

Iowa Law: Frontal Assault on *Roe v. Wade*



AP



WV Photo

Left: Protesters rally outside Iowa governor's office in opposition to anti-abortion bill, May 4. Right: NYC protest against federal "gag rule" threatening to cut funding for Planned Parenthood and others providing abortion services and referrals, May 24.

Fight for Free Abortion on Demand!

At the same time that he was whipping up anti-black and anti-immigrant fervor on the campaign trail, Donald Trump vowed to punish women who have abortions and the doctors who perform them. Though made to partially walk back his statement, it was no empty promise. With his evangelist vice president Mike Pence as an emissary, Trump plays to the organized religious right that is a crucial chunk of the Republican Party base. Decade after decade, these

anti-abortion bigots have chipped away at a woman's fundamental right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy, with both the acquiescence and collusion of the Democrats. The slashing of access to clinics, the imposition of boundless legal hurdles, a rise

in harassment of providers and patients, and a new domestic "gag rule" aimed at Planned Parenthood are making abortion little more than a pipe dream for the vast majority of women. In Ireland, the electorate bucked the reactionary Catholic church and over-

whelmingly voted to repeal the constitutional ban on abortion, opening the door to legalized abortion. Meanwhile, in the U.S., that door is closing. In early May, Iowa Republican governor Kim Reynolds, who has vowed to "never stop fighting to protect the unborn," signed into law the most extreme abortion restriction to date. Scheduled to take effect on July 1, the "fetal heartbeat" law would prohibit abortions once *continued on page 6*

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Immigrant Woman Shot Dead by Border Patrol in Texas

LOS ANGELES—On May 23, Border Patrol, emboldened by the official racism and anti-immigrant vitriol emanating from the Trump White House, killed Claudia Patricia Gómez González, a 19-year-old indigenous Guatemalan from the Maya-Mam group. Claudia, who had graduated with an accounting degree, had just crossed over near Laredo, Texas, when she was brutally shot in the head by an agent. She had come to the U.S. to find work in order to continue her education. Her distraught mother told a TV network in Guatemala: "We're poor and there are no jobs here, that's why she travelled to the U.S.—but they killed her."

Resorting to the same excuse of "fearing for my life" that the racist cops routinely use after killing black men, a Border Patrol statement claimed that an agent "came under attack"

from a group of immigrants and described Gómez González as "one of the assailants"—before changing their story. Reportedly, three undocumented immigrants were detained by Border Patrol, and Marta Martinez, a Spanish-speaking local resident, was threatened with arrest as she live-streamed the aftermath of the grisly shooting. Grotesquely, the Texas Rangers, which have the blood of thousands of Latinos and other minorities on their hands, have been assigned to "investigate" Gómez González's coldblooded killing. *Free the arrested immigrants! Hands off Marta Martinez!*

According to the *Guardian*, over the last 15 years at least 97 people, including 28 U.S. citizens, have been killed by Border Patrol. Border agents, both at land crossings and in roving patrols, have used deadly force up to 160 miles away from the border and shot dead three Mexican teens on Mexican soil between 2010 and 2015.

Meanwhile, the Trump administra-



Family photo

Claudia Patricia Gómez González

U.S. officials have literally lost track of nearly 1,500 immigrant children who were seized as they crossed the border. Additionally, according to the ACLU, more than 100 children held in temporary detention centers have been subjected to physical, sexual and verbal abuse by Border Patrol agents, as well as deprivation of food, water and medical care. Now, Attorney General and notorious racist Jeff Sessions is threatening to prosecute undocumented parents for "smuggling," for bringing their *own* children along to claim asylum! *Stop all deportations! Full citizenship rights for all those who have made it here!*

Gómez González's killing comes less than two months after the Democratic and Republican governors of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas answered Trump's call to send 1,600 National Guard troops to the border. That deployment came as a caravan of desperate refugees was moving north to *continued on page 5*

Beware Anti-Union “World Socialist Web Site”

3 May 2018

The latest WV has a fine article on the Arizona teachers strike [“Victory to School Strike!” WV No. 1133 (May 4)], but I think (once again) it makes the mistake of failing to attack the Northites. As you must know, the Northites are in virtual campaign mode with enthusiastic talk of the wave of teachers’ strikes as supposed harbinger of a working class upsurge *around the world*—another “new stage” of class struggle.

This strikes me as wishful thinking, but the danger is they jump into it with significant resources and create special “newsletters” for their interventions—a Teacher Newsletter, an Autoworker Newsletter, a Telecom Workers newsletter, an Amazon Workers newsletter, etc. all of which do get circulation, I believe. Their online interviews with workers, with photos, suggest they could very well be making headway here, and simply ignoring them in the press is foolish, in my opinion.

They play on genuine worker disgruntlement to promote their *anti-union* line that the workers should just quit the union and form “rank-and-file committees”—committees led by the SEP [Socialist Equality

Party], presumably? This sounds fanciful—perhaps a version of 1920s ultra-leftism—but I would not underestimate the danger here in their picking up some advanced workers who are fed up with the grotesque union sellouts, and want a broader view of the world than just unionism.

Mark K.

WV replies: We thank Mark for his letter. David North’s SEP, which runs the “World Socialist Web Site” (WSWS), promotes a union-busting line. They equate the trade unions with the pro-capitalist bureaucracy, which has presided over decades of givebacks and the decimation of the unions, all the while preaching reliance on the capitalist Democratic Party. The unions are the basic defense organizations of the working class. What is needed is a fight to forge a new, class-struggle union leadership based on the understanding that the interests of labor and capital cannot be reconciled. Instead, the Northites, whose politics cannot be described as ultra-leftist in any form, label the whole union movement as reactionary and call for the destruction of the unions.

For whatever talk they may spout about socialism, the Northites’ position serves

only the bosses, who would love nothing more than to see “right to work” laws expanded from states like Arizona to the whole country, with an eye to getting rid of unions altogether. That is the purpose of *Janus v. AFSCME*, the case now before the Supreme Court.

The court’s expected anti-union ruling would ban the agency shop in public employment, whereby employees who refuse to join the union must pay “agency fees” to the union, which bargains on their behalf as well as that of its members. The reactionary forces behind *Janus* are betting that demoralized workers will then opt to quit the unions. WSWS aligns itself perfectly with the Koch brothers on this question: “There is nothing democratic or progressive in requiring workers to pay agency fees to the right-wing, pro-capitalist unions. These organizations long ago abandoned any defense of the interests of workers and collaborate openly with employers in driving down the living standards of the working class” (“US Supreme Court Hears Arguments in Union Agency Fees Case,” wsws.org, February 27).

During the West Virginia and Arizona school strikes, *Workers Vanguard* sales teams saw no evidence that the Northites gained traction among strikers with such anti-union garbage. But if they did, it’s not advanced workers who would be attracted. As we noted in “Janus Case: Assault on Labor,” which was in the same issue as our Arizona article: “The effectiveness of unions lies in their ability to carry out actions through their *collective* power; workers who abandon their union become a potential reserve of scabs.”

At the time of the West Virginia strike, we published a sidebar to our main article on the walkout titled, “‘World Socialist Web Site’: Anti-Union, Not Socialist” in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 1129, 9 March), which we also distributed in Arizona. Our article calling for victory to the Arizona school strike necessarily emphasized the fight for bilingual education as part of the struggle for free, quality, integrated education for all—a burning need for the working class and Latino, black and Native American poor. These are key issues for the labor movement to take up if it is to be revitalized.

For their part, the Northites have always displayed contemptible indifference to special oppression—whether as the SEP

or its predecessor, the Workers League (WL). After the 2012 coldblooded killing of Trayvon Martin, a young black man, by a racist vigilante, the SEP presidential candidate grotesquely opined that the killing was “not fundamentally about race” (see “SEP Denies Racism in Trayvon Martin Killing,” WV No. 1005, 6 July 2012).

Decades ago, WL leader Tim Wohlforth crudely captured this outfit’s disdain toward racial and sexual oppression, telling a group of young New Left Maoists in the early 1970s: “The working class hates faggots, women’s libbers and hippies, and so do we!” Such views were indeed those of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy at the time under George Meany, who had nothing but racist contempt for the fight for black rights or those of any of the oppressed. Yet, at the height of Vietnam antiwar protests and the upheavals in the black ghettos, the WL urged that Meany’s AFL-CIO form a “labor party” on a program that omitted any mention of the war or the fight for black liberation.

After years of pandering to the AFL-CIO tops, the Northites in 1992 declared the unions to be “direct instruments of imperialism.” To justify this reactionary line, they drag Leon Trotsky’s name through the mud. In a February 28 article, WSWS selectively quotes from Trotsky’s 1937 article “Not a Workers’ and Not a Bourgeois State?” in order to make it appear that Trotsky denounced the unions as “an organization of scabs.” In fact, Trotsky famously drew an analogy between the American Federation of Labor, with its pro-capitalist leadership, and the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet Union in order to explain why it was vitally necessary to defend the workers state despite Stalinist bureaucratic misrule.

“[AFL head William] Green and Company, in order not to lose their base, must within certain limits lead the struggle of the workers for an increase—or at least against a diminution—of their share of the national income. This objective symptom is sufficient in all important cases to permit us to draw a line of demarcation between the most reactionary trade union and an organization of scabs. Thus we are duty bound not only to carry on work in the AFL, but to defend it from scabs, the Ku Klux Klan, and the like. “The function of Stalin, like the function of Green, has a dual character. Stalin serves the bureaucracy and thus the world bourgeoisie; but he cannot serve the bureaucracy without defending that social foundation which the bureaucracy exploits in its own interests.”

For years, the Northites supported imperialist-backed forces working for the destruction of the Soviet Union and applauded the workers state’s demise through counterrevolution in 1991-92. Likewise, they stand with reactionaries hell-bent on destroying the trade unions. ■



TROTSKY

The 1953 East German Proletarian Uprising

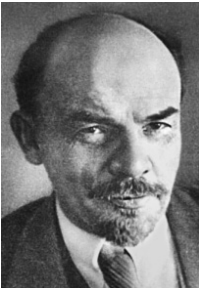
This June marks the 65th anniversary of the East German proletarian uprising, which, for the first time, posed the potential for working-class political revolution to sweep away Stalinist bureaucratic rule and establish a government based on workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism. Contrary to claims by bourgeois ideologues and the Stalinists, who portrayed the uprising as a pro-capitalist rebellion, the workers defended

the collectivized foundations of the East German deformed workers state. They raised the call to their class brothers in West Germany: “Sweep out your crap in Bonn—In Pankow [East Berlin] we’re cleaning house.” In the excerpt below, published shortly after the suppression of the uprising, the then-revolutionary Socialist Workers Party emphasized the need to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist party. (For more on the subject, see “The East German Workers Uprising of 17 June 1953” in Workers Vanguard No. 332, 17 June 1983.)

The general strike was deeply rooted in the masses of East Germany. It was splendidly organized. Who were the leaders? Who were the workers that formed the strike committees, which numbered thousands of members, coordinated the actions of numerous cities, organized the storming of the prisons to free political prisoners, and displayed such heroism and organizing capacity in the face of the repressions? This workers vanguard is composed of trade unionists, communist and socialist workers, who acted with splendid revolutionary initiative despite the Stalinist and the Social Democratic leadership of the workers organizations.

The regroupment of this workers vanguard into a revolutionary Leninist party, that will organize the struggle and guide it to victory is the burning task of the hour. The perspective opened up by the beginning of the political revolution is thus the perspective of the reconstitution of the revolutionary socialist party of Lenin and Trotsky. The leaders of the East German workers are forging the basis for such a party in the heat of struggle. Brutal repressions by the Stalinists, however ferocious, will not prevent this indispensable and unpostponable task from being realized. There is only one banner under which such a revolutionary party can march, the banner of Trotskyism, the movement that today constitutes the organizing nucleus for the Leninist rearmament of the working class.

—“German Revolt—Beginning of End for Stalinism,” *Militant* (13 July 1953)



LENIN

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 May 29

No. 1135

1 June 2018



Arizona teachers march through downtown Phoenix during statewide strike, April 26.

Letters Policy

Workers Vanguard welcomes letters from our readers. Opinions expressed in letters do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the WV Editorial Board. We reserve the right to respond to letters either at the time of publication or at a later point. We verify the authenticity of letters published in *Workers*

Vanguard; only letters received with contact information will be considered for publication. Letters can be published anonymously if the author so desires. In order to facilitate the printing of letters, which we do not edit, please keep them to 500 words or less. Letters can be sent to *Workers Vanguard*, Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 or emailed to vanguard@tiac.net.

S.F. Airport Atrocity

Moro Activist Tortured, Refused Entry by Border Cops

The following statement was issued on May 23 by the Partisan Defense Committee. The PDC is a legal and social defense organization whose work is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League/U.S.

The Partisan Defense Committee joins Filipino activists and others in protesting the brutal treatment of Jerome Succor Aba by Customs and Border Protection agents at San Francisco International Airport on April 17-18. A defender of the oppressed Muslim Moros and Lumad communities of the southern Philippines island of Mindanao, the 25-year-old activist was held for 28 hours as supporters rallied outside the airport to demand his release. According to a press release by Jessica Antonio, secretary general of Bayan USA, Aba was treated like an enemy combatant and subjected to rendition-style interrogation, including being forced to strip naked in front of an industrial fan blowing cold air and badgered about being a “terrorist” or “communist.”

Aba was refused entry to the U.S. despite having a valid multi-entry visa.

After arriving back in the Philippines, he recounted that he had been made to sign blank pieces of paper for U.S. authorities to use in claiming that he was never tortured. When he tried to add the initials “UP” for “under protest,” he was forced to sign new blank sheets.

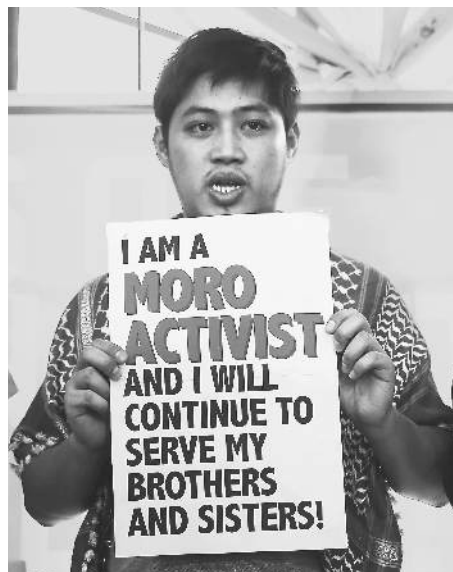
Aba had been invited by the United Methodist Church to join its Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C. Co-chair of Sandugo—Movement of Moro and Indigenous Peoples for Self-Determination, he was also due to take part in a speaking tour on the situation in the Southern Philippines under martial law, imposed by the Rodrigo Duterte regime during its bloody suppression of Islamist fighters in the city of Marawi.

Martial law continues even after the defeat of the insurgents last October following nearly five months of bombing and a military siege that turned Mindanao’s most heavily Muslim city into a ghost town. This murder and mayhem was backed to the hilt by the U.S., which sent Special Forces to aid the Philippine armed forces’ assault. With good reason, some

Moro groups are linking the recently commenced U.S.-Philippines Balikatan military exercises to Aba’s detention and torture. All U.S. troops out of the Philippines!

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution on May 1 calling for an independent investigation into Aba’s ordeal and condemning the Trump administration’s “nationwide pattern of abuse and coercion at major ports of entry.” The treatment meted out to Aba certainly fits with the Trump government’s broad anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant crackdowns. But the “anti-terror” pretext behind those actions was sanctified by Trump’s Democratic and Republican predecessors, who also bankrolled the Philippine rulers’ vicious repression of workers, peasants and national and ethnic minorities in this U.S. neocolony.

In its dirty work in Mindanao, the ruling class in Manila follows directly in the footsteps of its American minders. Having rained down terror and destruction in seizing the Philippines in the 1898 Spanish-American War, the U.S. colonizers then undertook the prolonged



AP
Quezon City, Philippines: Moro activist Jerome Aba at April 21 news conference detailed his detention and torture by U.S. authorities.

“pacification” of the archipelago’s southern islands. This included the notorious 1906 U.S. Army massacre of 900 Moro men, women and children at Bud Dajo mountain. General Leonard Wood, who engineered the bloodbath, was congratulated by President Theodore Roosevelt for “the brilliant feat of arms wherein you and they so well upheld the honor of the American flag.”

The murderous history of American colonial and neocolonial oppression in the Philippines underscores the importance of U.S. workers taking up the defense of Aba and others who have been victimized for defending the oppressed. In fighting on their behalf, the workers will be fortified in waging their own struggles against the U.S. capitalist rulers who make life hell for the vast majority. ■

Polanski...

(continued from page 3)

obscene morals of this society, which are enforced by religion, parents and cops. Kathleen misleadingly paints a picture of an unknowing child desperately trying to escape the clutches of an aggressive seducer. But it is not insignificant that Geimer, an aspiring model and actress, viewed Polanski as “my ticket to stardom” and showed off her experience and maturity as a young adult—she told him she was sexually experienced, had drunk alcohol, tried Quaaludes, seen *Playboy*. Even if one accepts Geimer’s account of the encounter as conveyed in her book, all it reveals is a young woman engaged in an inner dialogue dealing with the complexity of sex, trying to balance the feelings of physical pleasure and societal shame: “He asks if it feels good, which it does—and that, in itself, is awful. I don’t want this, my mind recoils, but my body is betraying me.”

Our view of sexual consent is the effective and voluntary agreement between individuals during an encounter. Given the class and social divisions in capitalist society, we know consent can also be murky, particularly when fame or money plays a role. Signals can get mixed and misread, especially when drugs and alcohol are involved. There is no universal

consensus on consent: an enormous range of both verbal and nonverbal behavior exists that allows people to communicate desire or absence of desire. Under such circumstances, motive and intent are crucial; by *all* accounts, Polanski’s motive was mutual pleasure. We reject the idea that there must be “affirmative consent,” a guideline that criminalizes anything less than repeated, enthusiastic agreement and opens the door for any sexual encounter to be regarded as assault. We also reject the notion that rape can be ambiguous, “gray” or a matter of miscommunication. Such a view grossly minimizes this uniquely violent crime, which is based on coercion and degradation.

There is no denying that Polanski was singled out for a crime that didn’t occur. The 2008 documentary *Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired*, directed by Marina Zenovich, demonstrates the vindictive scapegoating by the media and the state, which was determined to punish Polanski. In one interview, journalist Richard Brenneman, who covered the case, discloses the rumor in 1977 that the prosecuting attorney, Gunson, was chosen because he was both a Mormon and the only one in the D.A.’s office who hadn’t had sexual relations with an underage girl. According to Gunson, none of the people in L.A. County who had been convicted of sex with a minor in the year preced-

ing Polanski’s case spent any time behind bars. This seems improbable in today’s reactionary climate, where to be labeled a pedophile is to be branded a sex offender for life.

The documentary notes that the targeting of Polanski started years before his encounter with Geimer, setting the stage for a perfect Hollywood case with a stereotypical “villain.” Polanski, whose mother was murdered in the Holocaust, was a controversial director, a short Jewish man, a foreigner with a heavy accent, and the victim of one of the grisliest crimes California had yet seen: the butchering of his pregnant wife, Sharon Tate, and others in his home by the crazed Charles Manson gang in 1969. In the months after the murder, and before Manson was apprehended, the press mercilessly hounded Polanski. The media claimed that his films proved that he and Tate engaged in sinister practices, then churned out references to orgies, drug parties and black magic, grotesquely blaming Polanski’s lifestyle for the crime. Tate’s death was an emotional watershed for Polanski that would affect him for decades; it also began a mutual loathing between him and the American press, which exists to this day.

As for Kathleen’s demand for “a shred of sympathy for the girl,” how about a shred of sympathy for an innocent man who has been maligned and witchhunted

for over four decades? As for Geimer, she herself makes clear that it was the media and the legal system that traumatized her, *not* Polanski. Her repeated requests that the prosecution drop its charges against Polanski have been denied time after time. For protesting the ongoing witch-hunt against Polanski, Geimer has been smeared as a “rape apologist” who suffers from “Stockholm syndrome” and “victim’s guilt.” This is the logic of the dangerous climate enhanced by the anti-sex feminists of #MeToo: anyone defending the accused is sent to the gallows.

Kathleen’s brief serves a purpose: to slander us as misogynists and defenders of rapists, including because we printed “epithets” uttered by Polanski and the late Gore Vidal. After a yearlong judicial nightmare, 42 days of “psychiatric observation” in Chino state penitentiary, facing decades of imprisonment for having sex with a starstruck girl who appeared to be entrapping him, Polanski made the verbal comments Kathleen refers to in her letter. Solidarizing with Polanski’s justifiable anger, we wrote in “Stop the Puritan Witchhunt Against Roman Polanski!” (WV No. 192, 10 February 1978), “Good for him. We are cheered to see that this ordeal of puritanical witchhunting has not broken Roman Polanski’s spirit.”

Gore Vidal’s comments, which were made in 2009 as Polanski faced extradition to the U.S. for the 1977 case, alluded to the well-known Hollywood scene where sex is exchanged for advancement. As we wrote in WV No. 192, “Regardless of what one thinks of the scene as a whole, its all-too-obvious reality makes absurd Rittenband’s attempts to force rigid morality of the Victorian era into L.A. freeways and bedrooms.” It is the next portion of Vidal’s remarks that contains his core point: “Anti-Semitism got poor Polanski. He was also a foreigner. He did not subscribe to American values in the least. To [his persecutors] that seemed vicious and unnatural.” To the *Atlantic* interviewer’s question as to what are “American values,” Vidal responded, “lying and cheating.” And the capitalist rulers sure love a good moral panic, especially if supplemented by a witchhunt of someone who deviates from their moral compass. ■

Women and Revolution

Women and Revolution, which was published as the journal of the Women’s Commission of the Spartacist League/U.S. from 1973 to 1996, reflects our commitment to the fight for women’s liberation through socialist revolution. *Women and Revolution* articles are now incorporated into *Spartacist*.

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Defend Revolution Club/Refuse Fascism Protesters! Anti-Trump Leftists Targeted by UCLA Administration, Cops

We print below a March 19 leaflet issued by the Los Angeles Spartacist League and distributed at UCLA. According to a spokesman for Refuse Fascism, the L.A. city attorney has decided not to proceed with charges, for now, against those arrested at the February protest against Steven Mnuchin and during the Chelsea Manning event in March.

Since February, the UCLA administration and its campus police thugs have been on the warpath against supporters of the Revolution Club and Refuse Fascism, front groups associated with the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). On February 26, three women from these organizations were manhandled and arrested for vocally protesting Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin at a public forum on campus. As much of the audience hissed, booed and jeered at Mnuchin's remarks, the women vigorously condemned the Trump administration for deporting immigrants, bullying North Korea, and assaulting health care and Social Security. In the guise of defending "freedom of speech and expression," cops yanked the critics from their seats and dragged them from the hall, all of which was captured in a video that Mnuchin and the administration unsuccessfully tried to squelch. According to Refuse Fascism, the three women were then charged with trespassing, while one of them—a UCLA student—was also charged with resisting arrest.

Meanwhile, two men were arrested while demonstrating *outside* the venue, one after being roughed up on a flight of stairs by two cops. Both were hit with charges of disturbing the peace. In addition, all five protesters were slapped with a verbal seven-day ban from campus.

A week later, on March 5, cops again arrested two of the protesters from the Mnuchin event as they waited in line to hear courageous truth-teller Chelsea Manning speak. Their alleged "crime": violating the ban from the previous week. They were charged with "non-student refusal to leave" and banned from campus for seven more days.

These acts of repression were not isolated incidents. On March 1, a supporter of the Revolution Club Chicago participating in a silent protest in defense of undocumented immigrants was arrested by University of Chicago cops and charged with felony aggravated battery on a police officer and resisting arrest. A few days

UCLA cops assault protester outside venue where U.S. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin was speaking, February 26.



Ken Shin/Daily Bruin

later, two Refuse Fascism supporters were arrested for reading out a debate challenge to Mnuchin in front of the Treasury Building in Washington, D.C. A March 7 Refuse Fascism statement noted, "RefuseFascism.org activists on two coasts have been targeted with excessive politically-motivated suppression, repression and governmental snooping, including by the Department of Homeland Security for nothing more than nonviolent political speech."

The UCLA administration is the representative of the capitalist ruling class on campus. As such, part of its job description is to provide a platform for government leaders like Mnuchin and then sic its cops on protesters when they get out of line. Under capitalism, the primary purpose of the administration is to ensure that universities propagate bourgeois ideology and groom future professionals, CEOs, members of the imperialist officer corps and intelligence agents. Frequently, university officials are themselves business or political figures, like UC president and former head of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano. As part of our struggle to make education a right available to all working people and the oppressed, we fight to abolish the administration and advocate worker/student/teacher control of the university. We are for free, quality public education for all, including open admissions with a state-paid living stipend.

Young radicals from the Revolution Clubs and Refuse Fascism are justified in venting their righteous anger at bourgeois figures like Mnuchin. During the world-

wide Great Recession, he became known as the "Foreclosure King" for his role as chairman of OneWest Bank, which carried out tens of thousands of foreclosures heavily affecting seniors and minorities. Today, as part of Trump's cabinet, he has been instrumental not only in cutting taxes for capitalist corporations and the ultrarich but also for imposing a new round of punishing imperialist sanctions on the North Korean deformed workers state. As part of our unconditional defense of North Korea against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution, we Trotskyists defend its development of nuclear weapons and associated delivery system, while demanding that all U.S. forces get out of South Korea and Japan. We also call for an end to all sanctions, which have been imposed under both Democratic and Republican administrations as well as by the United Nations.

However, the RCP diverts justified hatred of these actions of U.S. imperialism into trying to build the left wing of a broad anti-Trump "resistance." This can only mean helping liberals to round up workers and oppressed as voting cattle for the Democratic Party. That's the purpose of the RCP's fallacious claim that Trump is a "fascist": cohering a "democratic alternative" based on a liberal program. The truth is that while Trump and the Republicans openly relish busting unions and demonizing black people and immigrants, the Democrats lie and do the same thing. Although the RCP has recently mouthed some criticisms of the Democrats for backing Trump's foreign policy and averred that,

"A Democratic victory in 2018 midterm elections is not going to change anything in this regard" (*Revolution*, 5 March), it has no principled opposition to the Democratic Party. When it shouts, "The Trump/Pence regime must go!" it remains utterly silent about who should replace it.

The RCP has traveled this path before. In 2004, in the midst of its campaign to "Drive Out the Bush Regime!" (music to the ears of many a Democrat), the RCP advised their supporters: "vote for [Democratic presidential candidate] Kerry if you feel you really have to" (*Revolutionary Worker*, 29 August 2004). Topping even this, Refuse Fascism last year mobilized rallies to "protest the firing" of none other than FBI director James Comey—the head of the bourgeoisie's secret police! At the very moment that the Democrats embraced Comey as a freedom fighter against Russia, the RCP/Refuse Fascism followed suit, insisting that Trump's dismissal of Comey was an "ominous" attack on America's "norms" (see "RCP on FBI: 'Communists' for Comey," WV No. 1112, 19 May 2017).

The RCP's calls to mobilize "millions" in the name of "humanity" are the typical stock in trade of sundry liberal critics of right-wing bourgeois governments. These classless appeals to "people of good will" promote the illusion that fundamental change can come about through liberal pressure politics within the framework of the capitalist-imperialist system and do nothing to educate the multiracial proletariat in the understanding that its class interests are counterposed to those of the capitalist rulers. In contrast to the RCP, we struggle to break the working class and oppressed from the capitalist Democrats. Our goal is to win the most conscious workers—together with students and youth—to the perspective of building a revolutionary, internationalist working-class party that fights for socialist revolution.

As part of this struggle, we defend the left and labor movement against the capitalist state, including the anti-Trump protesters arrested for protesting Mnuchin. As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a March 19 protest statement to UCLA chancellor Gene D. Block: "These measures at a publicly funded university are a draconian suppression of democratic rights and an attempt to intimidate and silence any protest against U.S. government policies and representatives." **Hands off the activists! Drop all the charges! ■**

Border Patrol...

(continued from page 1)

ask for asylum in the U.S., seeking to escape the hell of poverty and violence that U.S. imperialism has turned their countries into. At the same time, the administration has revoked Temporary Protected Status for hundreds of thousands of immigrants—mainly from Haiti and Central America—with provisional visas to live and work in the U.S., threatening to destroy their lives, including by separating them from their U.S.-born children.

The U.S. government has declared open season on immigrants, spreading terror across whole communities. Border residents report that agents are more aggressive and feel they can interrogate and deport anyone they want. In the face of

such racist hysteria, speaking Spanish in public or even having a Spanish last name is enough to make you a suspect. The viral video of a racist New York lawyer abusing restaurant workers for speaking Spanish is just the tip of the iceberg. On May 16 Ana Suda, a U.S. citizen in Montana, was interrogated by a Border Patrol agent for the "crime" of speaking Spanish in a gas station. In January, Washington State filed a lawsuit against the Motel 6 chain for reporting the information of nearly 10,000 guests with Latino-sounding names to immigration authorities between 2015 and 2017. According to news reports, Motel 6 carried out a similar practice in Arizona, resulting in the arrest of 20 immigrants.

While openly racist rhetoric dehumanizing and criminalizing immigrants has mushroomed under Trump, who has

obscenely described groups of immigrants as "animals," anti-immigrant attacks are bipartisan. Trump did not create today's vast deportation machine; he inherited it from his predecessors. The Democrats have played a key role in going after immigrants. Bill Clinton's "Operation Gatekeeper" militarized the border starting in 1994. Barack Obama massively expanded the detention system and deported record numbers of people. The Obama administration also implemented the callous practice of separating children from their parents, splitting up Mexican fathers from their spouses and children.

Atrocities like the killing of Gómez González will continue under the U.S. rulers' endless war on immigrants. But undocumented immigrants are not just victims; they form an important part of the working class in the U.S. Immigrants are a

living bridge to the proletariat in their home countries, many of which have traditions of militant class struggle. The bosses use anti-immigrant chauvinism and anti-black racism to divide and rule their wage slaves. To fight for the unity and integrity of the working class, the integrated unions must be in the forefront of the defense of immigrant rights. But the labor movement is crippled by a union misleadership committed to the defense of American capitalism, most clearly expressed by its support to the Democratic Party.

As part of the struggle to forge a fighting leadership of the unions, we seek to break working people and the oppressed from the Democrats and win them to the fight to build a multiracial workers party. Such a party is the indispensable instrument in the struggle for socialist revolution to sweep away the barbaric U.S. capitalist order. ■

Abortion...

(continued from page 1)

a heartbeat is detected, usually at around six weeks, i.e., before many women even suspect they are pregnant. This would force many women into a future they either didn't anticipate or don't desire, and compel the rest to either travel outside the state or attempt to self-induce. Though abortion rights advocates have filed a lawsuit in Iowa district court to try to block the law, the bill's sponsors anticipated such legal challenges to its constitutionality. In fact, they viewed it as a test case to topple *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that overturned state bans on abortion nationwide. The goal of the religious zealots is as perverse as it is pernicious: to legally enshrine the myth that life begins at conception in order to ban all abortions.

The *Roe* decision represented a critical gain for women's political and social rights. At the same time, it was limited and partial in this unequal, class-divided society. Access to abortion has been increasingly out of reach for poor and working-class women, who can't afford the high cost of insurance and who lack the ability to travel long distances or take time off work. Meanwhile, the daughters, mistresses and wives of the rich (and others with means) have had no problem circumventing restrictions.

If *Roe* is overturned and abortion thrown back to state legislatures, it would be a devastating blow—at least 14 states already have laws on the books that would automatically ban or severely restrict abortion. The days of back-alley procedures and coat hangers would be resurrected, as even today an increasing number of women resort to do-it-yourself abortions. Countless numbers of women would be unable to continue school or jobs, and might find themselves condemned to lives of poverty. Many others would become trapped in the strictures of parenting and household drudgery they had hoped to elude.

Attacks on the right to abortion hit black, Latina and poor women especially hard. Of the roughly one million abortions in the U.S. each year, poor and low-income women account for some 75 percent and black and Latina women account for over half. The Trump administration's proposed domestic "gag rule" is another dagger aimed at millions of them. Under the rule, providers receiving Title X family planning funding will be pressured to withhold information on abortion, forbidden from abortion referrals, and Title X clinics will have to be separated from clinics providing abortion services. The administration specifically seeks to cut federal funding to Planned Parenthood, the single largest provider of Title X services, which would have savage effects. The bulk of Planned Parenthood's patients are impoverished, minority and working-class women, as well as young teenagers, who are in desperate need of affordable health care and

who rely on the organization for basic services, like health and cancer screenings, birth control and sex education.

There is an urgent need for mass struggle to defend abortion rights and fight the attacks on Planned Parenthood. It is absurd that the government, from state legislatures up to the inherently reactionary Supreme Court, has the decisive power over people's most intimate, private decisions. As Marxists, we fight for *free abortion on demand* as part of a system of quality health care for all that is free at the point of delivery. Unrestricted access to abortion and contraception—both of which open the possibility of women being able to have sex for pleasure—is essential for all women to exercise control over whether and when they will have children. Abortion should be merely a question of basic health care, but the anti-woman bigots view it as a threat to the patriar-



May 26: Celebration at counting center in Dublin after landslide vote to repeal Irish constitutional ban on abortion. The government has promised to introduce legislation granting limited abortion rights in the fall.

chal family, the main source of women's oppression and a key prop of capitalist class rule. The regulation of abortion and contraception has historically been a powerful weapon in the hands of organized religion and the capitalist state to enforce conservatism and social conformity.

Though most anti-abortion bigots also oppose gay rights, attitudes toward gay marriage have more broadly shifted to being more tolerant, while views on abortion seem to be going in reverse. Gay marriage can be packaged as part of conventional family values, whereas sexual freedom cannot. Abortion challenges the deeply traditional idea that motherhood is a fixed destiny, posing the question of women's equality and independence. The fundamentalist reactionaries think women should be baby-making vessels or, as the late social satirist George Carlin put it, "They believe a woman's primary role is to function as a broodmare for the state." The pious tears for the "unborn" are nothing but a cover for a program of controlling female sexuality. Lurking not

far behind is a vision for an ordered society where Christian *sharia* is enforced and women are confined to the home. It's no wonder *The Handmaid's Tale* evokes an eerie sense of foreboding.

Democrats and Republicans: Enemies of Women's Rights

Whenever the Republican right grabs the anti-abortion spotlight, the liberals and feminists rush to salvage the last thread of abortion rights by promoting reliance on the "lesser evil" capitalist rulers, i.e., Democrats. After the Iowa law was signed, Planned Parenthood's outgoing president Cecile Richards argued on *Democracy Now!* (8 May) that "the federal court system has been sort of the place that we're able to go, in general, to protect against laws that are unconstitutional." Staking her claim in the anti-Trump "resistance," she promoted dead-end "fight the right"

electoralism, including to counter Trump's appointment of conservative judges: "If women vote in November, we will change the direction of the country politically."

The truth is that abortion rights were won in this country not through the ballot box and not through judicial benevolence. For the likes of Richards, this is an inconvenient truth, one that goes against their syphilitic chain: elect Democratic politicians who will then appoint friendly judges who will then act as a supposed firewall in defending women's rights. 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. *Roe v. Wade* was a concession to almost two decades of explosive mass struggle. The women's liberation movement arose as masses of radicalized activists took to the streets to fight for black rights and against the dirty imperialist war in Vietnam.

The *Roe* decision, which was based narrowly on a woman's right to privacy, struck down bans on abortion in the first trimester, but it did not prevent states from targeting women in subsequent stages of pregnancy. For decades, opponents of abortion have been driving trucks through that opening—peddling fictions about the medical dangers of abortion that echo the "masturbation will make you blind" drivel, along with religious-based pseudoscience on fetal viability. If the last 45 years have proved anything it is that the liberal, legalistic strategy of depending on the Democratic Party has helped cede the terrain to the reactionaries, and demobilized fighters for women's rights.

Restricting women's rights has always been a bipartisan effort. The first major attack on abortion following *Roe* took place under the "born again" Christian and Democrat Jimmy Carter, who in 1977 signed into law the Hyde Amendment that eliminated abortion coverage from the Medicaid health plans of 23 million poor women. Passed with substantial Democratic support, it has been renewed every year, regardless of which party controlled Congress or the White House. From the same playbook, in 2010 Obama signed an executive order ensuring that federal funds from the Affordable Care Act

would not be used for abortion.

Back in 1992, Bill Clinton won the presidency with support from women for his pro-*Roe* stance, and then proceeded to ax welfare for mothers and preside over a barrage of restrictions on abortion rights. This went virtually unopposed by feminists as long as abortion remained formally legal. Earlier that year, the *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision upheld *Roe* but gave states the green light to impose restrictions as long as they did not pose an "undue burden" on abortion, though what followed certainly did that: from mandatory waiting periods and parental consent rules to TRAP (Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers) laws, which have driven clinics out of business. From 2010-15, with Obama in the White House, there were more than 280 new state restrictions, including "punishment" rules requiring women to listen to a fetal heartbeat and view an ultrasound. On top of everything else, women entering clinics are forced to endure a psychological and physical onslaught of fanatics spewing vitriol and threats.

While a numerical minority, the anti-abortion forces have the wind in their sails, winning out on the legal and political terrain, as well as in rhetoric. A crop of so-called "anti-abortion feminists" promote slogans like "abortion hurts women." The Democrats also peddle the lie that abortion is harmful and risky—even though it is a simple medical procedure (or medication) vastly safer than pregnancy or childbirth. Since the 1990s, the Democratic Party's platform has stated that abortion should be "safe, legal and rare." Her Highness Hillary Clinton emphasized the "rare" and called abortion a "sad, even tragic choice," as she pandered to evangelical voters. Even the non-offensive slogan "choice" has been ditched for the more ambiguous "reproductive health" terminology, making the "A" in abortion the new scarlet letter.

The whittling away of abortion rights, alongside the rollback of other gains won in the 1960s and '70s, proves that reforms benefiting the oppressed are reversible under capitalism. The right-wing evangelical movement, which became politically mainstream during the Carter administration, spearheaded this decades-long reactionary backlash, attacking poor and minority women's access to abortion in the context of a rising tide of racist reaction against integration and social programs for the poor. In fact, the Christian fundamentalists who today are focused on the anti-abortion crusade took up that cause as a surrogate for racial segregation. In this racist and anti-woman society, the onslaught against abortion is directly linked to generalized social reaction, particularly targeting black people.

Even as they are under assault by the government, the leadership of Planned Parenthood in Colorado is appealing to Trump's National Labor Relations Board to fight unionization efforts at its Rocky Mountain clinics. The clinic workers, who put their lives on the line daily to defend the precious remaining health services for women, must be able to bargain for higher wages and medical insurance. This union-busting is testament to the political bankruptcy of the liberal feminists, who are committed to upholding this deeply oppressive bourgeois order.

With untold millions of American families drowning in economic misery, the capitalist rulers do not bestow on living human beings the same solicitous concern as that reserved for the fetus. It is in the direct interest of the working class—men and women—to take up the fight for free abortion on demand, as part of the struggle to liberate itself from the very capitalist profit system in which exploitation, black oppression and women's subordination are rooted. The emancipation of women and all the oppressed requires a revolutionary transformation of society, where the working class wrests the power and wealth of society from the capitalist rulers. Only after socialist revolution can women be freed from age-old family servitude and brought fully into social and political life with the support of the new social order, including through free quality health care and socialized childcare. ■

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6

WORKERS VANGUARD

(continued from page 8)

Many intellectuals and pseudo-leftists see something “unnatural” in the PRD-PAN and Morena-PES alliances. In reality, all that these alliances between the bourgeois parties confirm is that there are no irreconcilable differences between them, and that bourgeois democracy *is* a sewer in which the only unbreakable principle is maintaining the capitalist regime itself; it is a democracy for the rich and a fraud for the poor. In backward countries like Mexico, “democracy” is a thin layer of paint that is supposed to hide the blood-bath of daily military-police brutality.

Broad layers of the exploited and the oppressed see in AMLO an alternative to improve their situation substantially and to gain the fulfillment of the democratic rights that they have demanded so vehemently, such as national emancipation. For many workers, AMLO is a sort of reincarnation of General Lázaro Cárdenas. Certainly, Lázaro Cárdenas and AMLO (just like the deceased Hugo Chávez and now Maduro in Venezuela) are representatives of nationalist populism. Such populism is a form of capitalist politics to which

Although he hypocritically denounces criminal state brutality, AMLO offers more of the same. He boasts that he will enforce the current Internal Security Law (in fact he had previously proposed to create one of his own); he is in favor of having the army in the streets (although, according to him, in a temporary capacity); and he wants to continue this militarization by creating a “national guard” in charge of “security” and integrated into the armed forces and the police. He plans to implement a policy of “zero tolerance for corruption,” a remake of the draconian “zero tolerance” policy that he applied when he was head of the government of Mexico City, which meant greater police repression and, among other things, the prohibition and criminalization of panhandling and street vendors. To carry out this vile policy, in 2003 AMLO hired the hated ex-mayor of New York, and later Trump adviser, Rudolph Giuliani, at a cost of 450 million pesos [\$23 million]. And it should not be forgotten that it was AMLO who in 2001 unleashed repression on the peasants of Atenco, well



The pseudo-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Movement (MTS) would like to make electoral cretinism its trademark. Recently it celebrated the success of its crazed 52-day campaign to collect the signatures needed to run a candidate for Mexico City Congress in the next local elections. For the last four years, the MTS has mobilized all of its scarce forces in campaigns to participate in bourgeois elections, including in the farce of Mexico

Against all illusions in bourgeois parties, we Spartacists struggle, based on the experience of the Russian Revolution of 1917, for a workers and peasants government through socialist revolution. In countries of backward capitalist development, such as Mexico, only the seizure of power by the working class, led by a revolutionary workers party and supported by the peasantry and pauperized urban petty-bourgeois masses, can attain genuine national emancipation by expropriating the national bourgeoisie, repudiating foreign debt and struggling to spread the revolution internationally. The socialist revolution would replace bourgeois democracy, which in reality is nothing but a mockery for workers and the poor, with a genuine democracy for the exploited and the oppressed, in which the workers and poor peasants would lead the country through soviets or workers councils. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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Mexico Elections: No Choice for Exploited and Oppressed



Bartlett/L.A. Times



AFP

Left: Nine-year-old boy picks jalapeño peppers in Guanajuato, Mexico. Agricultural workers, mainly indigenous people, including many children, are brutally exploited for capitalist profit. Right: Soldier at military checkpoint in northeast Mexico. Growing militarization especially targets union militants and fighters for social justice.

The following article is translated from *Espartaco* No. 49 (April 2018), publication of the *Grupo Espartaquista de México*, section of the *International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)*. The Mexican elections are scheduled to be held on July 1.

ESPARTACO

A few months away from the presidential elections, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) and his bourgeois-populist Movement for National Regeneration (Morena) is in the lead against his opponents: the technocrat José Antonio Meade of the governing PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]; Ricardo Anaya of the alliance of the neo-Cristero PAN [National Action Party—the Cristeros led a right-wing Catholic fundamentalist revolt in early 20th-century Mexico]; the bourgeois-nationalist PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution]; and the “independent” candidates, the renegade PAN member, Margarita Zavala (wife of former president Felipe Calderón), and the right-wing ex-PRI populist Jaime Rodríguez, “El Bronco.” [Zavala withdrew from the campaign in May.] For the working class, there is no one to vote for. National-populists or neoliberals—all are candidates of the bourgeois parties that defend the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. All are enemies of the interests of workers and the oppressed.

We learned from V.I. Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Party that led the Russian workers and peasants to power in 1917, the true nature of capitalist democracy: every six years the workers and the oppressed are granted the right to go to the polls and decide which representative of the bourgeoisie is to crush and repress them. Our purpose is to sweep this whole system away, and the political independence of the workers movement is the premise of this revolutionary program. On principle, we oppose voting for any party and/or candidate alien to the workers movement. We struggle to forge a vanguard workers party that unites the advanced workers

and declassed intellectuals under a program of revolutionary internationalist class struggle.

For us, it is also a question of principle that Marxists do not run candidates for executive office of the capitalist state, such as president, mayor and governor. This position derives from our understanding of the bourgeois state as a machine of repression and oppression—whose nucleus is the army, the police, the courts and the prisons—which serves to protect capitalist rule and its mode of production (see “Marxist Principles and Electoral Tactics,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 61, Spring 2009). Far from wanting to administer the capitalist state, we communists struggle to destroy it and replace it, through socialist revolution, with a workers state.

Anti-Worker “Reforms,” Militarization and Imperialist Subjugation

According to government numbers, in 2016 there were 53.4 million people “in a situation of poverty”—more than 40 percent of the population—while the number of people “in poverty or precariousness” increased to 95 million—*three-quarters of*

the Mexican people! This is a direct result of NAFTA, a treaty of imperialist depredation against Mexico, and of decades of privatizations and “structural reforms” (privatization of the oil industry, electricity and railways; deregulation of the price of gasoline; “education reform,” etc.) with the purpose of turning the nation’s economy over to the imperialists, especially the United States, and weakening and destroying unions.

The craven Mexican rulers do not cease in pursuing their aims, despite the open contempt of their imperialist masters. While overseeing the looting of Mexico, Democrat Barack Obama deported 2.7 million immigrants, setting an all-time record for a U.S. president, which the racist Republican, Donald Trump, would like to break. Trump is determined to make NAFTA even more beneficial for the United States while at the same time unleashing *la migra* against the “bad hombres” (Mexicans) and all immigrants, erecting his humiliating anti-immigrant wall and militarizing the border with the recent deployment of thousands of U.S. troops.

The Mexican capitalist government, along with its economic assault, launched

a brutal “war on drugs” under the PAN [in power from 2000 to 2012] and maintains it today under the PRI. This repressive assault was made in the U.S. as a means to increase the control that it exercises on its Latin American “back yard.” The recently approved Internal Security Law legalizes permanent militarization on a large scale and grants bonapartist powers to the president to mobilize the army, with no limitations, against whatever it considers a “threat.” *Down with the Internal Security Law! Down with the “war on drugs”!*

As we have insisted, the “war on drugs” and the increasing militarization of society have nothing to do with protecting the population; they are an excuse for strengthening the bourgeois state and further limiting the rights of the people. They are an attempt to frighten the entire population into submission and are aimed particularly at fighters for social justice and at union militants. We call for the decriminalization of drugs, which, by eliminating the enormous profits derived from the illegal and clandestine nature of drug trafficking, would reduce the crime and other pathologies associated with it. We also oppose the measures taken by the bourgeois state to restrict or prevent the population from bearing arms, which curtails its rights and guarantees a monopoly of arms by the state and criminals.

This lengthy pro-imperialist assault on workers and the poor has, in most cases, been met with passivity from the pro-capitalist union bureaucracies loyal to the PRI or the PRD (and now sometimes to Morena). The bureaucrats have made their best effort to demobilize the working class, when they have not simply supported one attack after another.

Morena, a Capitalist Spare Tire

PRI, PAN and PRD are openly in favor of the continuation of the bourgeois offensive. As testimony to their right-wing character and abject servility, they sound the alarm at the possibility of an electoral victory by AMLO. For his part, López Obrador, whose party (founded in 2012)

continued on page 7



El Universal

AMLO outside Catholic episcopal offices in Mexico, where he met with bishops on April 13. The preferred candidate of the fake left bends the knee to religious reaction.