

Tennessee Tortures Woman for Abortion Attempt

Anna Yocca has spent a year in jail because she attempted a self-induced abortion. A low-paid Amazon warehouse worker living in Rutherford County, Tennessee—where abortion, though nominally legal up to 16 weeks, is unavailable—Anna, who was 24 weeks pregnant, used a coat hanger. Having found her bleeding in the bathtub, her boyfriend took her to the hospital, where doctors compelled her to give birth. She deliv-

Free Anna Yocca Now!

ered through cesarean section a premature one-and-a-half pound baby boy with permanent lung and eye damage.

Forced into a desperate situation and then medically tortured, she was further

tortured by the vindictive legal system, which put the child in the custody of the state and arrested her on charges of first-degree attempted murder. Last spring, these charges were downgraded to ag-

gravated assault. But on November 12, Yocca was charged with three new felonies: aggravated assault with a weapon, attempted procurement of a miscarriage and attempted abortion. She has pleaded not guilty, but remains behind bars on an outrageous \$200,000 bond. **Drop all charges! Free Anna Yocca!**

During his election campaign, Donald Trump remarked that women who have *continued on page 8*

For a Class-Struggle Fight for Black Freedom

The following speech, edited for publication, was delivered by Spartacist League spokesman Alan Wilde at the Partisan Defense Committee's 31st annual Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners in New York City on December 2.

The Russian writer Dostoyevsky once wrote: "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons." By that measure, this is a brutal country run by a barbaric ruling class, whose overflowing prisons are medieval torture chambers. America, whose rulers lecture the world about democracy and human rights, locks up more than two million people in its dungeons—almost a quarter of the world's prison population. It still has, and uses, the death penalty, which is a legacy of slavery: the lynch rope made legal. Black men and women make up about 40 percent of those in prison and more than 40 percent of those on death row. This is capitalist America, and to think that capitalist America could be otherwise is like thinking that a leopard can change its spots.

And now we have Donald J. Trump. This is bad news. But a victory for Madame Strangelove, a/k/a Hillary Clinton, would not have been good news. We know that a Trump administration will be nasty (to use his word), and we know that fascist and fascistic types certainly feel the wind in their sails. We've all heard about the swastikas that have been painted, the Muslim women who've had their scarves pulled off, the black people and Latinos who are being harassed on the streets.

But the anger against Trump must not be channeled into schemes to "reclaim" the capitalist Democratic Party. Otherwise, the working people, black people, Latinos, immigrants and others at the bottom of this society will remain trapped in American capitalist democracy, which is really nothing but the dictatorship of the capitalist class. As Marxists, we oppose any political support to *any* capitalist party. So, no, Trump is



Spartacist League contingent at "Millions March NYC" demonstration against racist police killings, December 2014.

We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!

not our president. But neither is Obama. Trump's victory didn't come from nowhere. His road to the White House was paved by the Democrats.

Under eight years of Obama, here's what you got: the banks and auto bosses are saved; working people lose their homes, jobs and unions. Today, more than half of working Americans make less than \$30,000 a year. Trump threatens to deport, and I am sure he will, but Obama has deported more immigrants than any

president in American history. Obama has locked up whistle-blowers like Chelsea Manning. Cops gun down black men and women in the streets with impunity. "How to get away with murder: become a cop"—that was a sign at Wednesday's protest in Charlotte after it was announced that the cop who killed Keith Lamont Scott would not face charges.

Abroad, Obama's so-called humanitarian interventions include the overthrow and murder of Libya's Muammar el-Qaddafi

in 2011 (something for which Hillary Clinton can also claim a lot of credit). It includes the bombardment of Iraq, of Syria, of Afghanistan, and relentless drone strikes. Under his watch, U.S. special ops are now in 133 countries—in other words, 70 percent of the globe.

You can be sure that the U.S. wants to overthrow the Cuban Revolution, restore capitalism and re-enslave the island. We all know that last week, Fidel Castro, a massive historic figure of the late 20th century, died. He did survive the United States' numerous assassination attempts against him, dying in his bed at the age of 90. The revolution he led resulted in enormous gains for the masses of the island, especially black people and women. As Trotskyists, we have always stood for the unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state, just as we do for the other remaining workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos.

But we also stand in political opposition to these countries' Stalinist bureaucratic misrulers—they push nationalism, the myth of peaceful coexistence with imperialism and actually oppose international extension of revolution. Their policies go against what's necessary to defend the workers states. And that includes the Castro regime. As part of our defense of the Cuban Revolution, we also fight for a workers political revolution to get rid of the Stalinist bureaucracy and to establish a regime based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Back to the U.S. With Clinton and the Democrats promising more of the same as the last eight years, is it any wonder that many black and working people just stayed home on Election Day, while others, including many white workers, drank the Trump Kool-Aid? What about people like Bernie Sanders, the supposed progressive, who promised all these wonderful goodies and was supported by groups like Socialist Alternative? Just as he promised, he backed Hillary Clinton and dumped his own supporters like a hot potato. Here's the bottom line we want to *continued on page 7*



On Standing Rock and Land Theft

28 October 2016

First of all, I agree with the fundamental line of the WV article, “Standoff at Standing Rock” (23 Sept. 2016 [WV No. 1096]), which rejects environmentalist arguments against any oil pipeline on principle: “We do not counsel the capitalist ruling class on the most effective way to run its economy.” WV correctly argues for “generous compensation” to the Native peoples when “socially useful development” (railroads, pipelines, hydroelectric projects) is involved.

At the same time, WV allows that when Native peoples’ land rights are being trampled on by government, as is the case in western Canada, then Marxists have to side with the Native peoples.

The only question is: are there any Indian land rights being trampled on at Standing Rock? WV rejects Bill McKibben’s argument that the pipeline goes “across land that was taken from the tribe in 1958.” Instead WV asserts that “in fact, the DAPL goes north of land seized in 1958 and does not cross it.” I have no way to know about this, so in the end, I just accepted WV’s conclusion on the basis of trust, namely, that the Sioux have no legal basis to argue about land rights in this case, though they of course have a historical argument to make about the treatment of Indians.

But last night (Oct. 27) I saw a segment

of “The Last Word” with Lawrence O’Donnell which made me wonder that maybe some facts have been missed here. O’Donnell was interviewing actor Mark Ruffalo, who had just returned from Standing Rock. A rough partial transcript follows: *Ruffalo: They asked the young [Native] people to leave today. They said, “No, we’re gonna fight for our lives, we’re fighting for our water. This is a second genocide for us.”*

They’re there to protect their land. If you went to the 1851 treaty, the land treaty, this land belongs to the Natives. O’Donnell: A treaty that we violated. Ruffalo: This land belongs to the Natives, and all president Obama has to do is say, with the stroke of a pen, “that easement belongs to the Natives, back off!”

Leaving aside their foolish strategy of pinning their hopes on Obama (and also Hillary Clinton, who was presented a letter from the young Native protesters), Ruffalo presents some information I had not seen before, namely references to an 1851 treaty (actually there were two treaties that year) and some kind of “easement” held by the Sioux tribes. What’s that all about?

I simply don’t know, and Ruffalo may just be running on emotions and ignorance. The history here is full of treaties that were violated, but can a lawyer make a case that the tribes have an “easement” on nearby



Reuters

Veterans join activists in protest against Dakota Access Pipeline near Standing Rock reservation, December 5.

land, even if they don’t own it? If so, that may force a change in WV’s position.

PS – Today (Oct. 29) I found this bulletin from *Indian Country Today* which reports unambiguously that, on setting up a new camp directly on the path of the pipeline, “water protectors took back unceded territory affirmed in the 1851 Treaty of Ft. Laramie as sovereign land under the control of the Oceti Sakowin, erecting a frontline camp of several structures and tipis on Dakota Access property.” This confirms that the tribes claim *concrete land rights* which are being violated by the oil company.

Mark K.

WV replies: We thank Mark K. for his letter. About 35 miles of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) route crosses land that was stolen from the Sioux in the late 19th century, just one small example of the brutal dispossession of indigenous peoples that American capitalism was built on. The 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie recognized the Heart tributary of the Missouri River as the northern boundary of Sioux territory. The current border of the Standing Rock reservation lies roughly 30 miles farther south, along Cedar Creek and the Cannonball River. The Sioux are owed substantial compensation for the theft of the land between the Heart and Cannonball Rivers, a demand that we should have raised in our earlier articles.

This historic land grab does not change our attitude toward the pipeline. As the article quoted in Mark’s letter explained, we neither oppose nor support the DAPL. At the same time, we defend the anti-pipeline protesters against the vicious, racist police and company repression meted out against them. Our article also gave the example of the Northern Gateway pipeline in western Canada, which our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada/Ligue Trotskyste du Canada oppose because it brazenly flouts the land rights of the Native peoples who are the predominant population in the regions that the pipeline would traverse. That is not the case with the DAPL, which crosses land that has not been Sioux territory for almost 150 years and is inhabited by other people.

The Sioux territory recognized by the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty encompassed 60 million acres spread across North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Nebraska. (The territory north of the Heart River was territory of the Arikara, Mandan and Hidatsa.) The 1851 treaty, imposed at

the time of the California gold rush, gave settlers the right to cross Indian lands. In 1868, the U.S. government enforced a second Treaty of Fort Laramie that restricted where the Sioux could reside *within their own territory*. By the mid 1870s, with the construction of transcontinental railroads and the discovery of gold in the Black Hills, settlers had encroached on the Sioux reservation. Meanwhile, government-encouraged hunting had almost exterminated the bison in the area, depriving the tribe of its main food source. The rapid westward expansion of American capitalism following the Civil War destroyed the material basis for tribal life.

The border of the Standing Rock reservation south of the DAPL route was established through an executive order by President Ulysses Grant in 1875. This was part of a genocidal policy that confined Native tribes to barren reservations. The policy was enforced through a series of wars designed, in the words of U.S. general John Pope, who led the 1862 offensive in Minnesota, “to exterminate the Sioux if I have the power to do so.... They are to be treated as maniacs or wild beasts, and by no means as people with whom treaties or compromises can be made.”

The destruction of tribal society, which included centuries of broken treaties and land seizures, cannot be reversed. Capitalism offers American Indians only squalor and desperation on the reservations or pervasive bigotry and impoverishment in the cities. The working class should support the tribes’ struggles to claw back from the U.S. rulers whatever compensation they can. But it will take workers revolution that shatters the system of racist American capitalism to divert a meaningful influx of wealth to Indians and other oppressed populations, and embark on a massive program of economic development to lay the basis for a society of material abundance. A workers government will offer Native people the choice of voluntary integration into an egalitarian society or the fullest possible autonomy for those who desire it.

On December 4, the Army Corps of Engineers delayed the easement—government permission—for the DAPL to be laid underneath Lake Oahe near the Standing Rock reservation, in order to carry out an environmental study. Fear that the pipeline would contaminate the Standing Rock reservation’s water supply was a major component of the anti-pipeline protests. But oil pipelines, in addition to serving a socially

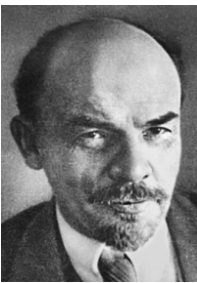
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TROTSKY

Marx on Christianity

Every holiday season, the bourgeoisie trots out hoary pleas for Christian charity to put a humanitarian gloss on poverty, homelessness and its drive to squeeze ever more profit out of working people. In an acerbic rejoinder to an official in the Prussian Ministry of Religious Worship, Education and Medicine, Karl Marx exposed the “principles of Christianity” as nothing but lies and hypocrisy that justify class domination.



LENIN

The social principles of Christianity have now had eighteen hundred years to be developed, and need no further development by Prussian Consistorial [official] Counsellors.

The social principles of Christianity justified the slavery of antiquity, glorified the serfdom of the Middle Ages and are capable, in case of need, of defending the oppression of the proletariat, even if with somewhat doleful grimaces.

The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and for the latter all they have to offer is the pious wish that the former may be charitable.

The social principles of Christianity place the Consistorial Counsellor’s compensation for all infamies in heaven, and thereby justify the continuation of these infamies on earth.

The social principles of Christianity declare all the vile acts of the oppressors against the oppressed to be either a just punishment for original sin and other sins, or trials which the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, ordains for the redeemed.

The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-contempt, abasement, submissiveness and humbleness, in short, all the qualities of the rabble, and the proletariat, which will not permit itself to be treated as rabble, needs its courage, its self-confidence, its pride and its sense of independence even more than its bread.

The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypocritical, and the proletariat is revolutionary.

So much for the social principles of Christianity.

—Karl Marx, “The Communism of the *Rheinischer Beobachter*” (1847)

WORKERS VANGUARD



Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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The Spartacist League is the U.S. section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Workers Vanguard (ISSN 0276-0746) published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August (beginning with omitting the second issue in June) and skipping the last issue in December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 299 Broadway, Suite 1618, New York, NY 10007. Telephone: (212) 732-7862 (Editorial), (212) 732-7861 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116. Email address: vanguard@tiac.net. Domestic subscriptions: \$10.00/22 issues. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is December 13.

No. 1102

16 December 2016

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Massive Repression in Turkey

Over 125,000 people fired or suspended from their jobs, tens of thousands jailed and awaiting trial—that’s the toll exacted by Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the months after his suppression of the July 15 military coup. In his drive to consolidate an authoritarian Islamist state in which he would wield dictatorial powers, Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) have gone after a host of opponents and critics, including Kurdish political leaders, teachers and unions. Some 150 media outlets have been closed, while more than a hundred journalists have been jailed, including a number from *Cumhuriyet*, one of Turkey’s oldest newspapers. Meanwhile, since last summer the military has been attacking Kurdish towns and cities in southeastern Turkey, bombarding them with artillery and tank fire and killing hundreds of Kurdish civilians.

Erdogan has also purged thousands of cops, soldiers, judges and other erstwhile representatives of the Turkish capitalist regime, accusing them of being in cahoots with the Muslim cleric and former Erdogan ally Fethullah Gulen, who has been living in the U.S. since 1999. For his part, Gulen denies any connection to the coup. As we wrote in “Turkey’s Failed Coup: Both Sides Bad for Workers” (WV No. 1093, 29 July): “We don’t know who the coup plotters were, but one thing is clear: the only position in the interest of workers was to oppose both the Erdogan regime and the coup.”

Even before the coup, the Erdogan government had been on the warpath against critics, arresting people for “insulting” the

Kurds Under the Gun



September 9: Riot police detain demonstrator during protest against mass suspension of Kurdish teachers in Diyarbakir, main city of Turkish Kurdistan.

5,000 demonstrators mobilized in Istanbul on November 20 to protest these arrests. The government also detained many Kurdish mayors and muzzled at least 20 Kurdish media outlets.

The Erdogan government is now using a December 10 bombing claimed by the Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK) as a pretext to further escalate its war against the Kurdish people. The bombers targeted

of the proletariat. However, we defend the HDP and its leaders from the assaults of the Turkish state. The Turkish workers movement must oppose Erdogan’s all-sided repression, fight for the immediate release of Kurdish victims of the government’s purges and demand: All Turkish forces out of Kurdistan!

The government has also suspended or fired 60,000 teachers, although some 6,000 were reinstated in November in the face of a massive teacher shortage. While the regime has accused many of the victimized teachers of alleged ties to Gulen, some 11,500 of them were accused of being supporters of the PKK. Most of these Kurdish teachers live in the Kurdish-majority southeast and belong to Eğitim Sen, a teachers union that is part of the leftist public-sector workers union confederation KESK.

While Erdogan is popular among conservative and religious Turks as well as sections of the poor who have benefited from infrastructure improvements, he is widely hated by secular Turks for his growing crusade to extend the reach of Islam in public life. During his first term as prime minister, he unsuccessfully sought to criminalize adultery. In recent years, fundamentalist goons have taken to patrolling the streets and attacking bars and other establishments selling alcohol. A sign of the times was the attempt last month to pass a law that in effect would have given the state’s seal of approval to forced child marriages. Following a huge outcry and demonstrations around the country, the bill was eventually withdrawn. Nevertheless, it was emblematic of the deeply ingrained oppression of women in Turkish soci-

ety, expressed in the prevalence of such vile acts of violence as “honor killings.”

The European imperialists are seizing on Erdogan’s massive wave of repression to posture as defenders of civil liberties and bring Erdogan to heel. On November 24, the European Parliament passed a nonbinding vote to suspend talks with Turkey on its membership in the European Union (EU), throwing a wrench in the country’s years-long (and unlikely) bid to join this consortium of imperialist brigands and the weaker countries they exploit. Among other things, the Parliament cited Erdogan’s outrageous threat to re-enact the death penalty, which Turkey abolished in 2004. Erdogan shot back that the EU decision had “no value” and threatened to terminate a deal with the imperialists to stanch the flow of refugees to Europe in exchange for billions of euros.

The imperialists’ “humanitarian” pretensions are utter cynicism. For more than two decades, EU boss Germany has banned the PKK and has joined the U.S. in arming the Turkish military to the teeth in its war against the Kurds. Across Europe, from Theresa May’s England to Angela Merkel’s Germany, the capitalist rulers have unleashed the furies of Islamophobia that embolden the fascists and other racist forces.

Turkey, the Kurds and the Syrian Quagmire

The Turkish government’s decades-long campaign to root out the PKK massively escalated last year, when the Turkish army launched a furious assault on Kurdish cities in southeastern Turkey. These attacks were partly in response to military gains in northern Syria by the PKK-affiliated Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its military wing, the People’s Protection Committees (YPG). They were also in retaliation for the HDP’s gains in the June 2015 parliamentary election, in which the HDP became the first Kurdish party in Turkish history to enter parliament, and Erdogan’s AKP lost its parliamentary majority.

Through years of struggle, the Kurds have clearly demonstrated their desire for independence. But far from fighting for self-determination, the petty-bourgeois nationalist PKK is using the military conflict to force the Turkish rulers to the bargaining table to achieve a negotiated settlement and expanded local control. Likewise, HDP leader Demirtas seeks a “political solution” in which the Kurds would supposedly be granted more rights within the framework of the oppressive Turkish state. Such a plan would simply renegotiate the terms of oppression of the Kurdish masses, who would remain under Turkish domination.

It is vital for the working class of Turkey to stand for the military defense of the PKK against the Turkish state. If the

continued on page 4



Pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party demonstration against government detention of mayor and co-mayor of Diyarbakir, October 26.

president, stripping members of parliament of immunity and detaining the leader of the leftist Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DISK). After the coup, the regime declared a state of emergency, allowing Erdogan to rule by decree. Continuing the oppression of the Kurds, it used these emergency powers in November to detain eleven Kurdish members of parliament. These included Selhattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag, cochairmen of the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), a petty-bourgeois nationalist party that has considerable backing among secular Turks and leftists. Despite government intimidation, some

security personnel outside a soccer stadium in Istanbul, killing 36 riot cops (as well as eight civilians). The TAK says it is an offshoot of the nationalist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), though the PKK denies any links to it. As Marxists, we oppose the strategy of individual terrorism, which rejects the mass mobilization of the working class and oppressed against the capitalist regime. And, invariably, attacks like the one outside the soccer stadium kill innocent civilians, further driving the Turkish masses into the arms of their rulers. Since the bombing, the government has detained nearly 570 people, including politicians from the HDP, which condemned the attack, in operations spanning 28 cities, while the Turkish interior minister has vowed that Kurdish militants will be “wiped from this geography.”

As Marxists who stand for the political independence of the working class, we do not politically support the HDP, a petty-bourgeois party whose program is by definition hostile to the historic interests

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips an issue in December.

Our next issue will be dated January 13.

SPARTACIST

İLKELER VE BAZI PROGRAM ÖĞELERİ BİLDİRİSİ

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Turkey...

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proletariat is to ever liberate itself from capitalist exploitation, it must oppose anti-Kurdish chauvinism and take up the struggle for Kurdish self-determination. We aim to win the Turkish working class, as well as the workers of the region, to the fight for a united, independent Kurdistan embracing the Kurds of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. That fight is part of the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East, which would include a socialist republic of united Kurdistan.

We also support Kurdish independence from individual capitalist states—e.g., the right of Kurds in Turkey to secede. However, in Iraq and Syria, the Kurdish nationalists have currently subordinated the just fight for self-determination to their alliance with U.S. imperialism. This is a crime that will redound against the long-oppressed Kurdish people.

In Syria, the YPG is U.S. imperialism’s most reliable ally in the war against the Islamic State (ISIS). In acting as boots on the ground for the U.S., these Kurdish nationalists are betraying the interests of the Near East masses, not least the national aspirations of the Kurdish people. Washington’s occupations and interventions in the Near East have escalated communal tensions in the region, setting Shia against Sunni, Sunni against Alawite and Arab against Kurd.

We Marxists have no side in the reactionary and sectarian Syrian civil war, including in the clashes between the U.S.’s Turkish allies and its Kurdish tools. But we do have a side in resolutely opposing the U.S. and other imperialist powers. Thus, while we abhor and reject everything that the ISIS cutthroats represent, we stand for the military defense of ISIS against the U.S. and its proxies, including the YPG. Every blow struck against U.S. imperialism coincides with the interest of the working and oppressed masses of the world. At the same time, we also oppose the other capitalist powers involved in Syria, such as Turkey, Russia and Iran, and demand that they get out.

From the Armenian genocide during World War I to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the Kurdish leaders have collaborated with regional powers or the imperialists. In a 2011 interview, former national security official Brent Scowcroft remarked: “The Kurds are pawns in great power politics...as they have been for a long time.” But pawns are dispensable, and imperialist tools are discarded after serving their reactionary purpose. This is a fact that many Kurds themselves know



U.S. Special Operations forces in Syria with Kurdish-led allies, May 25. PYD/YPG alliance with U.S. imperialism is a betrayal of Kurdish masses and their struggle for self-determination.

only too well, even if some leftists and Kurdish activists justify these treacherous blocs with imperialism as clever tactics. As Joost Hiltermann commented in “They Were Expendable” in the *London Review of Books* (17 November): “The history of the Kurds’ long struggle is therefore one of a series of fleeting alliances with more powerful states, and cries of betrayal once these alliances fall apart, each followed by atrocities from which it takes them a generation to recover.”

Notwithstanding its current relationship with the PYD/YPG, the U.S. is and has always been opposed to Kurdish independence. When Turkey entered Syria in August, ostensibly against ISIS, its main objective was to prevent PYD/YPG fighters from linking the two semiautonomous Kurdish regions in northeast and northwest Syria. The U.S. supported the Turkish intervention with stepped-up airstrikes and military advisers—as well as a forceful statement by Vice President Joe Biden during a visit to Ankara in which he ordered YPG forces to retreat to the east of the Euphrates River.

More recently, the 10,000-strong Turkish force has been backing fighters from the Free Syrian Army (FSA)—which is also supported by the U.S.—poised to take the Syrian town of al-Bab, ISIS’s last significant stronghold before its Syrian capital of Raqqa. Supported by Turkish armor and warplanes, FSA fighters have clashed with the YPG-dominated Syrian Defense Forces, again pitting the Turkish military against the Syrian Kurds. U.S. commanders struggling to coordinate the assault on Raqqa have

been frustrated as their Kurdish proxies have insisted on attacking Arab-majority al-Bab. Meanwhile, Turkish troops continue to defy Washington by turning their fire on the YPG.

In Iraq, Turkish warplanes, with U.S. approval, have been bombing PKK positions for over a year. Now, the Erdogan regime, which has hundreds of Turkish soldiers stationed north of Mosul, is insisting on a Turkish role in the battle to retake the city from ISIS. That battle, which began in October, is being carried out by Kurdish *pesh merga* fighters, Shia militias and Iraqi government forces, backed by U.S. aerial power and Special Operations troops. Ankara’s maneuvers in this former region of the Ottoman Empire are heightening tensions with the Baghdad government.

The growing acrimony between the U.S. and its Turkish NATO ally has coincided with, and helped feed, a rapprochement between Ankara and Moscow, which has exercised NATO officials. As a result, Russian president Vladimir Putin has given tacit approval to Turkey’s actions in northern Syria. While Turkey and Russia have divergent interests in Syria, with the latter backing the regime of Bashar al-Assad, they agree with the U.S. on maintaining the “territorial integrity” of Syria—i.e., no independent Kurdish statelet.

For a Bi-National Revolutionary Workers Party in Turkey

Millions of Kurds—many of them victims of army terror, high unemployment rates and impoverishment—have migrated to such key western industrial centers as

Istanbul, Izmir and Bursa. Despite the fierce discrimination they suffer, this migration has strengthened the objective basis for uniting the Turkish and Kurdish working masses. But because anti-Kurdish chauvinism is integral to the maintenance of bourgeois rule in Turkey, unity can only be sporadic unless the Turkish proletariat is won to the fight for Kurdish national independence.

As Leninists, we defend the national rights of all peoples and uphold the principle of national equality, including the equality of languages. In defending the right of nations to self-determination, our purpose is to tear down the barriers created by bourgeois class society to keep the working people of different nationalities at one another’s throats. By championing Kurdish self-determination, the working class in Turkey would place itself squarely in opposition to its “own” capitalist class enemy. It would also undercut U.S. imperialism’s capacity to manipulate the Kurds’ grievances in order to further dominate the region.

Erdogan has gone a long way toward consolidating his autocratic rule and strengthening the sway of Islam over Turkey. Nevertheless, the society he rules over remains a pressure cooker of social and political discontents. What is vital is the forging of a bi-national, Turkish-Kurdish workers party that would also draw in Turkey’s oppressed ethnic and religious minorities. Acting as a tribune of the people, such a party, section of a reformed Fourth International, would lead the proletariat in the struggle for its own rule. In power, the working class would expropriate the bourgeoisie and break the hold of the imperialist masters over the country; establish a collectivized, planned economy; lay the material basis for the emancipation of women; and fight to ensure Kurdish self-determination.

The struggle for proletarian power in Turkey, and more broadly in the Near East, must be linked to the fight for workers rule in the imperialist centers. Centrally important to this perspective is the presence of some two million ethnic Turks and a million Kurds in Germany, where they are heavily integrated into the working class. These workers can serve as a living bridge linking the fight for socialist revolution in the Near East to working-class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe. In the U.S., the working class must be won to the understanding that the American ruling class is its enemy and that it must oppose imperialist aggression abroad. Our aim is a socialist revolution to overthrow U.S. imperialism, the greatest enemy of the world’s working and oppressed masses. ■

Land Theft...

(continued from page 2)

useful function of transporting fuel, are safer overall than shipping fuel by rail or road. While construction is halted, oil from the Bakken shale field will continue to be transported across the Missouri River by other, more dangerous means. We fight for union safety committees that would enforce safety standards and practices in construction, operation and maintenance.

The environmentalists Mark mentions in his letter use the 1851 treaty in service of their demand to “leave fossil fuels in the ground.” With society currently dependent on fossil fuels, this reactionary program would be a disaster for Native peoples and everyone else. For the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota, developing the oil wells in tribal lands on the Bakken shale brought desperately needed income to the tribe and dramatically reduced unemployment on the reservation. (At the same time, development on the reservation enriches the tribal bureaucracy, which dispenses government funds and controls jobs as well as the revenue from mineral holdings and land, while other tribal members go hungry.)

Human-induced climate change is a

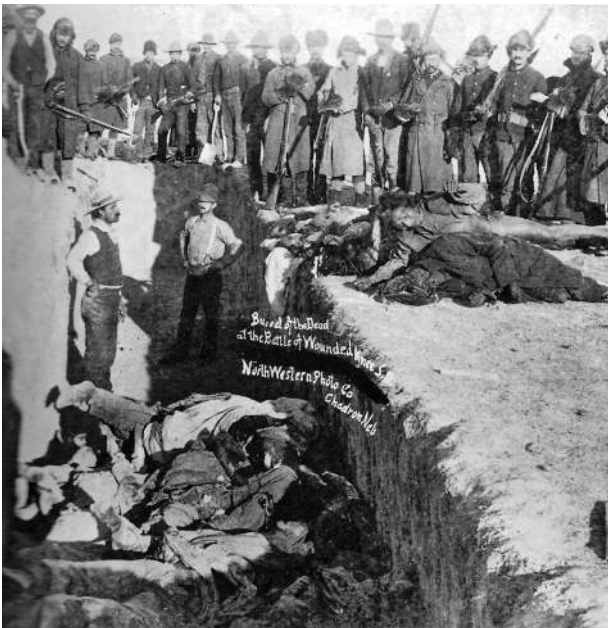


Fort Laramie, Wyoming, 1868: General William Tecumseh Sherman negotiating treaty that restricted land rights for the Sioux and Arapaho (left). Soldiers bury corpses of Sioux slaughtered by U.S. Army at Wounded Knee in December 1890 (right).

real problem, but nothing good can come from advising the world’s biggest plunderers on how best to power their economy, as the environmentalists do. The anarchic and crisis-ridden capitalist system not only breeds poverty and inequality but also is the main obstacle to addressing

global warming on the necessary world scale. Freed from the fetters of production for profit, a workers government would strive to generate and use energy in the most rational, efficient and safe manner possible, including by developing other sources—nuclear, solar, wind, etc. Even

then, it may well prove necessary to harness fossil fuels for a period of time. Only in the context of an international socialist economy that relegates hunger and poverty to the past can a rational plan be hammered out to modulate climate change and minimize its human toll. ■



Ireland: CWI Hustles for Cops

DUBLIN—In October, the Garda Representative Association (GRA), which has some 10,500 members in the Garda Síochána [Civil Guards, the Irish police], announced four one-day “strikes” during November demanding pay rises. Faced with mass “insubordination,” the Garda high command drew up plans to mobilise senior officers and trainees to maintain “law and order” and even mooted the imposition of martial law! Just hours before the first of these “strikes” was to take place on 4 November, the government came up with an offer of nearly 50 million euros in extra pay for its thugs in blue.

The police are not workers, but a central part of the capitalist state. The purpose of the state, which also includes the courts, prisons and military, is to defend the interests of the tiny class of exploiters, the bourgeoisie, who rule society. The cops are used to break strikes, including by enforcing injunctions against workers’ pickets. They carry out racist repression against immigrants and Travellers [a distinct ethnic group with a historically itinerant way of life] and suppress opposition to the capitalist rulers and their diktats.

Over the last several months, the Irish state has used a prominent feud between rival drug gangs to put on a show of force. In a country where most cops have historically not been armed, many working-class districts in Dublin are now regularly littered with roadblocks manned by the Garda’s armed response unit. In addition to demanding more pay, the GRA has been campaigning to give the cops additional firepower—from more widespread use of Tasers to the return of Uzi submachine guns for armed detectives.

The threatened Garda “strikes” were particularly ominous given the current



Press Association

Dublin: Cops attack anti-racist protesters, February 6. Reformist CWI claims police are “workers in uniform.”

high level of discontent within the working class. After the 2008 economic crash, workers in Ireland were forced to accept wage cuts and tax hikes under European Union-mandated austerity while the banks were bailed out. Now, the capitalists’ profits are soaring and the government is touting renewed economic growth, while demanding that workers continue to make sacrifices. Dublin tram and bus workers have gone on strike this year, as have high school teachers nationwide, and other workers in both the public and private sector are threatening to strike.

The generous terms for the police stand in sharp contrast to the government’s refusal to grant wage demands from workers unions. Of course, this is no accident. The wage settlement with the cops was

all about the capitalists and their government ensuring a reliable cohort of strike-breaking thugs. When Margaret Thatcher became British prime minister in 1979, one of her first acts was to approve a massive pay rise for the police, whom she went on to unleash against striking steel and mine workers and anyone else who dared stand up to her.

While class-conscious workers in Ireland know the cops are their enemies, the reformists of the Socialist Party (part of the Committee for a Workers’ International, whose U.S. section is Socialist Alternative) declared, “The strike action by Gardai should be supported.” The Socialist Party’s 20 October statement lamented that “demoralisation in the Gardaí is high,” and went on to claim: “A victory for the Gardaí in their dispute with the government will further strengthen the hand of workers fighting for pay rises.” No! Any “victory” for the cops means a police force more emboldened to carry out its basic task, namely repression in defense of capitalist rule. It poses a real threat to the working class, the oppressed and anyone who dares resist the depredations of capitalism.

In addition to the cash, the government has also offered the GRA access to the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court, both state institutions that are historically involved in negotiations with trade unions. Thus, the GRA may come one big step closer to its goal of being officially recognised as a trade union. In this endeavour too, the cops find strong support from the Socialist Party. Only last year, one of its TDs [members of the Irish parliament], Paul Murphy, voted for union rights for the GRA. We warned at the time:

“Any move for police ‘unionisation’ or the ‘right to strike’ is not a development in the direction of trade-union consciousness. Quite the opposite. Such moves express the bonapartist appetites of the police to break free from the fetters of bourgeois democracy and to act as judge, jury and executioner, unhindered by the courts or by parliament and its laws” (“Irish Taaffeites Back Call for Cop ‘Union,’” WV No. 1072, 7 August 2015). Indeed, such bonapartist tendencies were displayed in October, when the cops made it clear that they intended to defy the Garda Commissioner’s orders to turn up for duty.

Ireland has seen enormous protests in recent years against the introduction of a regressive tax on domestic water supply that have been met with police attacks and arrests. The Socialist Party’s touching faith in the capitalist state has not even been lessened by the fact that its own members and supporters have been hit by the state’s repressive powers. Paul Murphy and several others are facing outrageous charges of “false imprisonment”—i.e., kidnapping—because a car carrying the then Labour Party leader and government minister Joan Burton was surrounded by a crowd of protesters in November 2014. We say: ***Drop the charges against Paul Murphy and all the protesters!***

In its 20 October statement, the Socialist Party portrays the cops as some kind of uniformed workers who could operate “under the democratic control of working class communities.” Their line on the police is no aberration. Peter Taaffe and other founding leaders of the CWI have been promoting the cops as “workers in uniform” for decades. In a 1983 pamphlet titled, “The State...a Warning to the Labour Movement,” the Taaffeites called for “the right of the police to an independent, democratic trade union organisation to defend their interests as workers.”

The CWI’s line on the cops is intrinsic to their perspective of reforming capitalism through building “movements” that will pressure the bourgeoisie to enact a decent social order through a progression of baby steps. Such a strategy fuels deadly illusions among the working class and the downtrodden that an end to oppression can come about without the overturn of the whole capitalist system. Genuine Marxists, building on the lessons of history—not least the 1917 Bolshevik-led Revolution in Russia—recognise that getting rid of the exploitation, oppression and misery inherent to capitalism requires that the capitalist state and its “special bodies of armed men” be swept aside through socialist revolution and that the working class install itself as the ruler of society. ■

Message from Barnestown: “Our Line’s Been Changed Again”

Before...

VOL. 80/NO. 45 NOVEMBER 28, 2016

What does Trump election mean? — Not very much

BY NAOMI CRAINE

After...

VOL. 80/NO. 45 NOVEMBER 28, 2016

2016: Most important US election in 100 years

BY NAOMI CRAINE

THE MILITANT

306 W 37th St. 13th FL., New York, NY 10018

Tel: (212) 244-4899 Fax (212) 244-4947 TheMilitant@mac.com www.themilitant.com

November 18, 2016

Dear subscriber,

Militant issue no. 45 that was mailed to you is being reprinted. The main change will be in the line of the front-page article, “What does Trump election mean? — Not very much.”

Far from meaning “not very much,” the election of Donald Trump signals the most important changes in bourgeois politics since the second imperialist world war. The article will be rewritten to explain what this means and the stakes involved for working people.

The new issue of the paper will be printed on Monday, November 21, and mailed out the following day. Please discard the withdrawn issue you receive.

Sincerely,

John Studer

John Studer, Editor

In mid November, a letter (see above) went out from the editor of the *Militant*, newspaper of Jack Barnes’ Socialist Workers Party (SWP), asking subscribers to junk the 28 November issue of their press. To be thrown into the dustbin of history was the front-page article headlined, “What Does Trump Election Mean?—Not Very Much.” This was replaced by a new article headlined, “2016: Most Important US Election in 100 Years.” Quite a switch! In March, the SWP denounced a Chicago protest against a Trump rally as a “blow to free speech” while enthusing that Trump supporters at the rally were “finding interest in what the Socialist Workers Party has to say” (12 March statement, “Breakup of Trump Rally Sets Back Working Class”). Far be it from us—much less the membership of the SWP, whose politics are divined by its ultimate leader Jack Barnes—to know what this is all about. To paraphrase a 1930s song parodying the abrupt about-faces of Earl Browder’s Communist Party, “I knows it Barnes, Our line’s been changed again.”

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Former Class-War Prisoners Address NYC Holiday Appeal Benefit

Some 150 people turned out on December 2 for the Partisan Defense Committee's 31st annual Holiday Appeal benefit in New York City. This year's lively benefit included two new guests for the PDC, courageous former class-war prisoners Robert King and Albert Woodfox of the Angola 3. The successful event raised funds for the PDC's monthly stipend program and holiday gifts to class-war prisoners—not as an act of charity but of solidarity with these victims of racist capitalist injustice.

The Spartacist League initiated the PDC in 1974. The model was the International Labor Defense under James P. Cannon of the early Communist Party. As a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization, the PDC takes up cases and causes whose successful outcome is in the interests of the whole of the working people. Those defended need not, and often do not, share our Marxist outlook. It is more important than ever to continue the work of the PDC. As a PDC spokesman noted at the event, "Class-struggle legal and social defense, including support for class-war prisoners, is of vital importance to labor activists, fighters for black rights and immigrant rights and defenders of civil liberties."

The stipend program, which began in 1986, currently provides material support to 12 prisoners: Mumia Abu-Jamal; American Indian Movement spokesman Leonard Peltier; Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janine Africa, Janet Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa and Chuck Africa of the Philadelphia MOVE organization; Jaan Laaman and Thomas Manning of the Ohio 7; and Ed Poindexter, a Black Panther supporter and leader of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. Poindexter's comrade and fellow stipend recipient Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa died last March after 45 years behind bars and was recognized for his unwavering opposition to racial oppression.

This year's benefit provided an occasion to honor the Angola 3 (King, Woodfox and Herman Wallace), who collectively spent over a century in solitary confinement at one of America's most notorious hellholes, Angola prison. Its jailers entombed these Black Panther Party members in retaliation for their having organized work stoppages and other protests against horrific



Robert King, Francisco Torres and Albert Woodfox (left to right) at New York Holiday Appeal benefit, December 2.

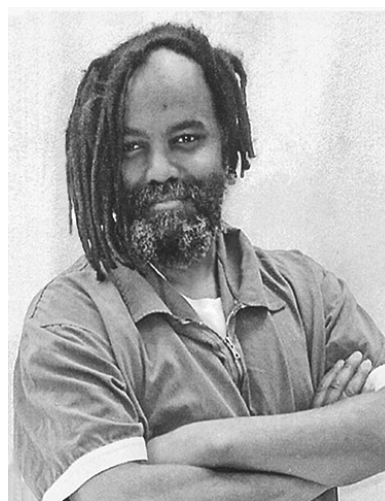
prison conditions. Woodfox and Wallace were falsely convicted of the 1972 killing of a guard; King was framed for killing a fellow inmate the next year. Wallace died from liver cancer in October 2013, three days after his release from prison. King was released in 2001, and Woodfox finally in February.

King and Woodfox (who became a stipend recipient in 2014) were introduced at the New York benefit by a recorded greeting from America's foremost class-war prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, who also wrote a preface to King's book *From the Bottom of the Heap*. A former Panther spokesman and journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless," Mumia was framed up for his political views on false charges of killing a police officer and spent nearly three decades on Pennsylvania's death row. Now consigned to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, Mumia is fighting for medical treatment to save his life, as well as for his freedom, which the PDC has long championed. In his recording for the Holiday Appeal, Mumia observed:

"Today you'll hear from two of the finest former members of the Black Panther Party, brothers Albert Woodfox and Robert King. Truth is, if the free political prisoner movement was stronger, there'd be three brothers standing here, Herman Hooks Wallace among them. Yet we remember Hooks, the third of the Angola 3. These brothers survived decades in solitary, decades in one of the most hellish prisons in America, one whose very name reflects its horrid inheritance of a slave plantation, Angola, Louisiana. All members of the Black Panther Party knew of these brothers because they had the nerve, the revolutionary audacity, to organize a chapter of the Black Panther Party in the very bowels of a maximum-security prison: Angola. For that, and that alone, what the state called 'Black Pantherism,' they were sentenced to life bits in solitary, the dictionary definition of torture."

Both Woodfox and King received standing ovations (for Woodfox's remarks, see separate article). King, who upon release dedicated himself to winning freedom for his comrades Wallace and Woodfox, thanked Mumia "for his touching introduction of us, and I need to say to Mumia and all the brothers and sisters who remain in prison that hope is on the way." King explained, "When we say free all political

prisoners, free prisoners of class war and so forth, we really mean this. You know, Frederick Douglass said a long time ago, this struggle may be a moral or may be a



Mumia Abu-Jamal

Workers World

physical one, but nevertheless there has to be a struggle and the struggle goes on. It continues."

Touching on a theme of his book, which chronicles the series of racist frame-ups that landed him in Angola, King said: "Legality and morality do not shake hands in a courthouse. They don't meet.... Because something is legal does not mean that it is morally right, and we have a right

to challenge that." He observed that the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery, maintained involuntary servitude for those "duly convicted" of a crime. He added, "How many people in this United States have been duly convicted of a crime but are actually innocent of it? So, it means that slavery still exists."

King pointed to "those brothers and sisters who are in prison, who were targeted by COINTELPRO, who were targeted by the FBI" because they "had the audacity" to fight back. He emphasized that these fighters "had this moral right to do so. Anybody in their right mind would do so." Encouraging everyone to "get out of the box," he concluded: "Malcolm said a long time ago that if you believe a lot of the stuff that's out there, they'll have you loving your enemies and hating your friends."

Other benefit speakers included Charles Jenkins and Francisco Torres. Jenkins, a member of the powerful Transport Workers Union Local 100, spoke on behalf of the New York chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, which has for years contributed to the PDC stipend fund. Torres is one of the San Francisco 8, former Black Panthers prosecuted on bogus charges of killing a San Francisco police officer in 1971. The charges against Torres were thrown out in 2011. After mentioning recently released prisoners, Torres offered: "This is what your

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Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Number 39 50c Fall 2015

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Free Him Now!**
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Albert Woodfox: Unbowed, Unbroken

We print below Albert Woodfox's speech to the December 2 New York City Holiday Appeal benefit.

All power to the people! It is an honor for me to be here. I want to thank the Partisan Defense Committee and all the comrades who are here in attendance for asking me to come here and speak before you. Given all the wonderful things that have been said by wonderful comrades before me, I feel like a backup dancer right now.

I guess my message to you is that for those of you who are just entering social struggle, welcome. To those of you who have spent decades, look at me and see that the strength and determination of human spirit defies all evil.

I wish I could say that I can see the horizon. I have been struggling for the last 44 years in solitary confinement. But we just elected a maniac. For those of you who are involved in social struggle, I say: You must be more determined. You must be willing to make whatever sacrifice is necessary because this struggle is not about us.

A young man asked me—we were visiting Harlem—why was I still in-

volved in social struggle? And I thought about it for a moment and I said, "Old men like me struggle so young men like you could know victory."

For 44 years I defied the State of Louisiana and the Department of Corrections. Their main objective was to break my spirit. I saw other men who had been broken by the state—by the use of other inmates and by the brutality of prison guards. Once a man's spirit has been broken he can never get it back. He will never be the same. And those are the kind of things that motivated me, my comrades Robert Hillary King and Herman Hooks Wallace, to continue to struggle at a time when all we had was one another.

So I will ask you here tonight to look at me: unbowed, unbroken. You played a part in that. Everyone here tonight who has ever written a letter to me or to another prisoner, it is that kind of strength that gives us the will to keep going, to keep making a sacrifice.

I have been asked many times would I change anything? Not one thing. Because what I went through allowed me to be the man I am today, the Black Panther I will always be. Thank you.



Coomer/Houston Chronicle

Protesters mobilize against "alt-right" white supremacist Richard Spencer speaking at Texas A&M University, December 6.

talk about "white skin privilege," they accept, whether they know it or not, that white workers have no material interest in fighting for black freedom. There *is* actually a layer of white people that does benefit from black oppression. It's called the ruling class, the white ruling class, and they're laughing all the way to the bank because they've got the people they exploit and oppress at each other's throats. If you think all white people—especially white workers—benefit from black oppression, this is not only false; it alibies the racist ruling class. Racial oppression is used to divide the working class and deepen the exploitation of *all* workers.

Many activists have taken a very courageous stance against rampant police terror. But the cops keep on killing because it is their job under capitalism to terrorize the ghettos and barrios and to smash workers struggles. The only way out is a class perspective; the only way out is the fight for black liberation through socialist revolution. Neither liberalism nor black separatism challenges capitalism. There can be no road to black freedom separate from integrated class struggle. Ours is the program of revolutionary integration:

itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded."

Today, after Trump's victory, many Democrats talk of compromise. Speaking of the new orange overlord, Obama said: "We're actually all on one team." And they are. Compromise works for them because—whatever their differences—Democrats and Republicans, as well as Greens, all represent the same capitalist system. But for the working class, there is no basis for compromise, there is no common ground with them. Compromise didn't end slavery. Compromise maintained slavery. It took a Civil War, the Second American Revolution, to end slavery. And it will take a third American revolution, a socialist revolution, to end wage slavery and black oppression. I think I can make a pledge, which is that when a victorious multiracial workers army marches through Louisiana, Angola prison will be evacuated, and that symbol of slavery and oppression taken down off the face of the earth.

It is utopian to think that this blood-drenched system can be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. What is needed is a fighting labor movement that understands that the bosses and workers have no common interests. What's needed is a revolutionary, multiracial, internationalist workers party that champions women's rights, including free abortion on demand; that fights for full citizenship rights for all immigrants; that makes central to its cause the struggle for black freedom; and that wins working people to opposing the ravages of this ruling class abroad and to standing in solidarity with the victims of U.S. imperialism—a workers party dedicated to a working-class revolution that sweeps away capitalist rule. Only then will the wealth of this country be used to benefit those who produce it.

Our model is the Bolshevik-led October Revolution of 1917. Our goal is an internationally planned socialist economy. And our vision is a global, classless, stateless communist society of freedom and material abundance. The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League, is committed to building the workers party that will, without compromise, fight for a workers government where those who labor rule. We urge you to join our struggle. ■

Black Freedom...

(continued from page 1)

convey to people, to activists, to workers: you don't get reforms from the ruling class by electing nice-sounding candidates. Benefits for working people and the oppressed are not won through the ballot box. They are forced out of the hands of the capitalist rulers through massive class and social struggles on the picket lines and in the streets. As the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass put it, "Power concedes nothing without a demand."

But there is a lack of class struggle, to put it mildly, in the U.S. today. The capitalist rulers have been waging relentless war against working people. And the response of the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy? Vote for Democrats. Trump said he wants to "save American jobs." This is just an echo of the same losing and poisonous protectionism that the union tops have long promoted. How did a predatory capitalist once best known for the phrase, "you're fired," become the supposed savior of a layer of white workers? You can give a lot of thanks to the union bureaucracy for that. They oversaw the devastation of the unions. In the 1950s,

35 percent of all workers were unionized; today, it's just over 11 percent. By the way, that 11 percent includes the cops and prison guards that the union tops treacherously organize. These aren't workers; they are enforcers of capitalist rule. Cops and prison guards have no place in the labor movement.

Slavery and the near extermination of the Native population are at the heart of



WV Photo

New York City Verizon strike rally, May 5.

the founding of American capitalism. The ruling class has nothing but contempt for Native Americans; just look at the vicious repression against the Standing Rock protesters. One young woman now faces the prospect of losing her arm after she was hit with a police concussion grenade. We are Marxists; we are not environmentalists. We don't oppose pipelines per se, and we don't have a position on whether that particular pipeline should be built. But we do vigorously defend the Standing Rock protesters and say: Hands off! American Indians have been the victims of rape, pillage and plunder, land theft and broken treaties. Only working-class rule can ensure their social emancipation: voluntary integration on the basis of full equality and regional autonomy for those who want it.

The bedrock of American capitalism is black oppression, with the majority of black people forcibly segregated at the bottom of society. One of the big lies the ruling class sells white working people is that they pay for the benefits that are perceived as going to black people or other minorities. But when anti-racist activists

mobilizing the proletariat against every manifestation of black oppression to open the road to black equality by building a socialist society. This is part of the struggle to liberate the whole working class from exploitation. Karl Marx captured the great truth of America when he said about this country: "Labor cannot emancipate

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MAY-JUNE 1967

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The struggle of the Negro people in America

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Abortion...

(continued from page 1)

abortions should be punished. Facing an outcry from both Republican and Democratic politicians, he was quickly forced to disavow the statement. But in Tennessee, Trump’s rant is already reality.

Anna Yocca, 31 years old when she sought to terminate her pregnancy, lives in a state where 96 percent of counties have no abortion clinics. This is part of a growing pattern making it all but impossible for working-class, black and Latina women to have access to abortion. Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming each have only one abortion clinic remaining.

The prosecution of Anna Yocca on felony charges is a dangerous precedent for new attacks on abortion rights, which have been rolled back for decades. According to the Guttmacher Institute, since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, states have enacted more than 1,000 restrictions on abortion. More than a quarter of these state laws

selves could be punished under any of 40 different laws, including those against child abuse, drug possession, or practicing medicine without a license. In Ohio, the state legislature recently passed a “heartbeat” bill that would ban abortions from as early as six weeks. If a doctor terminates a pregnancy without listening for a heartbeat or when a heartbeat is audible, the physician could lose their license and face up to a year in prison.

In a motion to dismiss Anna Yocca’s case, her attorney argued that bringing her to trial “makes every pregnant woman vulnerable to arrest and prosecution if she is perceived to have caused or even risked harm to a human embryo or fetus.” Indeed, and one could also note a prior victim of such an attack, Purvi Patel, sentenced in 2015 to 20 years in prison in Indiana for having had a miscarriage. Though the conviction was overturned last July, Patel was the first woman in the U.S. sentenced for “feticide.” At least 38 states now have “fetal homicide” laws to punish women for terminating a pregnancy. Central to the ideology behind anti-abortion

aiming to win over a section of their religious constituency. Hillary Clinton’s well-known statement that abortion should be “safe, legal and rare” was part of the Democratic Party’s platform beginning in the early 1990s.

Some 90 percent of abortions are first-trimester procedures that are medically safe, simple and done in a doctor’s office. Yet abortion remains an explosive political issue because it touches on the equality of women. It is seen as challenging the institution of the family and the idea that motherhood is a woman’s destiny.

The *Roe v. Wade* decision was a democratic gain, but access to that gain was always more difficult for poor and working women. We live in a class-divided society where those with money will always have access to the procedure while an increasing number of women are forced to resort to do-it-yourself abortions, including the coat hanger. Today almost half of women who obtain abortions live below the federal poverty line. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, serve and protect the capitalist social system, which consigns millions of women and children to lives of poverty. As socialists who fight for workers revolution to bring down the whole oppressive system, we call for free abortion on demand. Abortion and contraception should be available at no cost as part of universal, quality health care that is free at the point of service.

In the wake of Hillary Clinton’s defeat, several prominent feminists linked to Clinton and the Obama administration

are calling for a January 21 march in Washington, D.C., the day after Trump’s inauguration. Tellingly, the call for the march goes out of its way to disappear any mention or hint of abortion rights. Reliance on “pro-choice” Democrats has been the hallmark of the bourgeois feminists, undermining the fight for abortion rights.

What is urgently needed is a militant struggle, independent of the Democrats and bolstered by the power of labor, to defend and extend women’s rights—including the right to abortion. As we wrote in our article after the elections, “We Need a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party! Democrats Paved the Way for Trump” (WV No. 1100, 18 November):

“The election made it clear that there is plenty of anger against the Washington elites, but it is not expressed along class lines. It is high time that some genuine *class hatred* be mobilized against the politicians of the Republicans and Democrats, whatever their race or sex, and the capitalist rulers they serve. The power to resist the depredations of capitalism lies in the hands of the men and women—black, white and immigrant—whose labor keeps the wheels of production turning and produces the capitalists’ wealth.”

The emancipation of women requires a workers revolution that will smash all forms of social oppression, lay the material basis to free women from age-old family servitude and reorganize society in the interests of all. Key to this perspective is the forging of a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that will lead the fight for women’s liberation through socialist revolution. ■



Washington, D.C.: Protest outside Supreme Court during hearing on 2013 Texas anti-abortion law, March 2.

were passed in just five years—while Barack Obama was in the White House. The most common restrictions include bans on late-term abortion, restrictions on medical abortion, enforced waiting periods, parental notification and consent regulations and mandatory counseling (where medical personnel are forced to provide inaccurate information to dissuade women from seeking abortions).

In recent years, anti-abortion bigots have pursued a campaign of Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws, which impose expensive, medically unnecessary regulations on clinics to force them to shut down (see “Fight for Free Abortion on Demand!” WV No. 1086, 25 March). Women who attempt to end their pregnancies them-

and “fetal protection” laws is the religious dogma that a fetus has a God-given “soul.” In imposing this fiction on everyone, the anti-abortion bigots seek to reduce women to mere baby-making machines.

Trump’s victory, unexpected by many, has many abortion-rights activists understandably scared. Vice President-elect Mike Pence threatens that the legal right to abortion will be “consigned to the ash heap of history,” while Trump vows to appoint anti-abortion justices to the Supreme Court. But it was not the political composition of the 1973 court—the majority of whom were Republican appointees—that led to the legalization of abortion in the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision. The *Roe* decision was a concession to explosive mass struggle. The women’s liberation movement arose as masses of radicalized youth took to the streets to fight for black rights and against the dirty imperialist war in Vietnam.

It was a sign of the times that in April 1969, hundreds of thousands of women marched in Washington, D.C., demanding that abortion be legalized. Many wore coat hangers around their necks, symbolizing what women face when abortion is illegal. But in the years after the *Roe* decision, abortion rights were whittled down by relentless attacks, illustrating that democratic rights under capitalism are always partial and reversible. It is the stock in trade of Republican politicians to attack abortion. But it was the Democratic Party that paved the way for them. The anti-abortion crusade found a champion with “born again” Democratic president Jimmy Carter, who in 1977 sneered, “There are many things in life that are not fair” as he signed into law the Hyde Amendment eliminating abortion coverage from Medicaid.

Understanding that most Americans favor some form of abortion rights, the Democrats say just enough in support of “choice,” while they echo the “family values” rhetoric of the Republicans,

Holiday Appeal...

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work has produced, some of your work anyway. I hope it produces more, which is, you know, the eventual overthrow of the capitalist system.”

Lynne Stewart, who, like Torres, is a familiar face at New York benefits, was not able to attend this year but sent a statement. A lawyer known for representing Black Panthers and leftist radicals, Stewart was imprisoned in 2009, having been convicted in a frame-up “war on terror” show trial for defending an Islamic cleric

who was jailed for an alleged plot to blow up NYC landmarks in the early 1990s. After nearly dying from breast cancer in prison, she was finally released in December 2013. Stewart wrote: “There is no event more enjoyable and important than the Holiday Appeal. That is so because it so clearly highlights and champions our true heroes and sheroes—those who wait to be released from sinister political imprisonment. None are more aware than your guests of honor, Robert King and Albert Woodfox, who suffered Angola.”

To support the work of the PDC, send contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013. For more information on how to contribute and how to correspond with the class-war prisoners, go to www.partisandefense.org. ■

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- This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2016, from issue No. 1081 (15 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 1102 (16 December). During this time, WV was published biweekly except for three alternate issues in June, July and August and skipping the last issue in December.
- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows. Corrections to articles from previous years indicate the issue number and date of the corrected article in brackets.
- Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:
Capitalists Poison Flint, #1082, 29 Jan. (1, 11)
means the headline of the article, issue No. 1082, dated 29 January, beginning on page 1 and continuing on page 11.
- No entry is listed twice; refer to cross-references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross-references are of two types: those following the word “see” deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words “see also” are related articles. Subject heads in cross-references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus:
United Nations (UN)—See **Haiti**. See also **North Korea**.

means that articles about the United Nations can be found by going to the subject head **HAITI**. Related articles can be found by going to the subject head **NORTH KOREA**.

- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not a subject heading unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally cross-referenced to their appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not normally under any other subject heading. Articles relating to Israel and the Occupied Territories will be found under the subject head **ISRAEL/PALESTINE**. Articles that deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under **U.S.: International Relations** or under the relevant geographical heading, for example, **CHINA**.
- Articles under the *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.
- Abbreviations used in entries are:
C: Correction
CSDN: *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* article
E: Editorial Note
L: Letter
R: Review
S: Series
YSp: *Young Spartacus* article
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