Liberties Union, National Council of Jewish Women and others, actions were organized “at statehouses, town squares and courthouses.”

High school students in Auburn, Alabama, have called a “Stand Up, Let Your Voice Be Heard” rally at the Capitol May 25 at 10:30 a.m.

While signing the anti-woman bill into law, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said it was unlikely to ever go into effect because it clashes with the Supreme Court 1973 decision that legalized abortion.

The goal of the bill, she said, was to be the cutting edge in efforts to overturn that decision.

“Keep on marching!”

“You are all the women who support women’s rights to join the May 21 protests and to organize ongoing actions,” Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Dallas mayor, told the Militant May 19. “We need to keep organizing and mobilizing the majority support among working people for women’s right to choose.”

The latest Pew poll shows 58% favor a woman’s right to abortion, among both women and men, across all age groups, and that this support has been growing.

These public demonstrations are what has been missing over the last several years in the fight to defend women’s rights to choose. Anti-abortion restrictions have been making access to family planning care, including safe and accessible abortions, more and more difficult, and have shut down clinic after clinic.

Alabama has only three abortion clinics in the state. Six states — Kentucky, Mississippi and Ohio legislatures

passed so-called heartbeat bills that would outlaw abortion when a fetal heartbeat is detected, usually around six weeks, often before a woman is even aware she is pregnant. State representatives in Missouri passed a similar bill May 17 banning abortions after eight weeks of pregnancy and criminalizing doctors performing abortions, making them liable to up to 15 years in prison.

Independent political course

After the Alabama ruling, Staci Fox, president of Planned Parenthood South Atlantic Advocates, said, “In the coming days, we will be mounting the fight of our lives — we will take this to court and ensure abortion remains safe and legal.”

Fox is right that this is the “fight of our lives,” but ensuring that abortion remains safe and legal cannot be won by relying on the courts, or, for that matter, by electing Democrats to office “we can rely on.”

It’s the capitalist courts that have given their stamp of approval to hundreds of laws since 1973 that have attempted to thwart women’s right and access to an abortion at every turn. Capitalist politicians, with cooperation from the courts, have imposed waiting periods, mandatory counseling, ultrasound tests, consent regulations for minors, unnecessary rules regarding physicians’ access to hospitals, and clinic layout that have shut many facilities down.

The “character and content” of the 1973 Supreme Court ruling itself has made these attacks easier. Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, explained in The Clintons’ Anti-Working-Class Record: Why Washington Fears Working People, “Roe v Wade was based not on a woman’s right ‘to equal protection of the laws’ guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, but on medical criteria instead. … At the same time, the court allowed state governments to ban most abortions after ‘viability’; … something that medical advances inevitably make earlier and earlier in the pregnancy.”

The 14th Amendment says, “No state shall make or enforce any law … which shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” It was won out of the second American Revolution to abolish slavery. What shall be illegal is any government interference with the personal decisions of women.

The right to abortion is essential to the fundamental ability of women to control our own bodies — and our lives. It is crucial for women to have the right to choose whether or not to have children, and access to birth control and family planning, in order to win equality in access to schooling and society more broadly. This is key for all working people, a precondition for the unity in action of the working class.

It is only through the mass mobilization of working people in the streets, and in defense of family planning clinics, that the majority support for a woman’s right to choose can be reinforced and a victory won. The debate over women’s rights has to be won by political and public mobilization — independent of the Democratic and Republican parties.

The middle-class liberal leadership of NOW and other groups have insisted on a different course — elect Democratic Party candidates; become part of the “anti-Trust resistance”; pass state-by-state enshrinements of fatally flawed Roe v Wade. They have no confidence in the working class, the people Hill- ary Clinton called the “deplorables,” so they say we should keep quiet to not get those in power upset. This course has led to disaster.

We can learn from the examples of the tens of thousands of women and men, building on gains of the fight to overthrow Jim Crow segregation and against Washington’s war in Vietnam, who organized meetings, teach-ins and public protests in the 1960s and ’70s that won legalization of women’s right to abortion. Thousands more mobilized in Wichita, Kansas; Buffalo, New York; and elsewhere in the 1990s to keep family planning clinics open, defeating rightist anti-abortion thugs led by Operation Rescue.

Defending women’s right to choose abortion is an international fight. We can gain inspiration from the successful mobilizations that won majority support and led to the recent overturn of bans on abortion in Ireland and South Korea.

Let’s take momentum from the May 21 actions and make this a fight, a fight we can win.

Further reading…

Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women’s Liberation

Documents of the Socialist Workers Party, 1971-86

This three-part series helps politically equip women and men joining battles in defense of women’s rights today.

$12 each; all three for $30

Abortion Is a Woman’s Right!

Why abortion rights are central not only to the fight for the full emancipation of women, but to forging a united and fighting labor movement. — $6

pathfinderpress.com

Above, 2,000 marched in Birmingham May 19 after Alabama legislature passed strict- est anti-abortion bill in the country, and thousands more protested across the state. Nationwide actions were held May 21: top left, Phoenix; bottom, Pasadena, California.
‘Capitalism is the greatest creator of wolves in human history’

How Far We Slaves Have Come

People of Cuba will overcome these as they have helped other countries overcome theirs.

We know that the revolutionary spirit of today was started long ago and that its spark was kindled by many fighters for Cuban freedom, and indeed for freedom of all suffering under imperialist domination.

We too are also inspired by the life and example of José Martí, who is not only a Cuban and Latin American hero but also honored by all who struggle to defend the freedom of all of humankind.

We also honor the great Che Guevara, whose revolutionary exploits, including on our own continent, were too powerful for any censor to hide from us. The life of Che is an inspiration to all human beings who cherish freedom.

We will always honor his memory. … It was in prison when I first heard of the massive assistance that the Cuban internationalist forces provided to the people of Angola, on such a scale that one hesitated to believe, when the Angolans came under combined attack of South African, CIA-financed FNLA, mercenary, UNITA, and Zairean troops in 1975.

We in Africa are used to being victims of countries wanting to carve up our territory or subvert our sovereignty. It is valued in African history to have another people rise to the defense of one of us.

We know also that this was a popular action in Cuba. We are aware that those who fought and died in Angola were only a small proportion of those who volunteered. For the Cuban people internationalism is not merely a word but something that we have seen practiced to the benefit of large sections of humankind. …

The crushing defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale was a victory for the whole of Africa.

The overwhelming defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale provided the possibility for Angola to enjoy peace and consolidate its own sovereignty!

The defeat of the racist army allowed the struggling people of Namibia to finally win their independence.

The decisive defeat of the apartheid aggressors broke the myth of the invincibility of the white oppressors!

The defeat of the apartheid army was an inspiration to the struggles inside South Africa!

Without the defeat of Cuito Cuanavale our organizations would not have been unbanned!

The defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale has made it possible for me to be here today!


By Fidel Castro

There is no doubt that all the political leaders are talking about social justice and the redistribution of wealth; that is not lacking. But I asked myself: Where did injustice come from? Where did poverty come from? Where did underdevelopment come from? Where did all these calamities come from, if not from capitalism? Where did colonialism come from, if not from capitalism?

Where did neocolonialism and imperialism come from, if not from capitalism? It would seem that all the riches of heaven and earth are to be blamed for the existence of poor people and that the social system has nothing to do with it, that the only problem is how to govern with it. It’s incredible! This is the language, this is the mentality, this is the doctrine.

To want to resolve these problems through a capitalist system that has been divided between extremely rich capitalist countries and the majority of extremely poor countries is a problem that is deeper than capitalism, colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism — it is an incredible illusion. … It’s like trying to put out a fire with gasoline.

We are internationalists. We are not narrow nationalists or chauvinists. We will shed our blood in other parts of the world, such as in Latin America and Africa. As Mandela recalled, for each person who went on international missions, there were ten who volunteered to go. … The blood of the Angolans was our blood, the blood of the South Africans is our blood! Humanity’s blood is our blood! [Applause]

Our ideas go beyond chauvinism or narrow nationalism. Our ideas extend beyond all borders. We live in the world that was given to us and we are fighting for a better world. Our minds, our intelligence, and our hearts are prepared for a much better world, for a superior world, for a world such as that desired by Che, and we act as brothers to each other rather than preying on each other like wolves.

Capitalism is the greatest creator of wolves in human history, and imperialism has not only been the greatest creator of wolves but also the greatest wolf of all who have ever existed.

Who can come from way back, who were conquered, who were exploited, and who were enslaved throughout history, what marvelous ideas we can develop, what just ideas we can imagine! And we can think in Latin American and even world terms.

How far we slaves have come! [Applause]
The following statement was released May 20 by Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Dallas.

The Socialist Workers Party and its 2019 slate of candidates across the country call on working people and their allies — even from 2010 to 2018, and declining production due to economic crisis unfolding in Venezuela. A combination of hyperinflation, with price increases expected to reach 10 percent a month, has electricity only three hours a day. In response, the Socialist Workers Party and its 2019 slate of candidates have joined in and initiated protest actions in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago and other places demanding U.S. hands off Venezuela! U.S. hands off Cuba!

On May 10 Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin imposed sanctions on two maritime compa- "imposes military aid to a woman's control of her own life and to winning rights to family planning."

President Nicolas Maduro responded to Washington’s latest threats by saying that Iran is attacked, Tehran would attack Isra-.

The U.S. rulers have intensified their pressure to force Tehran to end its nuclear weapons program and to remove the militias the Iranian rulers use in their bloody intervention in conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. They are not planning this kind of war against Iran at the moment. But their threats, vast mili- nerals provided by Tehran.

The U.S. sanctions come on top of the capitalist rulers in Germany and many other countries exploded during and after the 1979 Iranian Revolu- tion that overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah. Since then Tehran intervened in conflicts in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, establishing bases for missiles and advancing its regional influence within the broader context of U.S. efforts to remove the militias the Iranian rulers use in their bloody intervention in Syria has propped up the targeting Bashar al-Assad dictatorship with tens of thousands of Hez- bollah fighters. It has built its military forces closer to Israel’s border and opened more routes for missiles to arm its ally in Lebanon.

The May 21 actions should be the beginning of a national demonstration,: fighters. Opponents of women’s rights have chipped away to outlaw abortion!

Over decades the U.S. rulers have failed to estab-lish stable and subservient regimes in the countries of wars they have inflicted on the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. military.

The Militant June 3, 2019 9

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A NY public advocate, told those he met as he marched in defense of women’s right to abortion near Wall Street May 21. "The U.S. rulers’ threats to Iran are a thinly disguised assault on women the world over."

The fight for the right of women to family planning, including safe and secure birth control and abortion, is essential to winning women’s emancipation. And it is a key question for the working class world-wide. Large outpourings of women in South Korea, Ireland, Argentina and elsewhere show support for the right of women to choose whether and when to have an abortion is growing and it can be won. Central to the fight is the organization and mobilization of women en-and all working people independent of the bosses and their parties.

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