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BASHING THE BENCH PSL organizer Nancy Robles argued for abolishing SCOTUS at a recent pro-choice rally.

HOLDING COURT

Protestors link reproductive rights and human rights **BY ETHAN GREGORY DODGE**

THE SUN WAS still several degrees above the horizon when nearly 100 people, the vast majority of them women, gathered on the corner of Stevens Creek and Winchester boulevards in west San Jose. They held picket signs and posters bearing phrases ranging from the familiar “Our bodies, our choice” to the more explicit “My pussy, my rules.” Dozens of cars honked in support.

The protesters’ chants joined others across the nation last week in the wake of a leaked Supreme Court opinion showing the highest court’s plan to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, which

would allow states to ban the medical practice of abortion.

The sun was slightly lower when the group crossed Stevens Creek and turned east. Customers in Best Buy and the Container Store watched, some recording the march on their phones. One toddler girl smacked the glass wall repeatedly, attempting to say hi from inside the store, until her mother gently redirected her.

The protesters turned south down Santana Row, the street running down the middle of a high-end, outdoor shopping mall bearing the same name. The tall storefronts on either side of the street provided an echo chamber, causing their chants to reverberate and grow louder. More spectators stopped what they were doing to record, a handful joining the chants or cheering them on.

Upon reaching Olin Avenue, the group turned west and soon ended their march in the outdoor food court Plaza de Valencia. The crowd had gained several new members, including the toddler and her mother. Another toddler, eating dinner with his mom, asked what the crowd was doing. “Very important things,” his mom responded.

The event’s organizers mainly consisted of socialist organizations such as the Communist Party USA, Freedom Road Social Organization, and Democratic Socialists of America. Two racial justice organizations, HERO Tent and BLACK Outreach, were also among the organizers.

However, the main organizing body was the Bay Area chapter of the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL). The group led one of many marches in San Francisco on May 3, the day after the SCOTUS opinion was leaked, and another on May 7.

Upon reaching the plaza, speakers from almost every organizing body addressed the crowd. After the first speakers, a representative from PSL posed the question, “Are we gonna win?” The crowd yelled a resounding “Yes!”

“Are we gonna fight?” she probed further.

“Yes!”

“Do we say abolish the Supreme Court?” she asked. But this time, the response was hesitant. She repeated the question and received the same enthusiasm as before.

Later, Nancy Robles, another organizer with PSL, also spoke to the crowd. After citing issues such as homelessness, climate change, medical debt, and police brutality, she argued that they all infringe on someone’s right to choose.

“This system does not and will never give us the right to choose,” she said. “We have to fight for housing. We have to fight for education. We have to fight for healthcare. And we have to fight capitalism!”

In an interview after the event, Robles expanded on the organization’s views, including those regarding SCOTUS.

“We believe we should abolish the Supreme Court,” she said. “They are unelected, so they don’t actually represent the people. They usually come from very affluent backgrounds, so they don’t actually understand what the working-class struggle is.”

Of course, for the PSL’s party line, that applies to far more than just the court’s justices. “I would love to see our government replaced with a socialist government that actually represents the people,” she said. “One where the politicians aren’t career politicians that also come from affluent backgrounds, but are everyday people like you and me and aren’t doing the job to line their pockets but because they want to be public servants.”

In the PSL’s worldview, Robles opines, “A socialist planned government would mean that the people would really participate in the lawmaking,” she says. “Anyone with a uterus would have the right to choose what to do with their bodies.”

In a liberal urban area with a massive mural of the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg in the heart of downtown, it’s not surprising that some at the rally seemed unfamiliar with a call to terminate the Supreme Court before. Yet, as the sun began to disappear, the remaining protestors walked back to their original street corner, united in their demands for bodily autonomy. **W**