

Spannaus files over 500 delegates in Va.

Nancy Spannaus, the only Democrat in Virginia opposing Republican incumbent Sen. John Warner, announced on April 18 that her campaign had filed over 500 delegates in her bid to win the Democratic Party nomination at Party caucuses being held throughout the state on April 21 and 23. Spannaus's announcement of a delegate slate which substantially surpasses the 350 elected delegates needed to qualify the campaign under party rules, throws a monkey wrench into the plans of the party bureaucrats to cede the election to incumbent Republican John Warner by not even putting up a candidate.

Spannaus, a longtime associate of Lyndon LaRouche and the editor of the *New Federalist* weekly newspaper, made the announcement at press conferences in the state capital of Richmond and in Roanoke, as she made a final pre-caucus campaign tour of the southern part of the state. During her tour, Spannaus held meetings with labor, minority, farm, and other constituencies which are being disenfranchised by the Democratic Party leadership's attempts to block her candidacy. She urged constituency and community leaders to mobilize their members to attend the caucuses and elect the 350 delegates necessary to win the nomination.

The party leadership's dirty tricks against Spannaus included a letter to constituents, dated April 16, warning against those unnamed who are making "a mockery of our political process with fraud and intimidation." Spannaus's statement is reprinted in full below.

'Let's have real elections'

"I am pleased to announce that the Spannaus for Senate campaign has prefiled in the range of 500 candidates for delegates to the state Democratic Party convention this week. The delegate slate represents a strong protest to the state party's attempt to cancel the elections.

"Full slates of delegates have been filed in numerous locations, including the Tidewater [southeast] area. Delegates are generally not official representatives of any groups, but come from the ranks of working people who feel strongly that the Democratic Party should not be endorsing John Warner, an advocate of the policies of depression and appeasement being pursued by the Bush administration.

"The hurdles which the party bureaucracy has put before

would-be participants have been substantial—although they violate the explicit intent of the party rules and the party call for the convention. They include: 1) reducing the number of delegates from the normal level; 2) at least in some areas, refusing to carry out the normal practice of refunding pre-filing fees, if the individual is not elected; 3) forcing campaign committees—explicitly mine—to pick up the tab for indigent delegates; 4) providing as little publicity and information as possible on the caucuses and procedures for local Democratic committees and the general public; and overall, in the words of one local Democratic Party official, making the process 'deliberately confusing' and 'discouraging people from pre-filing to be delegates.'

"Now that the filing has occurred, however, I expect more problems. Since Kathy Bolles of the Democratic Party has refused to provide my campaign with a list of caucuses around the state, I am not even sure that some areas will have caucuses. How does the Democratic Party intend to handle that?

"Secondly, what assurances do I have that vote fraud will not be carried out by local party chairmen? It has already been publicly reported at some local Democratic Party meetings that chairman Paul Goldman has let it be known that he wants delegates to prefile for 'no candidate be nominated'—i.e. John Warner. This specifically violates the injunction against preferential treatment contained in the party convention call. A good number of local parties also refused to allow me to speak—although I am the only candidate. If no representative of my campaign is present, how can a fair vote be expected?

"I am asking the Democratic Party to allow a representative of the Spannaus campaign to observe the counting of ballots, and to be given sufficient access to ensure that there is no vote fraud, wherever we have a representative on hand asking for such access.

"In general, this convention process has been carried out with such deliberate chaos and confusion that I believe the Bush Democrats will have little trouble ramming through their cancellation of the state convention and endorsement of John Warner. However, I urge those individuals, from the media or otherwise, who are concerned about this violation of democratic procedures, to serve as watchdogs in whatever way they can.

"As chairman Goldman knows, the intent of the Voting Rights Act, if not the letter, is being grossly violated by the Democratic Party of Virginia through this entire process. We have attempted to play by their rigged rules—and have shown a substantial degree of support throughout the state. Should the party bureaucrats succeed in their objective to cancel the convention, it will mean nothing about what mainstream Democrats think in Virginia. It will only mean that the Virginia Democratic Party has successfully taken up the ways of the Communist parties of the East bloc, and prepared the way for its subsequent demise."