Washington deepens crisis on Korean Peninsula

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Washington’s unrelenting provocations and threats against North Korea are creating an increasingly dangerous and unpredictable situation on the Korean Peninsula.

With one after another round of crippling economic sanctions and its bellicose display of nuclear military capability, Washington is leaving the government of North Korea, which has stood up to U.S. imperialism for six decades, few options. And contrary to its pretensions, the Barack Obama administration has no control over the possible consequences of this course.

The U.S. and South Korean militarists are conducting large-scale military drills on the North Korean border from March 1 to April 30, involving as many as 200,000 South Korean soldiers.

Farmworkers demand legalization as Congress debates ‘immigration reform’

March 24 protest in Salinas, Calif., demanding legalization of undocumented immigrants was organized by United Farm Workers and backed by Teamsters, UFW and other unions.

BY ELLIE GARCÍA

WASHINGTON, D.C. — About 200 people demonstrated here for legalization of undocumented immigrants and to commemorate the birthday of union founder Cesar Chavez, who died in 1993.

The actions take place as Congress is embroiled in debates on “immigration reform” proposals, which many see as an opportunity to press for more rights and legalization for millions of undocumented than the Republican and Democratic politicians have in mind.

Oppose gov’t attacks on women’s right to abortion

BY LOUIS MARTIN

Recent passage of further restrictions on abortion in North Dakota and Arkansas is the latest blow in the decades-long assault on women’s rights in this country — a key front in the propertied rulers’ offensive against the working class.

The 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling was a major victory for women in this country and for all working people.

Without the right to decide when and whether to bear a child, women cannot participate as equals in economic, social and political life. And without the fight for women’s emancipation, the solidarity workers need to continue.

March in Charleston, W.Va., April 1 to protest slashing of medical benefits and pensions and tearing up of union contracts by Patriot Coal as part of company’s bankruptcy filing.

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Some 6,000-7,000 coal miners, their families, and other workers poured into the Civic Center here April 1 in the largest mobilization of miners in many years. The action was the latest in a series of demonstrations organized by the United Mine Workers of America since August 2012 to fight Patriot Coal’s attempt to use bankruptcy to gut union contracts, pensions and health care.

“Corporate greed has taken over this country. This is a death sentence for retirees,” said Benny Parker, a member of the UMWA from Mannington, who retired in 2007 from Patriot’s Federal No. 2 Mine.

W.Va.: 1,000s protest Patriot’s attack on mine union, retirees

UMWA calls next action for April 16 in St. Louis

COMMENTARY

Continued on page 4

Continued on page 7

W.Va.: 1,000s protest Patriot’s attack on mine union, retirees

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Continued on page 8

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By Allyson Kennedy

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Continued on page 7

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Continued on page 7

March in Charleston, W.Va., April 1 to protest slashing of medical benefits and pensions and tearing up of union contracts by Patriot Coal as part of company’s bankruptcy filing.

Continued on page 8

The financial instability unfolding in Cyprus and elsewhere is a symptom, not a cause, of a deeper economic crisis rooted in a worldwide slowdown of production and trade endemic to the normal workings of capitalism.

Cyprus banks reopened March 28 after a nearly two-week shutdown as European financial “experts” cobbled together a scheme to stave off collapse.
Framed-up lawyer Lynne Stewart fights for ‘compassionate release’

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—Supporters of jailed attorney Lynne Stewart have launched a campaign to win compassionate release for her based on being diagnosed with cancer, which has spread to both lungs and her back. Stewart is a criminal defense attorney who often takes other clients’ lawyers for political and career reasons and defended working people who could not afford typical lawyers’ fees.

More than 3,000 people have signed an online petition, which will be turned into prison authorities along with formal requests for compassionate release. “The sinister meaning of the relentless persecution of Lynne Stewart is unmistakably clear. Given her age and precarious health, the 10-year sentence she is serving is a virtual death sentence,” the petition reads.

Stewart, 73, has been in jail since November 2009 on trumped-up charges, including “conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist organization.” The charges stem from Stewart’s defense of Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, a Muslim cleric convicted in 1995 of “seditionous conspiracy” for alleged links to Muslim cleric convicted in 1995 of “seditionous conspiracy” for alleged links to the Islamic Group and the Egyptian government. Judge John Koedl initially imposed a sentence of 28 months on Stewart.

“I don’t think anybody would say that going to jail for two years is something you look forward to, but as my clients have said to me, I can do that standing on my head,” Stewart said in a speech to supporters after the sentencing.

When Stewart appealed her conviction, the government cross-appealed her sentence, arguing her statement showed she lacked remorse. On Dec. 23, 2009, the Court of Appeals denied Stewart’s appeal and instructed Koedl to resentence her with “terrorism enhancements.” On July 15, 2010, Koedl gave her 10 years.

Stewart was scheduled for a hysterectomy “to take her 18 months to get the surgery after she was sent to prison,” Ralph Poynter, Stewart’s husband and a leader of her defense effort, told the Militant in a March 28 phone interview.

Stewart is shackled and cuffed every time she is sent to the hospital. “They even shackled her to the bed when she has an operation,” Poynter said.

She was worried after one operation that she would run a risk of infection in her prison cell. But when Stewart got back “she saw the cell was clean and the other inmates told her ‘we’ve got your back. We’re changing your sheets twice a day.’”

Stewart has been helping other prisoners obtain legal counsel. “She was sanctioned for having another prisoner’s papers on her,” Poynter said. “No telephone calls, no commissary, no visits for a month. But the prisoners rose up. So the staff told her to try to be more circumspect.”

On Feb. 21, Stewart filed an appeal asking the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn her conviction, arguing that public statements conveying opinions of Abdel Rahman were protected by the First Amendment. The appeal adds that increasing Stewart’s sentence because she exercised her right to free speech has a “chilling effect” on others.

Bosco’s bribes donated to further work of ending capitalism

“The thank you for the opportunity to be able to convert a tiny portion of Walmart’s bloody bonuses into funds for ultimately ending capitalism forever,” wrote Eric Simpson in San Francisco works at United Airlines and contributed $60. “This check showed up the same day I had a relative in a coma. I was kind of embarrassed.”

“Blood money” refers to company bonuses and other boss bribes to get workers to accept wage cuts, speedup, hazardous working conditions and concession contracts. Donations go to long-range work of the party, financed by the Capital Fund.

Eric Simpson in San Francisco works at United Airlines and contributed $60. “This check showed up the same day I was told my father was in a coma. I was kind of embarrassed.”

“Enclosed is blood money for the Capital Fund,” wrote Leslie Dork, who works as a nurse in Albuquerque, sending in $1,200. “I think it’s supposed to make me feel better about having nine personal days taken away.”

To make a contribution, contact Militant distributors on page 6.

—EMMA JOHNSON

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Workers sign up for ‘Militant’
Continued from front page
"I very much liked the fact that the Militant talked about what was happening to us, but I also wanted to support the paper. I also found the international news to be very interesting," said Brigitte Malenfant when asked why she had decided to renew her subscription.
Milenfandt is one of 380 hotel workers who have been on strike since Oct. 28 against the Hôtel des Seigneurs in Saint-Hyacinthe, about 30 miles northeast of Montreal. They are fighting for wage parity with hotel workers in Montreal.
Join the international effort to increase the circulation of the Militant among working people. You can call the distributors in your region (see directory on page 6) or order a bundle at themilitant@mac.com or (212) 244-4899.

Thousands join miners’ demonstration in W.Va.

Continued from front page
Many retired miners have black lung and other debilitating work injuries from decades in the mines and depend on what they thought were lifetime benefits set down in UMWA contracts since the 1940s. More than 50 busloads of miners came from seven states. Hundreds drove up from southern West Virginia. The rally included both working and retired coal miners as well as union delegations, including from the United Steelworkers, United Auto Workers, Communications Workers of America, Ironworkers and the American Federation of Teachers.

Terry Steele, a retired miner from UMWA Local 1440, came to the rally from Matewan. He used to work at the Zeigler Old Ben Mine owned by Horizon. "In 2002 they filed for bankruptcy, just like Patriot’s doing. They got out of all their responsibilities," he said.

In 2007 Peabody Energy spun off most of its union mines to form Patriot Coal Corp. A year later Patriot bought Magnum Coal Co., an Arch Coal spinoff. More than 90 percent of “Patriot” retirees today never actually worked for Patriot.
As part of its bankruptcy proceedings, Patriot Coal on March 14 asked a judge to sanction its plan to tear up union contracts and end benefits covering 10,000 retirees and their 13,000 dependents. Patriot’s bankruptcy takes place in the context of a recent contraction in domestic demand for coal, fueled in large part by falling natural gas prices.
There are no union mines left in Mingo County, W.Va., or Pike County, Ky., Steele said.

Both the number of coal miners and the proportion who are members of the UMWA has declined dramatically over recent decades. Only about 82,000 active miners in the U.S., down from some 89,000 in January of last year and from 175,000 30 years ago.
“The younger generation, a lot of us, were raised off the union,” said Jeff Samek, 29, a faceman at the Alpha Natural Resources Carmichaels Mine in Southwest Pennsylvania. “If Patriot does this every company will try it.”

Speakers at the rally included Democratic state Sen. Chrisetr West Virginia, including Sen. Joe
Continued on page 9

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UFW actions in California

Continued from front page

in Washington, D.C., to demand ci-
tizenship for undocumented workers. Demonstra-
tions will take place in other cities that day and the weekend before.

In New York, Chicago and other citi-
ues, there will also be demonstrations for legalizing immigrants on May 1.

“Many people live and work here who don’t have papers,” Eloy Magana Gomez, one of the marchers, told the Militant. “We’re all human beings. They work here. They need to be here.”

In February, Magana Gomez and 53 other farmworkers won a fight to recertify the UFW at RBL Packing, a lemon orchard in Blythe. Sun World, the previous owner had a contract with the UFW but sold the company to RBL, he said. “We won the recerti-
fication of the union 100 percent.”

“The union we are comfortable. We have medical insurance, a pension, the boss offers you water and gives you bathroom breaks. The bosses can’t yell at you, he has to treat you with respect,” Magana Gomez said.

Magana Gomez was part of the fight to organize the strawberry pickers in Salinas and Watsonville in 1994 and 1995. “We didn’t win but the struggle was important because of what we got out of it and it helped later on.”

“At one time Coachella was one of the areas where the UFW had a number of contracts. Now we have the one in Blythe and one in Coachella. We’re trying to organize here again,” Hilario Torres, a UFW organizer, told the Militant.

The Coachella Valley was the scene of big battles to organize the farm-
workers’ union in the mid-1970s.

“We’re at a really critical time,” UFW President Arturo Rodriguez told the rally. “We have to talk to our family members about immigration reform.”

The next day about 300 joined the march in Oxnard and some 2,000, mostly field workers and their fami-
lies, in Salinas. The Salinas march included contingents from Triarmers’ Teamsters Local 890, the United Food and Commercial Workers, and the Service Employees International Union.

“Without legal status, farmworkers can’t collect unemployment during a winter layoff,” field worker Osvaldo Cisneros, who was part of the Salinas march, told the Militant. “Without un-
employment insurance workers need to save up all year or find another job, which is becoming harder. We need immigration reform that allows work-
ners to work in the United States for many years.”

‘Long, hard’ road to citizenship

Democratic and Republican party senators say they are close to intro-
ducing a bipartisan immigration bill in Congress. According to the March 30 Washington Post, the bill will “fea-
ture a 13-year path to citizenship,” more visas for “highly skilled tech work-
ers,” and increased “border control and workplace security.”

Expansion of programs like the govern-
ment’s E-Verify database system that make it harder for immigrants without papers to work.

“Undocumented immigrants will “have a path to citizenship,” Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham told CNN. “But it will take time, it will be hard.”

Leaders of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO trade union federation have reportedly reached an agreement on an ex-

danded “guest worker” program that would give temporary work visas to up to 200,000 high-skilled workers a year. The new “W” visa program for some construction, restaurant and hotel workers — would start with 5,000 visas in 2015. This would be in addition to the already existing H2A program for farmworkers.

More than 65,000 immigrants received H2A visas last year. Guest worker programs have been widely criticized, the New York Times notes, because workers “are shackled to em-
ployers and thus acutely vulnerable to exploitation.” H2A visas are granted for a specific boss and workers are subject to immediate deportation if they quit or are fired.

Few details have been released on the proposed “W” program. While the Times and other papers report that workers would be allowed to change jobs, it’s not clear what their status would be between jobs.

At the same time, associations of capitalist farmers are pushing to “re-

duce the wages currently paid H2A workers and put in place a wage for new agricultural visa holders lower than what current farmwork-
ers make,” UFW Communications Director Maria Machuca told the Militant. “It would be a grievous mis-
take to allow agribusiness to use the debate over immigration reform to further reduce wages of the poorest workers in the country.”

Ellie Garcia is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for School Board District 2 in Los Angeles. Eric Simpson contributed to this article from Salinas.

Wash. farmworkers march for immigrant rights

YAKIMA, Wash. — More than 200 people marched here March 23, one of several demonstrations in Washington and California to commemorate the legacy of United Farm Workers leader Cesar Chavez, who was born March 31, 1927, and died in 1993. The march was billed as a “national day of action for a fair immigration process.”

Yakima is an agricultural center for thousands of farmworkers who pick or pack apples, cherries, peaches and other fruits.

“Separating families is inhumane,” said Yesica Arciga, 26, who works at the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic. “I see a lot of families at the clinic who have been affected by deportation.” She has lots of kids in foster homes here in Yakima. My own husband was deported.

“This is a question of social justice,” she said. “We are all human and should be treated not according to where we come from or the color of our skin.”

CLAY DENNISON

Philadelphia trial of doctor targets abortion rights

BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA Post

The trial of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, 57, closed Women’s Medical Society clinic, began March 18. Gosnell is charged with third-degree murder in the death of a patient and seven charges of first-
degree murder for “infanticide.”

The prosecution is seeking the death penalty and using the case as a foil against women’s right to choose abortion.

The widely publicized trial is being held while several state legislatures — including Pennsylvania — are passing or considering laws that would place further restrictions on a woman’s right to choose abortion, including sharply cutting the number of weeks during which the abortion procedure would be legal.

Karnamaya Mongar, a 41-year-old Bhutanese immigrant, died in Gosnell’s care after having a reaction to pain med-
ication and being transported to a near-

by hospital. Her death was originally listed as accidental by the city medical examiner, but, under prodding from the district attorney, was changed to homicide months later.

The prosecution argues that the seven fetuses were killed after the 24-week limit set by state law limiting abortions, and that they were delivered live and then had their spinal cords cut.

Gosnell’s clinic was sued at least 15 times for malpractice by patients, some of whom will be testifying against him about conditions at Women’s Medical Society. The clinic was ordered closed by the state in 2010 and Gosnell’s medi-
cal license was revoked.

Nine clinic workers were arrested and jailed, eight of whom pled guilty — three for third-degree murder, others for practicing without a medical license.

“Leaders with anti-abortion views are exploiting this case in an effort to fur-

ther restrict access to safe abortion care,” Jennifer Boulanger, director of communica-

tions for the Philadelphia Women’s Center, a family planning clinic, told the Militant.

“One of Gosnell’s former patients tes-
tified to the Pennsylvania Senate Health and Welfare Committee that she heard Gosnell was the cheapest provider,” said Boulanger, who called for repeal of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits use of Medicaid funds for abortion.

The gutted clinic can be viewed today through graffitied windows in a majority Black, working-class area ad-

jacent to the University of Pennsylvania.

Half a block away is the huge Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, which is affiliated with the university.

The case has sparked discussion in neighborhoods throughout the city, with a wide range of opinions being ex-

pressed on the case.

“There are those who want to use this trial to disfranchise women of their rights,” said Iren Snavely, a former res-


taurant worker who lives across from the clinic. “I support all women’s right to abortion.”

“I don’t think the doctor’s race is the question,” said Jackie Brown, a city worker who is African-American, in reference to defense arguments that the prosecution is going after Gosnell because he and many of his clientele are Black. “Who was supposed to be inspecting this clinic?” Gosnell should lose his license, but not face the death penalty, she said.

“When I came to this country I thought the U.S. was technologically advanced but socially backward, like with the issue of abortion,” said Clark Ho, 24, a Drexel University graduate from Hong Kong and London who has lived near the clinic for three years. “In London, abortion is covered by nation-


cialized health care.”

“Today, there are just 13 free-standing providers of surgical abortion care in Pennsylvania, down from 22 two years ago,” Kate Michelman, president emeri-
tus of NARAL Pro-Choice America and Carol Tracy, executive director of the Women’s Law Project, pointed out in an opinion piece in the March 25 Philadelphia Inquirer.
Restaurant workers at Belshaw Adamatic Bakery plant in Auburn, Wash., have won a new contract after a nearly two-month strike over the company’s efforts to cut wages, pensions, health care benefits and job security. The 62 workers at the factory voted unanimously to go on strike over a contract dispute, with the company saying it could not afford any union demands. The strike began on March 25, with workers picketing Belshaw Adamatic Bakery plant in Auburn, Wash., for an informal celebration at an Irish pub. They had all the moratoriums we want. We are in this to the end. "We have no money" for you guys." — Cameron Slick, Hotel Ivy worker, member of UNITE HERE Local 17

Workers in the restaurant are both U.S.- and foreign-born, including from Bosnia, Ecuador, Mexico, Tibet and Ethiopia. — Cameron Slick, Hotel Ivy worker, member of UNITE HERE Local 17

Wash. Machinists strike at bakery equipment factory

AUBURN, Wash. — Since March 25, members of Machinists Local 79 have been walking the picket line here in front of the Belshaw Adamatic Bakery plant, which manufactures bakery equipment.

The 62 workers at the factory voted unanimously to go on strike over a contract dispute involving questions of wages, pensions, health care benefits and speedup. They have twice voted down company proposals since the previous agreement expired in October. "The company’s wage raise offer of 25 cents a year for the next two years and 50 cents for the third year is off-set by raises in medical deductibles," said Clifton LaPlant, chief shop steward, and who has worked 35 years at the plant. LaPlant said the company has trimmed half its workforce as it squeezes more work from less employees.

The company has listed job openings for manufacturing positions on the WorkSource Washington website in search of replacement workers. The CEO wants to break the union," said David Schonians, who has worked at the plant for nine years. "He doesn’t like the union because with it he can’t do anything he wants. We can’t go backwards anymore."

"We are doing this for the people coming up behind us," said Josephine Ulrich, with 25 years at the plant. The company has not responded to phone calls for comments. Picket lines are up from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. six days a week. — Edwin Fruit

Detroit ‘manager’ hired to impose austerity, go after unions

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A state-appointed “emergency financial manager” began running the city of Detroit March 25, with broad powers above those of elected city officials to balance the city’s budget on the backs of working people.

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, a Republican, named Kevyn Orr, a high-profile bankruptcy lawyer, to the post. Orr, an African-American and a Democrat, worked for Chrysler during its 2009 bankruptcy proceedings. He’ll be paid an annual $275,000 salary by the city. Under the state’s emergency manager law, Orr is authorized to slash city expenses; impose changes on city workers’ union contracts; cut down, merge or eliminate departments; and privatize city assets, such as the water and sewage departments. He can also recommend bankruptcy, which would involve tearing up all city labor contracts in what would be the largest municipal bankruptcy filing in U.S. history.

Working people in Detroit have been particularly hard hit by the capitalist economic crisis. Official unemployment is a week. "I’m in the union, I’m full with the union," bartender Josh Brehmer told the Militant after the vote. Shortly after the hotel opened in 2008 some 50 workers won representation by Local 17. But 20 workers in the restaurant were excluded based on an agreement between union officials and the hotel owner that the restaurant would be spun off and run independently of the hotel. This spin-off never happened. The restaurant was a nonunion operation within a union shop.

After the vote, workers got together for an informal celebration at an Irish pub.

“Our manager is supposed to re-spect us, but he was forcing us to do dumb things. He was forcing us to vote against the union,” Seif Hando told the Militant at the celebration. “When we were in the mandatory meeting with the company, they said ‘we have no money’ for you guys.”

Sage Hospitality, the company managing the hotel, held mandatory meetings one on one with every worker asking them if they supported the union.

Workers in the restaurant are both U.S.- and foreign-born, including from Bosnia, Ecuador, Mexico, Tibet and Ethiopia. — Cameron Slick, Hotel Ivy worker, member of UNITE HERE Local 17

The Militant   April 15, 2013            5

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

April 15, 1988

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 1,000 union members and their supporters rallied at the Capitol March 23 to protest the privatizing policies of Eastern Airlines’ management.

The rally was one of a series of actions organized around the country. The contract of the International Association of Machinists expired on Dec. 31, 1987, and the union is attempting to negotiate a new one. The company has proposed a cut of 50 percent, slashing benefits, and new hire wage of $5 an hour.

Mary Jane Barry, president of the Transport Workers Union local that organizes Eastern flight attendants, told of harassment, discipline, and firings of workers. "We have to stop Frank Lorenzo," she said, referring to the chairman of Texas Air, Eastern’s parent company. “Our success will be labor’s success.”

April 15, 1963

A new wave of anti-segregation demonstrations is sweeping the South. The most spectacular of these are taking place in one of the most heavily industrialized and unionized cities in the country—Birmingham, Ala. The demonstrations, which police have attacked with trained dogs, are under the leadership of veteran rights fighter Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth and the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, which he heads. So far over a hundred demonstrators have been arrested in ten days of sit-ins and protest marches.

The United States Justice Department, headed by Attorney General Robert Kennedy, has been urging Negroes to call a moratorium on the Birmingham demonstrations until a new city administration takes office. Shuttlesworth rejected the advice declaring: “We have had all the moratoriums we want. We are in this to the end.”

April 16, 1938

A swiftly-spreading strike of more than 150,000 workers in the airplane, automobile, and motor factories around Paris was the immediate response of the French working class to the formation of the cabinet of Edouard Daladier. Sit-down strikers in the Citroen plants were joined in rapid succession by the 35,000 workers in the Renault factories. Without awaiting orders from their unions or parties, workers in one plant after another joined in the movement for defense of the workers’ livelihood from the open capitalist offensive. The French proletariat approaches the test of strength with admirable spirit but also with dangerous weaknesses. Strikes and even armed struggles can yield no solution to the vital problems of the working masses unless they are backed up by an audacious and determined plan for the organization of the proletarian revolution.
Gen. Teté Puebla: ‘Cuban Revolution belongs to the people’


WATERS: The U.S. rulers know perfectly well what they would confront if they invaded Cuba.

PUEBLA: That’s why they haven’t attacked.

These are counterrevolutionary organizations. The U.S. is sponsoring here that want to stir up riots, and engage in other activities. The government doesn’t intervene because every block has its Rapid Response Detachment.1 These groups are under surveillance, and everyone is ready to respond.

They can’t do anything because the revolution is ours, it’s the people’s. It doesn’t belong to a little group that wants to come and tell us: “Do as we say.” No, this revolution belongs to the people.

There’s a popular saying: “The enemy’s not taking my street. My city will be defended inch by inch, house by house.” In sign centers reads, “Long live socialism.”

These compañeros are not criminals, they’ve committed acts of sabotage, who participated in attempts on Fidel’s life; people responsible for the deaths of many Cubans.

Take Jorge Mas Canosa. According to the perpetrators themselves, he gave money to finance the bombing of the Barbados plane.2 He has been linked to more than forty acts of sabotage committed against the Cuban people. The group he founded has close ties to many in the U.S. government.

Who was killed in that plane over Barbados? Some were young people fourteen, sixteen, and seventeen years of age. There was the entire Cuban junior fencing team, which was returning victorious to the country from their competition in the Pan American Games in Caracas. I should mention that we’re helping the families of the victims of that act.

The people who committed this crime are the real terrorists.

Yet the ones they find guilty are our compañeros, the five heroic prisoners of the empire: Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, and Ramón Labañino. These compañeros are not criminals, they’re ordinary working people who were there defending our homeland. They were trying to prevent all those acts of sabotage that were opposed against our people. And to prevent acts of terrorism against our people. Three were given life sentences. Yet they’re innocent; they simply were trying to save the world from so many deaths. …

WATERS: It’s been forty-six years and you’re still on active duty. …

PUEBLA: That may sound like a long time, but I don’t see myself as a hero, just a regular person. We don’t like to talk about what we’ve done since it’s just our daily work and daily lives.

We’ve lived the revolution so intensely that we can’t separate it from ourselves. It’s our reason for being.

I can’t stop feeling I’m a guerrilla. Today we’re defending the same ideas of Marti and of the Moncada. But we do so with other, heavier weapons, and we face a powerful enemy that demands greater unity and steadfastness, not to mention heroism. These times require combatants with a guerrilla spirit, a rebel spirit. Such a spirit exists within one—people who in the midst of all the difficulties remain loyal to our commander in chief.

If I were to be born again, I’d do exactly the same thing. Being a general of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, a military force that has never been a mere instrument, constitutes the pride of our lives. Because every member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces represents all of our dead. The war of liberation cost twenty thousand dead. And others died later. From the days of the war of liberation up to the present, we work and live for the people. We’re a people in uniform.

So I’m proud of being a soldier, of wearing the olive green uniform. And we will defend this uniform to our last breath.

1. Formed in 1991 to mobilize community residents to meet any U.S.-encouraged counterrevolutionary actions in Cuba. 2. Oct. 6, 1962. Cuban Revolutionary organizations set off a bomb on a Cuban Airlines airplane flying from Barbados to Cuba. All 73 people aboard were killed.

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US provokes Korea crisis

Continued from front page

diers and some 10,000 U.S. troops.

On March 19, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced to reporters at a press conference in Seoul that B-52 bombers would carry out their sec-
ond simulated nuclear raid the following day as part of drills.

Ten days earlier, U.S. military officials announced that two nuclear-capable B-2 stealth bombers flew from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri to a bombing range near South Korea, conducted air-conditioned hypersonic nuclear raids and returned to the U.S. in a single, continu-
ous mission. This is the first time a training run by a stealth bomber over South Korea has been published.

“The Korean Peninsula is now in a touch-and- go situation due to the nuclear provocation moves,” North Korea's foreign ministry said March 26.

On March 31, the U.S. flew F-22 stealth fighter jets, ordinarily stationed in Japan, to South Korea to participate in the military drills. F-22s are low-flying, planes capable of evading radar and air-defense sys-

tems and can also be used to escort B-2 stealth bombers

in a strike.

The following day, a spokesman for the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, said that the USS McCain, a destroyer capable of shooting down ballistic missiles, was standing by positioned south of South Korea. The USS Decatur, was reported to be en route from the Philippines.

The current crisis is rooted in the 1945 division of Korea. The border is imposed by U.S. imperialism. Between 1950 and 1953 Washington carried out a bloody war under U.N. auspices in an attempt to over-
throw the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Korea remains the only undivided nation divided into di-

vision coming out of World War II. To this day Washington refuses to sign a peace treaty with North Korea and maintains some 28,000 U.S. troops in the South.

“Since early in the 1950s the U.S. has made cease-

less nuclear blackmail against the DPRK,” said

A March 15 press release from North Korea's permanent mission to the U.N. said that the U.S. was contin-

uing the Korean War by then President Harry Truman. After introducing tactical nuclear weapons into South Korea in 1957, Washington announced in 1991 that it had pulled them there, part of hypocritical calls to “demilitarize the peninsula” shortly after Pyongyang began its nuclear program.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military has long-range strate-
gic nuclear missiles aimed at North Korea. In recent years, for example, Washington shifted the majority of its Trident submarines armed with hundreds of in-
tercontinental ballistic nuclear missiles to the Pacific, explicitly targeting China and Russia.

“Strategic nuclear missiles in the U.S. mainland are aiming at the DPRK and submarines with nuclear warheads are swarming the waters off South Korea and the vicinity of the border,” North Korea's foreign ministry said March 26. North Korean statement pointed out.

Last month, Pyongyang cut off all military com-
munication lines with South Korea and declared the cease-fire from 1953 void.

On April 1, the North Korean government said it would strengthen its nuclear weapons capacity in light of U.S. provocations, but would work to further nucle-
ar non-proliferation if there were an “improvement of relations with the U.S.”

North Korean officials said the government would restart its uranium enrichment plant in Yongbong, which was shut down under a nuclear disarmament deal with Washington. In recent years, for example, Washington shifted the majority of its Trident submarines armed with hundreds of in-
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Continued from front page

mount effective resistance against the bosses and wage a victorious revolu-
tionary struggle to take political pow-
er out of their hands is impossible.

The Supreme Court ruling reflected changes in thinking among men and
women and a growing rejection of wom-
ens' second-class status.

During and after World War II, mil-
ions of women were drawn into the
workforce. Scientific advances for the
first time made possible and effective
contraception and medical proce-
dures like abortion.

In the 1950s and ’60s, the smashing of
Jim Crow segregation by the powerful
working-class battle for Black rights and
the mass protests against Washington's
war in Vietnam had a deep social im-
pact upon abortion rights and brought
a growing movement for women's rights.

Equal Rights Amendment

A few years before the Roe v. Wade
ruling, women's organizations, some
unions and other groups began to cam-
paign for adoption of the Equal Rights
Amendment. The Senate, in a 1923 vot-
ing that stated, “Equality of rights under
the law shall not be denied or abridged
by the United States or any state on
account of sex.”

At first, broad public support for the
measure pushed Republican and Demo-
cratic politicians to back the meas-
ures. They claimed they had ratified the
ERA, out of the 38 required for the
amendment to become law.

Shortly after Roe v. Wade passed, polit-
cicians of both capitalist parties be-
gan to push back the gains it registered,
leading to the 1976 adoption of the Hy-
de Amendment, which cut off Medi-
caid funding for abortions.

A bipartisan front against passage of
the ERA began to emerge. Ultimately, the
ERA was defeated, falling three
states short of the total needed for rat-
fication: M e n d o s a, Utah and Idaho.

Assaults on abortion rights in the
decades intervening have primarily fo-
cused on changes in state laws, severely
limiting access to abortion. The largely
gone unanswered. Today 97 percent
of counties outside of metropoli-
tan areas have no facilities that provide
abortion. Nevertheless, most working
people continue to support women's
right to choose, regardless of whatever opin-
ions they may have on the procedure.

The assault on abortion rights is the
main front against passage today and
part of the broader attack on the work-
 ing class.

Under the impact of the capitalist eco-
nomic downturn, which began in the
1970s and has accelerated since 2008,
the propertied rulers have sought to
divide the working class.

These changes are partially rooted in
the sympathy working people felt as
the AIDS epidemic swept the U.S., affec-
ting primarily gay men, intravenous
drug users and hemophiliacs.

Growing protests by gay rights
groups and others helped draw attention
to how discriminatory laws on marriage
prevented victims of AIDS from using
their companion's health care plans and
barred involvement of companions in
their partner's treatment.

Second, there is nothing inherently
progressive in being gay or lesbian, or
for that matter, not being heterosexual.
It is often presented by bourgeoisie-
rads who have disdain for workers and
consider anyone who opposes their "liberal" agenda as reactionary.

What is of concern to workers is getting
rid of laws that allow the capitalistic state
to interfere in people's personal lives.

The question is one of equal protection
under the law and the fight against all
forms of bigotry.

And third, any legal gain made by
people under capitalism stands on
shaky ground, especially in the context
of deepening attacks on women's rights.

Those seeking to restrict the scope
of any Supreme Court ruling curtailing
discrimination against gays in marriage
will have to make such arguments. "It's not
that the judgment was wrong," Ginsburg
said, "but it moved too far, too fast."

The movement for gay rights emerged
at the end of the 1960s in the U.S. un-
der the impact of the growing fight for
women's rights, and remains inexorably
bound to it.

A growing international issue

The right to choose abortion and oth-
er rights of women are issues of grow-
ing importance for workers around the
world.

As the working class grows through-
out the semicolonial world today, from
Indonesia to Bangladesh, millions of
women are being drawn into the work-
force, as their sisters in Europe and North
America were before them. This has resulted in intertwined struggles for workers’ rights, wom-
 en’s rights and the right to abortion.

Today the rulers in some 70 coun-
tries bar abortion completely or re-
strict it to cases deemed necessary
to save a woman’s life. But the tide of
history moves against those who would keep it so.

Back women’s right to abortion

BY SUSAN LAMONT

On March 26 and 27, the U.S. Supreme
Court heard arguments in two widely
publicized cases concerning overturning
marriage laws that discrimi-
nate against gays. The cases challenge
the constitutionality of federal and state
restrictions on the rights of gays to have
their marriages recognized as legal and
the same benefits as heterosexual
spouses.

The court’s decision to hear the two
appeals comes after overwhelming
evidence of changing attitudes among
working people on the question, as part
of widespread opposition to forms of le-
gal discrimination.

Referenda results in last November’s
elections blocked efforts to enact dis-
criminatory marriage laws in Maryland,
Maine, Minnesota and Washington.

Same-sex marriage is now legally recog-
nized in nine states and the District of
Columbia.

In face of this shift in public opinion,
some Democratic and Republican politi-
cians have been rushing to go on record
in support of legalizing same-sex mar-
riage.

President Barack Obama, who op-
po sed this in the 2008 election, said last
year he was convinced by his children
to change his position. Former President
William Clinton, who signed the dis-
agreement 1996 Defense of Marriage
Act into law, is now urging its repeal, as
is Hillary Clinton. DOMA defines mar-
rriage as “only a legal union between one
man and one woman as husband and
wife.”

A layer of conservative figures, in-
cluding Republican elected officials,
have done likewise. Former Utah Gov-
ernor and presidential candidate Jon
Huntsman was one of some 80 promi-
nent Republicans who filed a supporting
brief to the case challenging DOMA.

Republican Sen. Mark Kirk of Illinois
announced his support for same-sex
marriage April 2.

The first case, heard March 26, was
Hollingsworth v. Perry. It involves a
challenge to California’s Proposition 8,
a referendum passed in 2008 that amend-
ed the state’s constitution to restrict
marriage to a man and a woman. After
a federal court and court of appeals ruled
the proposition unconstitutional, sup-
porters appealed to the Supreme Court,
which agreed to hear the case.

In one exchange during the hearing,
Justice Antonin Scalia asked Theodore
Olson, an attorney for opponents of
Proposition 8, "When did it become
unconstitutional to exclude homosexual
couples from marriage? 1791? 1868,
when the 14th Amendment was ad-
opted?" Olson replied, "When did it be-
come unconstitutional to prohibit inter-
racial marriages? When did it become
constitutional to assign children to
separate schools?"

"It’s an easy question," Scalia replied.
"At the time that the Equal Protection
Clause was adopted [1868]."

Continued on page 9

NDakota anti-abortion laws part of stepped-up attack on women’s rights

BY HELEN MEYERS AND JOHN STUDE

A hundred supporters of a woman’s right to choose abortion protested March 29 at a clinic in Grand Forks, N.D., one of 250 more in Fargo, N.D., against three bills, including the most restrictive anti-abortion law in the country, passed by the North Dakota Legislature and signed by Gov. Jack Dalrymple three days earlier.

“Opposition to these bills is paramount because we need to help our legislators know that it is not OK for them to impede our rights and privacy,” Jen Hoy of Stand Up for Women North Dakota said in a phone interview from Fargo. “They do not belong in our homes or our doctor’s offices.”

“The abortion is STILL legal in the state of North Dakota — despite the signing of some bills today by the Governor,” read a declaration posted March 26 at the top of the website for the Red River Women’s Clinic in Fargo, one facility in the state that performs abortions.

One of the new laws outlaw abortion after six weeks, when fetal heartbeat can be detected using an intrusive vaginal ultrasound. Doctors who perform abortions in violation of the new law could face felony charges and up to five years in prison.

Three weeks earlier the Arkansas Legislature adopted a bill to ban abortions after 12 weeks, when fetal heartbeat can be detected using an abdominal ultrasound. The legislators balked at requiring women seeking abortions to undergo the more invasive vaginal procedure.

Governor Dalrymple told the press that the North Dakota law was a direct challenge to the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that legalized abortion. The decision made abortion lawful until a fetus is considered “viable,” that is, capable of living outside the womb, usually considered to be at 22 to 24 weeks of a pregnancy.

The second bill signed by the North Dakota governor requires doctors performing abortion to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital. The bill is an attempt to shut down the Red River clinic, whose doctors are based out of state.

A similar law adopted last year in Mississippi targets the one abortion clinic in the state. The clinic could lose its license at a state Department of Health hearing April 18 because its doctors have been unable to obtain the required paperwork.

The third bill bans abortions based on genetic abnormalities, like Down syndrome, or to select the sex. Like a law adopted in Arizona in 2011 that banned abortions based on gender or race, such laws press women to publicly reveal their reasons for seeking a medical procedure, a private decision.

The North Dakota Legislature also approved holding a statewide referendum in 2014, seeking approval to amend the state constitution to assert that “right to life” begins at conception, outlawing virtually all abortions.

Similar “personhood” laws were recently rejected in referendums in both Mississippi and Colorado.

Support among working people for abortion rights has remained a majority view for decades. “Seven in 10 Americans believe Roe v. Wade should stand,” the Wall Street Journal reported Jan. 22.

Relentless assault on abortion rights

Almost from the day after Roe v. Wade, opponents of abortion rights have chipped away at women’s access to abortion.

In 1976, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which cut off Medicaid funding for abortions. Recently the amendment was extended to cover ObamaCare.

As of March 21, according to the Guttmacher Institute, 32 states and the District of Columbia prohibit use of any state Medicaid funds for abortion; 17 states require so-called counseling laws, which force women to be “informed” about alternatives; 26 states have waiting periods; 38 states have either parental notification or consent requirements for minors, or both; and 43 state laws defend the right of hospitals and other medical facilities to refuse to allow abortions to be performed on their premises.

Ten states have passed bills banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, less than the period legalized by the Supreme Court, claiming that a fetus can feel pain.

Abortion providers face other legal attacks, including growing requirements for expensive and unecessary physical features, such as hospital-width hallways.

As a result, there are no facilities that provide abortions in 87 percent of the nation’s counties. Outside metropolitan areas, that figure jumps to 97 percent.

While this has little effect on wealthy women, who have the resources to travel wherever necessary, it has a big effect on working-class and rural women.

Coal miners’ rally protests health and pension cuts

Power to the end the second class status of workers who choose abortion is a pressing issue for working people, especially politically men and men joining battles in defense of all three parts or $12 each part.

Supporters of women’s rights organized a demonstration in Grand Forks, N.D., March 29, to protest three new state laws that place onerous restrictions on access to abortion.

The Militant   April 15, 2013            9

Laura Goodwin, 5v, vice president of United Steelworkers Local 477 at a re- fractory plant in Buckham, said he came with several others from the local. “We faced the same thing in my plant. We lost health care for retirees and current employees.”

This is not just about the mine workers, UMWA President Cecil Roberts told participants. “This is a movement about the people.”

Following the speeches Roberts led the massive gathering out of the Civic Center, marching down the streets of Charleston to the headquarters of Patriot Coal. Chants of “U-M-W-A” and “We are union” broke out. Roberts and 15 other labor, civic and religious officials who had declared their intention to be arrested sat down in the street until cops took them away.

The next action will be in St. Louis on April 16 at 10 a.m. in front of Peabody Coal’s corporate headquarters.