

DEMOCRATIC

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Raising the Rose Lantern

The Socialist International Comes to the United States

DSA's Perspective on the 1996 Elections

NYC Living Wage Bill

AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

DSA's Perspective on the 1996 Elections

A STATEMENT FROM DSA'S NATIONAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

The key goal for progressives and socialists in the 1996 elections is to defeat the Republican right. To do this involves three important tasks:

- ◆ defeat Bob Dole;
- ◆ retake Congress from the Republicans; and
- ◆ enlarge and strengthen the Progressive Caucus in Congress.

To most of us on the left the 1996 Presidential race offers little in the way of hope for positive social and economic change. Polls today suggest that President Clinton has a commanding lead. But it's far too early to declare victory. And of course a Clinton victory would be a partial one at best.

Four years ago, Clinton won the Presidential election by focusing on the economy and it seems likely to be a key issue in this election as well. Four years ago, however, 'the economy' meant simply economic growth; today, it's broader - it's corporate responsibility, international trade and economic insecurity. Economic growth over the last few years hasn't resulted in more jobs or better-paying jobs for the American worker, but only higher CEO salaries and corporate profits. These are issues that Clinton isn't addressing.

Clinton's signing of the Republican welfare bill once more demonstrates that he has abandoned some of the basic tenets of Democratic liberalism. His position can only be seen as a further retreat from economic justice. The vote in the House on the final version of the bill - which passed 328-101 - also shows the deep divisions within the Democratic Party, divisions that amount to a class struggle. Almost as many Democrats voted for the Republican bill as voted against it.

Today the sole force operating in Congress that could clearly have a positive effect on the left's agenda is the Progressive Caucus. Of those 101 votes against the welfare bill, 45 came from the Progressive Caucus. Underfunded and understaffed, it remains the only political group speaking out with a constructive and compelling agenda. A strengthened Progressive Caucus with 100, rather than its current 52 members, would be a force to be reckoned with. It would be a force that could move the Democratic leadership and the party away from the sell-out policies of the Democratic Leadership Council. To make that happen, November's election will have to result in new progressive members being elected to Congress and current progressives being re-elected.

The last two years have shown how much damage can be done when reactionaries control Congress and a weak Democratic president allows himself to be pushed around. The liberal left in Washington is only now emerging from its shock at the Gingrich victory. It is beginning to recognize the need not just to fight against the worst of the GOP proposals, but to set its own agenda. In some states, notably in California, key parts of this agenda are also on the ballot:

- ◆ supporting civil rights by defeating the California Civil Rights Initiative (which would actually take away key rights for people of color and women);
- ◆ advancing the principle of health care for all by support for initiatives on HMOs; and
- ◆ strengthening the principle of a living wage for all by support for the initiative raising the minimum wage.

In addition, the Progress Caucus has developed a "Progressive Promise to America" which includes eleven agenda items from corporate responsibility to a living wage to downsizing the military budget. In Washington, DSA has been working with the Caucus and the Committee on Economic Insecurity to develop public hearings on issues related to this agenda. These hearings will focus on themes such as rebuilding communities, fiscal policy and full employment, women's economic empowerment and 'who really runs the US economy.' These hearings, along with DSA's own hearings project, form the basis for advancing a real progressive agenda in the next Congress - if it's a Congress controlled by the Democrats and with a strong Progressive Caucus.

To achieve these goals, DSA is working hard to elect progressive candidates. The June meeting of DSA PAC voted to endorse members of the Progressive Caucus and some insurgent progressive challengers (a list of the endorsed candidates is on page 21). In targeted races local volunteers from DSA will be helping candidates raise money, contact voters and get out the vote. We'll also be working to educate voters on how their economic security is impacted by these elections. An organizing manual is available from the national office for locals and individual activists with suggestions about how economic insecurity can be made a powerful election issue for progressives.

The elections demonstrate the strength and weakness of the American electoral system. Election campaigns provide one of the few forums in which we can discuss the important political choices facing us, but that discussion is often sidetracked by sound bites, attack ads and specious polling data. And most of the time the left, and in particular DSA, is simply not a part of the discussion at all. To change America - to achieve the thorough transformation of our economy and society that we strive for - means changing American politics in a fundamental way. We must recreate the possibility of true political interaction among Americans and between voters and candidates. We need to rebuild a left and recharge social movements so that we have a long term strategy for change that forms the basis for our immediate campaigns.

DSA won't be able to do all that in the course of the 1996 election. However, we can lay the groundwork for it. The reelection of Clinton, regaining Democratic control of Congress and election of a stronger Progressive Caucus would not be a complete victory for the left, but it would provide the opening to make an authentically left agenda happen.

DEMOCRATIC

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cover: United Nations Building, New York, NY; site of the 1996 meeting of the Socialist International. Photo by Christopher Smith/Impact Visuals.

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Raising the Rose Lantern

The Socialist International in Perspective

BY BOGDAN DENITCH

The Socialist International, as well as its predecessors and rivals, has always been a fair representation of the state of the politically organized world left. This was the case with the premature First International, which Marx and Engels set up in 1884, before there were any substantial workers' and socialist parties, and before there was any mass suffrage, so the issue of parliamentary reformism was an abstract theoretical proposition.

The Second International, founded in 1889, accurately represented the strengths and weaknesses of the German Social Democratic Party, clearly the leading mass social democratic party at the time. In those days before the first World War and the Russian revolution there was no distinction made between social-democratic and socialist parties—that difference was a later Communist invention.

The Third, or Communist, International (Comintern), built out of a split of the anti-war pro-revolutionary left-wings which existed in all major social democratic parties, turned willy-nilly into an instrument of the Soviet Communist Party. The Comintern's major function was to defend the Soviet revolutionary state in a very hostile world. As the Soviet Union became increasingly dictatorial so did the Third International. It was abolished formally in 1943, and was semi-reconstituted in 1948 as the Cominform, or Communist Information Bureau, united the ruling Communist parties of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe with non-ruling mass Communist parties throughout the world (minus Yugoslavia and, later, China and Albania.)

THE END OF THE "COMMUNIST" INTERNATIONAL

The Cominform began to disintegrate even before the collapse of the Soviet Union as the state "socialist" Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The larger Communist parties of Italy, Spain, France, and Great Britain began a painful evolution, then labelled "Eurocommunist," from parties which were primarily pro-Soviet to workers' parties which were evolving into de facto social-democratic parties. They committed themselves to taking power democratically through parliamentary elections and defending "bourgeois" democratic rights.

This process, which was to be repeated country after country in Eastern Europe after 1989, for practical purposes ended the historic split between "reformist" and "revolutionary" parties; between parties committed to democracy and those supporting one-party rule. This has made the present Socialist International the single logical center of the social-democratic, socialist, and democratic left parties throughout the world.

Former Communist parties in Italy, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Croatia, and Macedonia now describe themselves as "social democratic" and either already are members of the Socialist International or are applicants for membership. Three are almost sure to be given full membership at the 1996 SI Congress in New York: Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. Throughout the world leftist parties, organizations, and individuals no longer describe themselves as "Communist"

The present Socialist International has the chance to become the clearing house and networking center for the world democratic left.

or "revolutionary" but rather orient more or less firmly to the Socialist International. This includes former guerillas in Latin America, such as the M-19 Democratic Alliance in Colombia and the Sandinistas. The exceptions to this pattern are the remaining "Communist" one-party regimes in China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

The present Socialist International has the chance to become the clearing house and networking center for the entire democratic left in the world. This is terribly important in an increasingly globalized world economy where it is all but impossible for democratic left parties and movements to win struggles within national boundaries. In this new period of global capitalism, the dominant neo-liberal ideology leads to assumptions which threaten to devastate the third world economies and roll back the social and economic victories of the labor movements and social democratic parties in advanced economies. That is why the response to neo-liberalism has to be international. (Already in the 1970s, SI leaders Willy Brandt of Germany, Olof Palme of Sweden, and Michael Manley of Jamaica issued a report which proposed to link struggles in the underdeveloped world with the self-interest of the workers and middles strata in the advanced economies—a sort of Keynesianism on a world scale. DSA's founding chair Michael Harrington contributed significantly to the programmatic proposals.) After almost two decades of world-scale Reaganism and Thatcherism the gap between poor and rich nations and the rich and the poor within nations has dramatically increased. The SI must become one of the arenas within which new democratic redistributionist programs can be fur-



J. Kirk Condyles/Impact Visuals

"Beating swords into ploughshares..." Statue donated to the United Nations by the people of the former Soviet Union.

ther developed and implemented. The SI has taken significant steps, but too many of the social democratic parties are still retreating in the face of a now fading neo-liberal economic and social consensus. Major battles are shaping up in the European Community, in the North American Community, and over North-South issues.

FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

To be more effective, the SI must move away from being an excessively consensus-oriented mini-United Nations (one is enough!). The parties in the SI need to be more autonomous of the governments which they often lead. This confusion of the roles appropriate for parties and governments led to the crisis of the Second International and the collapse of the Comintern. It has led to the absurd situation where a corrupt and repressive Mexican PRI has the same (associate) relationship to the SI as DSA's sister party, the social democratic PRD (Partido Revolucionario Democrático.) It permitted the Greek party PASOK to block any SI objections to the unilateral blockade of Macedonia by Greece. In post-communist Eastern

Europe, it led to a major mistake of accepting all (mostly paper) pre-1945 social democratic parties as full members. These mostly insignificant, but revenge-oriented, parties have made the transition of reform-minded former communists to social democracy more difficult. Above all the SI has to move away from its present format where meetings are mostly devoted to endless empty formal speeches by heads of states (often not even social democrats), leaving no time or place to discuss ideas, proposals, and strategies for transforming an increasingly unjust world.

Such debates could lead the SI to closer cooperation with the religious left, to bringing in mass democratic parties such as the Brazilian Workers' Party, and to effec-

tive work for democratic transitions from one-party regimes in Eastern Europe and the Third World. In short, the SI should lead the struggle for a more decent world of democracy and social justice on an international scale. And that means being far readier to confront the specific policies of the United States and the world financial community when they often work to prolong a world order which is too unequal, too unjust, and therefore too dangerous.

In that spirit we are delighted and proud to welcome the Socialist International to our country!

Bogdan Denitch, a DSA Honorary Chair, is DSA's official representative to the Socialist International.

The SI In Brief

From September 9-11, 1996, the Socialist International (SI), the worldwide organization of socialist, social democratic and labor parties, will be holding its triennial Congress in New York. This SI Congress will be preceded on September 5th and 6th by a conference of Socialist International Women (SIW). DSA is a full member of the Socialist International, and DSA's Feminist Commission is a full participant in the SIW.

The principal themes for the SI Congress will revolve around economic globalization, international security and human rights. The program of the SIW conference will focus on "women as equals in the new millennium." John Sweeney, AFL-CIO President and DSA member, will address the SI delegates on some of these issues. DSA Honorary Chair Barbara Ehrenreich will be the keynote speaker at the SIW Conference.

The Socialist International is the oldest and largest international political association, currently comprising 109 parties and organizations from all continents. Its origins go back to 1864, and it has existed in its present form since 1951 when it was re-established at the Frankfurt Congress.

The International provides its members with a forum for political action, policy discussion, dialogue and exchange. Its statements and decisions advise member organizations and the international community of consensus views within the global family of socialist, social democratic and labor parties and organizations. The late Willy Brandt, former chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was President of the Socialist International from 1976 to 1992.

The most recent congress of the SI elected Pierre Mauroy, former Prime Minister of France, as President. Luis Ayala of Chile is the current Secretary-General.

The Congress, which meets every three years, and the Council (including all member parties and organizations), which meets twice a year, are the supreme decision-making bodies of the SI. Meetings of the presidium and party leaders are also held regularly, as well as special conferences on particular topics or issues.

Committees, councils and study groups have been established for work on peace, security and disarmament, economic policy, development and the environment, human rights, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Africa, the Asia-Pacific region, indigenous peoples, and finance and administration. These committees or study groups have specific programs of work and meet regularly. The SI also frequently sends missions or delegations to various countries or regions. As a non-governmental organization, the SI collaborates with the United Nations, and works internationally with many other organizations.

Socialist International Members

Full member parties

Popular Socialist Party, PSP, Argentina
People's Electoral Movement, MEP, Aruba
Australian Labor Party, ALP
Socialist Party of Austria, SPO
Barbados Labour Party
Socialist Party, PS, (French) Belgium
Socialist Party/Socialistische Partij, SP, (Flemish), Belgium
Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR, Bolivia
Democratic Labour Party, PDT, Brazil
Partido Social Democrático - Sao Paulo
Partido dos Trabalhadores - Sao Paulo
Partido Democrático Trabalhista - Sao Paulo
Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, BSDP
Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP, Burkina Faso
New Democratic Party, NDP/NPD, Canada
Social Democratic Radical Party of Chile, PR
National Liberation Party, PLN, Costa Rica
Movement for a New Antilles, MAN, Curacao
EDEK Socialist Party of Cyprus
Czech Social Democratic Party, Czech Republic
Social Democratic Party, Denmark
Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, Dominican Republic
Democratic Left Party, PID, Ecuador
National Democratic Party, NDP, Egypt
Estonian Social Democratic Party, ESDP
Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP
Socialist Party, PS, France
Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD
Labour Party, Great Britain
Panhellenic Socialist Movement, PASOK, Greece
Social Democratic Party of Guatemala, PSD
Revolutionary Progressive Nationalist Party of Haiti, PANPRA
Social Democratic Party, Iceland
The Labour Party, Ireland
Israel Labour Party
United Workers' Party of Israel, MAPAM
Partito Democratico della Sinistra (Democratic Party of the Left), Italy
Italian Democratic Socialist Party, PSDI
Socialisti Italiani SI (Italian Socialist Party)
Peoples' National Party, PNP, Jamaica
Social Democratic Party, Japan
Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, LSDSP
Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, Lebanon
Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, LSDP
Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party, LSAP/POSIL
Democratic Action Party, DAP, Malaysia
Malta Labour Party
Mauritius Labor Party
Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP, Morocco
Labour Party, PVDA, Netherlands
New Zealand Labour Party
Social Democratic and Labour Party, SDLP, Northern Ireland
Norwegian Labour Party, DNA
Revolutionary Febrerista Party, PRF, Paraguay
Socialist Party, PS, Portugal
Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP
San Marino Socialist Party, PSS
Socialist Party of Senegal, PS
Social Democratic Party of Slovakia, Slovak Republic
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE
Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP
Social Democratic Party of Switzerland

Constitutional Democratic Assembly, RCD, Tunisia
Republican People's Party, CHP, Turkey
Democratic Socialists of America, DSA, USA
Social Democrats USA, SDUSA
Democratic Action, AD, Venezuela

Consultative parties

Social Democratic Party of Albania, PSD
Socialist Forces Front, FFS, Algeria
African Independence Party of Cape Verde, PAICV
Party for Democracy, PPD, Chile
Socialist Party of Chile, PS
Liberal Party, PL, Colombia
Fiji Labour Party
SIUMUT, Greenland
Working People's Alliance, WPA, Guyana
Party of the National Congress of Democratic Movements, KONAKOM, Haiti
Ivory Coast Popular Front, FPI
Party for National Unity, VITM, Madagascar
Mongolian Social Democratic Party, MSDP
Nepali Congress Party
Pakistan People's Party, PPP
Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP
Polish Socialist Party, PPS*
Romanian Social Democratic Party, PSDR*
St Kitts-Nevis Labour Party
St Lucia Labour Party, SLP
Unity Labour Party, St Vincent and the Grenadines
Popular Unity Movement, MUP, Tunisia
Party for People's Government, PGP, Uruguay
People's Electoral Movement, MEP, Venezuela

* members of SUCEE

Observer Parties

Democratic Union of Progressive Forces, UDFP, Benin
Movement for Democracy and Social Progress, MDPS, Benin
Patriotic Front for Progress, FPP, Central African Republic
M-19 Democratic Alliance, Colombia
Hungarian Social Democratic Party, MSzDP
Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP
Sandinista National Liberation Front, FSLN, Nicaragua
Social Democratic Party of Slovenia, SDSS

Affiliated Organizations

International Falcon Movement/Socialist Educational International, IFM/SEI
International Union of Socialist Youth, IUSY
Socialist International Women, SIW

Associated Organizations

Asia-Pacific Socialist Organisation, APSO
Party of European Socialists, PES
International Federation of the Socialist and Democratic Press, IFSDP
International Union of the Socialist Democratic Teachers, IUSDT
Jewish Labour Bund, JLB
Labour Sports International, CSIT
Group of the Party of European Socialists, European Parliament
Socialist Union of Central and Eastern Europe, SUCEE
World Labour Zionist Movement, WLZM

To Intensify Democracy

BY PIERRE SCHORI

The effects of globalization most starkly confronted us all when a previously unknown man in a Mexican jungle, far from the citadels of economic power, created a political storm that reached all the way to Washington, Wall Street, London, and Stockholm. Commandante Marcos and his colleagues felt the results of a globalized economy in a very elemental way amongst the peasants and subsistence workers of Chiapas and environs, and chose their own methods to fight back. Financial markets were shaken beyond Mexico City, despite a United States stabilization loan of 20 billion dollars. One winter later, and a continent away, French blue- and white-collar workers took to the streets to express their fears and anger at worsening social conditions. This aroused immediate disquiet about the Maastricht monetary union and its future. While these two developments may seem reflective of their respective political environments, I believe them to be intimately connected examples of how the world market links us all.

The recent report of the United Nations Social Development Commission, "States in Disarray," argues that globalization is a result of technological change, the oil crises of the 1970s, and the debt burdens of the 1980s. It claims that it does benefit some populations, while weakening the status of many workers, and trade unions, and damaging social networks in a variety of settings. One result cited is international crime—growing at a faster rate than population growth; gangs in Moscow alone now number 3,000. In the largest U.S. cities there are 5,000 gangs with over 250,000 members.

A visit to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where corporate leaders like Helmut Maucher, CEO of Nestlé, gather, is also instructive. Herr Maucher told an interviewer for *Le Nouvel Observateur* that "for our company the whole world is a village. There are no obstacles any longer, be they political, economic, or physical. But there is still too much bureaucracy, taxation, and too many social safety nets." When the interviewer remarked that it seemed that the success of large corporations may have been in part based on the wider distribution of income, and wondered about the social responsibility of corporations, the chocolate and food magnate replied, "That is finished! To survive as a company or individual you must be more competitive than your neighbor...the market doesn't like socialism. Our only responsibility is to understand today's world...and we probably do better than politicians. Remember, capital is mobile, not people..." Herr Maucher may be partially correct in that politicians mostly don't understand, or aren't organized, for Herr Maucher's new world, which to my mind has more to do with Thomas Hobbes than Adam Smith.

The former European Union Commissioner Ralf Darrendorf, writing in the *New Statesman*, recently defined globalization as requiring the social exclusion of between five to ten percent of the population of the developed world. Along with destroying important elements of the public sector and increasing inequality of income, it all adds up to a growing sense of personal insecurity and a climate that breeds intolerance and xenophobia in the West. Leaders like Thatcher, Berlusconi, and many members of the U.S. Congress are not alone in casting furtive glances, for instance, at the growing Asian tigers, where authoritarian governments and industrial growth take priority over human rights. Thatcher recently sent a telegram to General Pinochet on his eightieth birthday.

Darrendorf offers some suggestions so that OECD countries can try to hold together the triad of economic growth, social unity and political liberty.

◆ Change the language of economics to broaden the fetishistic Gross National Product measures to include equality, human rights, the environment and the distribution of wealth. (This might be useful for

the editors of *The Wall Street Journal*, who recently crowed that the money expended on the O.J. Simpson trial exceeded the GNP of Grenada.)

◆ Reconsider the structure of work. Jacques Delors has discussed a mixture of full and part-time work (connected to portable state benefits) that varies over a citizen's life.

◆ Develop strategies to combat social exclusion.

◆ Strengthen the ability of local governments to assist small business and provide vocational training.

◆ Extend participation in major corporations and institutions from shareholders to stakeholders, by increasing public representation on company, school, and bank governing boards.

To Darrendorf's list I would add that peace, democracy and economic well-being are inseparably linked. In search of those elements world political leaders now meet more than ever. While there is widespread criticism of summitry that is long on talk, short on action, the 1990 UN children's summit, the environment meeting in Rio in 1992, on human rights in Vienna in 1994, population in Cairo, the 1995 social summit in Copenhagen, last year's Beijing women's conference, and habitat in Istanbul in March, may at least provide some framework to discuss global solutions to global problems. Over one billion of our fellow humans live in extreme poverty, 70 percent of whom are women. The Beijing women's summit focused global attention on the necessity to liberate women as the best path to democracy and development—against the wishes of many patriarchal national governments.

No welfare state can be safeguarded, much less extended, in the North unless economic security in the South has been safeguarded. To the mean-spirited Republican majority on Capitol Hill we must say again and again that foreign aid is national security. The multibillion stability pact for the Mediterranean that the European Union recently introduced may have had its origins in French fears of a chaotic Algeria, but it is also an implicit acknowledgment that poverty is the main enemy of peace in the world.

Neo-liberalism made a crash landing with Thatcher and Reagan. The right-wing supporters of Gingrich are addicted to simple catch phrases because conservative solutions are, as William Pfaff recently wrote in *Dissent*, irrelevant: "The most bizarre feature of [global] capitalism as taught in economic schools and practiced in large transnational companies is the resemblance to Leninism or Stalinism...depriving millions of people of their living in exchange for the promise of happiness for future generations."

We Social Democrats will have little success if we are unable to deliver real improvements in living conditions to the next generation. The welfare state is

social democracy's contribution to modernism, and internationalism has been part of our, and allied labor's, message, but they won't be enough unless coupled to strategies that spark growth and equity. Jacques Delors, a Christian socialist, may be right in describing the Left's dilemma in industrialized nations: "The working class still exists, but it is embedded in an enormous middle class...comprising 70 percent of our citizens. Some twenty percent are low income earners or poor, while ten percent are rich. How can we find a collective project attractive to the 50 percent worried about their future—staying loyal or allied to the bottom twenty percent, and insuring that the top-earning ten percent contributes their fair share?"

"For our company the whole world is a village. There are no obstacles any longer, be they political, economic, or physical. But there is still too much bureaucracy, taxation, and too many social safety nets."

--Helmut Maucher, CEO of Nestlé

The European Union summit in Turin brought these issues into relief. The Social Democratic representatives wanted to include a special chapter on job creation in the revision of the Maastricht treaty, placing mass employment on the same level as economic and monetary unification. Conservative leaders opposed this and again offered the marketplace as a panacea. Sadly, many of those same conservative forces, now pushing the idea of a common European army, seem to ignore that the fear of losing one's job is at the top of European citizens' worries, followed by crime. While the animating origins of the EU may have been an end to intra-Continental wars, the fight against unemployment may provide a more important bulwark against disruption than any transborder armies.

I believe that the cardinal question for the next century will be how North and South can meet the common challenge of social exclusion. The means by which the EU will deal with threats of mass unemployment will be a matter of survival for the union, and for democracy as we know it. None but demagogues are served by low-intensity democracy. Protectionism is a non-starter. The welfare state in Europe can be strengthened by transborder cooperation, and the inclusion of the social dimension in our economic plans. But, as Mike Harrington would point out, the Vast Majority of the world's six billion people, five billion of whom are in the Third World, must be brought into this picture. We have no choice.

Pierre Schori is Deputy Foreign Minister of Sweden. These remarks are drawn from a speech given at a symposium in memory of Michael Harrington sponsored by the CUNY Center for the Humanities this past spring.

Constructing Global Labor Solidarity

BY PAUL GARVER

At a time when the globalization of capital has become a cliché, it should not be necessary to argue for the need of globalizing labor. We can move on to discussing ways and means of doing it. I'd like to offer a report from the field, based primarily on my own experiences working for the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), as a way of exploring some of the possibilities and the limitations of current efforts at international labor solidarity.

A key focus of the IUF is making trans-border activity part of the ordinary practice of trade unionism. An illustrative example of such everyday solidarity comes from Carlton Brewery Fiji, a company partly owned by the Melbourne-based Carlton and United Breweries (CUB) and a division of the Fosters beverages empire. New local managers at the two Carlton plants in Fiji have been trying to weaken the IUF affiliate, the National Union of Factory and Commercial Workers (NUFCW). Solidarity action by IUF affiliates in Australia, particularly the Liquor, Hospital and Miscellaneous Workers Union (LHMU), has proved crucial in persuading CUB management to force its Fiji subsidiary to back down.

Over the last year the local Fiji management at Carlton has consistently sought to undermine and bust the two breweries' union. They bypassed NUFCW by directly consulting with factory employees; they dissuaded workers at the smaller of the two breweries from supporting a collective bargaining strike; they further split the union by persuading the 21 workers at the smaller plant to resign from the

union; and finally, they sought to nullify NUFCW's legal representation at that brewery.

The IUF's intervention brought this anti-union activity to a swift halt. The Australian IUF affiliates pressured the CUB management in Melbourne, threatening strong protest actions unless the Fiji management ended its campaign against the union. As a result, CUB management committed to stop seeking nullification of union recognition in Fiji, and promised it would no longer promote resignations from the union. The Fiji manager admitted in writing that he had been "wrongly advised" by his consultant.

Cross-border coordination can make a critical difference in a union struggle, as the Carlton Brewery example shows, and sometimes a simple exchange of information by itself can achieve a lot. The same union in Fiji was presented by the management of a major Coca-Cola bottling company with a "collective bargaining agreement" for a new plant that the company claimed was the standard international Coca-Cola agreement. As it turned out, this "standard" agreement was modelled not on bona fide union contracts, but on several sweetheart agreements in Australia and the UK. In this case the IUF supplied the union in Fiji with numerous Coca-Cola agreements that actually were standard, thus thwarting management efforts to deceive workers into signing a less favorable contract.

As these examples make clear, rapid access to relevant information and cooperation among allied organizations is key to success for unions as well as companies in the global arena. One area where this is crucial is in the efforts to counter the introduction of new management methods known as Human Resource Management (HRM). HRM is being introduced by companies globally, often with the intention of marginalizing or eliminating union influence. Unprepared unions can be critically weakened before they can fashion an effective response, which is why the international exchange of strategies for union responses to this trend is so critical. The IUF is organizing or supporting union strategy meetings on this topic in countries as diverse as Eritrea, South Africa, Thailand, Bra-

zil, the UK, the US and countries within the European Union (EU). Experts and materials in particular from US and UK unions are being supplied to unions less familiar with HRM. The goal is to quickly develop a union "best practice" based on the most successful responses.

In the European Union, companies that operate on a European-wide scale are required to inform and consult their workers about matters significantly affecting their interests at that level (relocations, production transfers, closures, etc.) This directive of the EU is to be enacted into national legislation by September 1996. As that time approaches, companies are trying to impose a unilateral top-down arrangements based on HRM as an alternative to negotiating equitable agreements with their unions. The unions, meanwhile, are struggling for an autonomous workers' voice within the European Works Councils (EWC's), as the EU-mandated structures are called, in order to counter these management efforts.

In the IUF sectors (food, drink, tobacco, hotel, agriculture) both developments have been evident. Some dozen companies (among them Nestlé, Danone, Kellogg and Philip Morris) have negotiated equitable agreements with unions coordinated through the IUF or its European regional organization, the ECF-IUF. Others, however, have launched unilateral initiatives that would exclude unions from formal roles and leave control firmly in management hands. Most of these initiatives have been blocked by union organization, but where unions are weak companies have been more successful. Such was the case at PepsiCo, where the company rammed through a blatantly management-dominated council that would serve primarily as an extension of the company's anti-union human resources philosophy.

At stake in the struggle over the EWC's is the effectiveness of cross-border union structures. The European Union provided crucial resources in the years leading up to the implementation of the works council directive to allow the unions, acting through the various trade secretariats and their European regional organizations, to organize networks of unionists within particular companies. Even after EU funding is withdrawn, most of these networks will be able to survive, and they represent potentially powerful resources in the effort to expand international labor coordination.

The IUF is currently working to link these European trade union networks within globally operating companies to similar councils operating in other regions. The objective is to achieve a level of global organization to match the company's own global scope.

This is an important part of a global trade union strategy, but it is incomplete in several respects. First, global corporations do not directly employ a large percentage of the world's workers. Their rapid expan-

sion, especially when it takes the forms of acquisitions, is accompanied by restructuring and the spinning off of marginal activities, so that total employment by transnational companies does not increase. Global union networks, even if comprehensive in geographic coverage, if they are limited to the core workforce, will not include the vast majority of the more exploited workers working for supplier firms, sub-contractors, etc.

Furthermore, networks of unionized workers operating within a single company, like enterprise unions generally, tend to accept the logic of globally competitive capital as voiced by the companies they work for. Arguments about improving working conditions, training and job security are generally couched in the rhetoric of improving company competitiveness vis-a-vis other companies. Thus there is a risk, even in companies well-organized by unions, that the relationship tends toward "dependent cooperation," where the social partnership is not that of equals, either in fact or psychologically.

To combat these tendencies, the IUF has tried to do several things. We believe it is essential to treat corporate networks as single, if complex, entities. This means holding top company managements responsible for the conduct of their subsidiaries, franchises, subcontractors and business partners. In addition, the IUF has encouraged member unions to try to organize not only workers who are direct employees of global corporations, but also those who work indirectly for them (through suppliers, sub-contractors, etc.). This is critical because the contemporary global company typically has an employment pattern like that of the Coca-Cola Company, which directly employs only about 5% of employees of the global Coca-Cola network.

These steps, rooted in the logic of trade unionism, are necessary but not sufficient. Trade union strategies in themselves cannot challenge the hegemonic neoliberalism that pervades the socio-political sphere. For example, they cannot deal effectively with overall levels of employment. Mass unemployment, particularly among young people, is sapping the ability of unions nearly everywhere to resist corporate incursions in the bargaining arena.

A crucial missing link in constructing international labor solidarity is the absence of a socio-political alternative to global capital. An indispensable part of creating a counterforce is a credible political movement articulated globally, a function once played by the Second International. At the present, a limited-agenda organization like Amnesty International is a more credible strategic partner for international labor than the Socialist International, which shares the malaise of most national social democratic parties. It does not help in this regard that some social democratic parties in government in the 1990s have enacted the neo-liberal and anti-union agenda with as much zeal as their conservative rivals.



The political deficiency of international labor is magnified by its structure. The international trade secretariats are made up of affiliates in industrial sectors. With the partial exception of public sector affiliates of the Public Service International, these national affiliates are not structured in a politically effective way. Even if many individual union leaders have a broad political awareness, their ability to mobilize their unions for their goals is limited. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is capable of the most stirring rhetoric of international labor solidarity, but lacks the mandate and resources to implement comprehensive programs, since national labor centers provide neither. The global corporation, by contrast, is far more genuinely internationally integrated than union structures. Tellingly, the thriving international organizations are those that explicitly serve the interests of global capital: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization. Given these realities, it is clear that creating a broader political space for international labor to operate in is a slow and complicated process.

The task is none the less urgent for being difficult, though, and there are numerous activities in support of global labor solidarity that can be carried out by sympathizers not directly involved with unions. Among the most important of these are the defense of human and trade union rights. Joining organized protest campaigns when essential rights are violated can save lives and union institutions, boost the morale of

those undergoing repression, and even reduce the severity of repression in specific cases. Selective buying campaigns are another example. Although narrowly-based boycotts are called too often to be generally effective, corporate policies can be influenced by selective buying. PepsiCo, for example, resisted appeals to reduce its involvement in Burma until it lost a Harvard University contract to Coca-Cola over the issue. This month Carlsberg and Heineken pulled out of Burma entirely under the threat of potential boycotts by an alliance of IUF affiliates, human rights and social investment groups.

Legislative campaigns, too, can play a role in expanding labor's global effectiveness. Of particular interest to the cause of global solidarity are removing restrictions on secondary sympathy actions, and linking trade and investment incentives to respect for worker rights. (It would not hurt in this regard if the US would ratify the basic ILO conventions on the freedom of association and collective bargaining!) General labor law reform that would make it less difficult for unions to organize new workers in the US is equally essential to building a stronger institutional base for global solidarity.

These strategies are small but crucial steps in the urgent project of developing a global force for workers' rights to combat the already established presence of global capital and its economic and political incursions on human freedom.

Paul Garver, a founding member of DSA, works for the IUF in Geneva.

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Power To Win

The Struggle for the New York City Living Wage Bill

BY MIRIAM BENSMAN

As the pages curled their way out of my fax machine, my excitement grew. At long last, here was a draft of the Living Wage bill. It was the penultimate step to winning a measure of justice for thousands of city contract workers.

In February 1995, when Councilmember Sal Albanese introduced the original Living Wage bill at the behest of the Metro New York Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), the pundits had pronounced it another nice idea going nowhere. The Albanese bill required all city contractors to pay at least \$12.10 an hour in wages and benefits to what were, in effect, indirect city employees. Such good things couldn't get done, we were told: not when the Mayor was committed to contracting out everything possible, and not when the bill was sponsored by a left-of-center maverick like Albanese.

Nonetheless, in March 1996 we got our bill, a compromise crafted by City Council Speaker Peter Vallone; one that, in the bizarre world of New York politics, could command a veto-proof Council majority; it was finally passed in early July. The compromise bill is far from perfect: it covers only for-profit contractors and only their workers in the four most exploited job categories (janitorial, security, clerical and food services). Moreover, it only requires them to pay the prevailing wage in the private sector: hourly wages for the affected workers would, depending on job title, go from between \$4.25 and \$8.50, to between \$7.25 and at least \$12.

But perched upon my desk like a talisman is a big red button that reads, "POWER TO WIN." A memento from a successful action by an IAF affiliate, it sums up in three words the IAF's philosophy: Organize for power, and you can win.

To this dedicated socialist, those simple, even obvious words were a much-needed wake-up call. Yes, being a socialist in America is hard. Our dreams are big, our ranks thin, and our ideas suspect in mainstream society. But too often of late, we've barely tried. Although exhausting to implement, our actions often

entail little more than preaching to the choir. How ironic that it took the mostly church-based IAF to refocus my efforts on delivering victories.

West Side DSA has been working for more than two years to help found and then strengthen an IAF affiliate on Manhattan's Upper West Side, which is one of eight groups in Metro IAF. Our effort isn't unprecedented for DSA: in the 1970s, several locals of the New American Movement, one of our predecessor organizations, helped establish state affiliates of Citizen Action, another community organizing network; in the 1980s, Nassau and Suffolk DSA helped found the Long Island Progressive Coalition, which later affiliated with Citizen Action of New York; this spring, New York DSA also affiliated with Citizens Action of New York. I believe our experience, although not unique, offers many lessons for DSA locals.

It was a sunny day in April 1995 when I filed into Manhattan's Community Church to learn more about the living wage campaign then just getting underway. Under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani there has been massive contracting out of services, and even the city's own agencies had little information on the wages paid to contract employees. The IAF's guesstimate was that at least a thousand city contract workers were earning only \$8,500 a year, and many more made less than \$19,000, the federal poverty level for a family of four in New York. People were doing public work paid for with public money, at poverty wages.

Chris Meyers, a chief strategist for the New York Public Interest Research Group, provided a power analysis: individual City Councilmembers have little autonomy;

People were doing public work paid for with public money at poverty wages.

they usually do what the Speaker orders. The Mayor was likely to oppose it; so we would need the Speaker to oppose the Mayor on a bill more clearly progressive than anything he'd pushed so far. The Speaker had an inner circle, but it didn't include the likes of Albanese.

On the other hand, Albanese had introduced the bill with 21 co-sponsors, many of whom had come on board at the IAF's request. We would need 26 to pass the bill and 35 to override the expected mayoral veto. Our task would be to add to that number and to get Vallone on board. That wasn't an insurmountable task, we were told. BUILD, the IAF's affiliate in Baltimore, had recently won a similar bill, facing similar obstacles. We could, too. "After all, we win things," IAF national staffer Mike Gecan said. We had the power of our own organizations and some strong potential allies.

At a City Council hearing six weeks later, those allies came out in force. Not only did AFSCME DC 37 and other public employees unions testify in favor of Albanese's bill, so did private-sector union leaders. "Raising the bottom tends to raise all wages," said Louis Albano, of Local 375, a professional, technical, engineering and chemical workers union. Equally impressive was an "unlikely ally," Frank McCardle, head of the contractors' association. He testified that his members, mostly construction companies, were used to paying prevailing wages and found that they leveled the playing field and put the focus on productivity. "Our only quarrel with this bill is the level," McCardle said. "It should be \$12.10 an hour plus benefits."

That's not to say there wasn't opposition. The Mayor's representatives and his pals from the New York City Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, and Manhattan Institute launched a heavy ideological attack: the bill would "repeal the laws of supply and demand, we were told; "artificial" wage levels would discourage vendors from doing business with the city, increase paperwork, and cost the city \$500 million a year. (That figure was subsequently revised downward to about \$100 million; for the compromise bill, it is \$16.5 million).

A quieter, but ultimately more effective, voice of opposition came from representatives of social service agencies, who feared that if the cash-strapped city forced them to raise the (often appallingly low) wages they paid their workers, it would be unable to pay for as many services. The power of those agencies, plus the Council leadership's concerns about balancing the budget, were behind exclusion of nonprofit contracts from the compromise bill. We made it clear, however, that the compromise bill was just a first step to far more sweeping legislation. We pledged to be back for more.

Negotiations with the Speaker began in the fall and while slow, eventually bore fruit. A key moment in the final negotiation was the not-so-casual comment by IAF national staffer Jim Drake: "By the way,

have you heard we're training 1,000 precinct captains across the city in how to mobilize voters for a living wage?" The council staffers paled.

All along, we kept up the pressure on the bill's endorsers and added to the list. There was other work, too: research into particularly questionable contractors and interviews with contract workers that put a human face on the bill. (One with whom I spoke was making \$6 an hour and no benefits doing data entry for the Department of Homeless Services, down from \$8 at another city agency—and \$16 at a private firm. He took the city contract jobs because they were "permanent" temporary assignments, and he had a family to feed, but the wages were so low he'd lost his apartment, so his family was doubled-up with his mother).

What we didn't do was assemble a paper coalition. Nobody went around collecting permission to put organizational names on a piece of letterhead (People for a Living Wage?) Perhaps not doing so lost us some support in a few corners, but it also left us free to concentrate on amassing our own power, meeting our own commitments, and lining up allies that would do the same. West Side DSA, for example, played its own small, but useful part, joining WEST meetings with our local Councilmembers and independently arranging for eight of our East Side members to call a newly elected Councilmember—at home—before he even took office. Articles in the *New York Democratic Socialist* also kept our own members and a wide circle of progressive New Yorkers abreast of the campaign's progress.

A key lesson for West Side DSA'ers, in this and in other WEST actions, has been the importance of committed, accountable organization. The sad thing about so much progressive action these days is that so few coalitions really expect member organizations to deliver, and few member organizations do. Often, they can't.

Another key lesson was the importance of aiming for something concrete—not only in extracting tangible victories, but in getting out our ideas. The debate over the Living Wage Bill, in newspaper op-ed pieces and in the Council chambers, raised almost every issue of economic insecurity that matters to us, and exposed the heartlessness and hypocrisy of the new Republican rhetoric about free markets and supply and demand. Because the bill was before the Council and had an impressive number of co-sponsors right out of the gate, the bill, and the debate, was fairly well covered by the media.

I'm not arguing that we should never engage in losing battles: Sometimes, the only way to win something big ten or twenty years off, is to start fighting for it now. But in these hard times, it's too easy for socialists to embrace their marginality. Whenever possible, we should strive to lay the groundwork for the long-distance victory and to raise our issues in campaigns that have at least a chance of winning. We're far more likely to find allies, to make a difference, to come out of the campaign with our organization strengthened, not drained. We're also far more likely to get our ideas heard.

Note: In late July the mayor vetoed the bill and the City Council voted to override his veto. Defeated legislatively, the mayor has turned to the courts, threatening a lawsuit to overturn the bill. At press time, the mayor's legal argument was not known. However, the final bill was written in the context of well-established prevailing wage law; therefore it would appear safe from challenge.

Miriam Bensman is a DSA activist who lives in New York City.

DSA Launches Center for Democratic Values

BY RICK PERLSTEIN

Anyone who doubts just how badly the left is losing the battle of ideas--and losing badly-- is advised to consult the 1996 National Democratic Platform Poll, a survey sent out to thousands of Democrats around the country. "This summer," it opens, "the Democratic Party will adopt one of the most important statements of principle ever issued by our party. Our party's platform can offer a compelling alternative that can and should be embraced by a majority of Americans," the Democratic National Committee promises -- if "we draw a clear distinction between our party and the Republicans."

We soon learn that this "compelling alternative" will be comprised of distinctions without differences. "To balance the budget," begins one poll question, "some cuts in government spending need to be made." Democratic regulars are then asked where the savings should come from: Medicare? Agribusiness subsidies? The Pentagon? Head Start?

Forced into such a choice, liberal respondents will no doubt counsel saving Head Start and socking it to the fat cats; moderates will put Medicare on the chopping block and congratulate themselves for their political courage. But the poll question itself rules out the notion that there exists a more genuine way to differentiate the policy prescriptions of Democrats and Republicans -- namely, to sponsor an open and honest debate about whether the federal budget deficit is a bad thing in the first place.

Democratic regulars won't know from the survey that someone named Frederick Thayer has already framed progressive discussion on the subject in an article published in the obscure journal *Social Policy*. And they also won't know that an unobscure Ameri-

can -- Abraham Lincoln -- considered the following to be a self-evident truth: Americans "can't be much oppressed by a debt they owe to themselves."

This perspective has made hardly a ripple in the mainstream media, much less in our everyday political conversation. Absent a debate about whether budget cutting is a good per se, conservatives turn their values into unchallenged policy assumptions, without having to mount even the most cursory attack on our values. They pretend to answer the call of economic necessity. Meanwhile, because our rhetoric is silenced, our values have been silenced. Over time, we might forget how to argue our values, or how to develop programs that express them; we might even lose touch with what those values are.

How to bring our values into America's bars and beauty shops, student unions and union halls, and, eventually, into the convention halls of Democrats, Republicans, or whatever third party should rise up to challenge them -- that's one goal of DSA's new Center for Democratic Values (CDV) think-tank project.

"One problem DSA faces," says national director Alan Charney, "is that we have a lot of dedicated, talented members who have seen only limited ways in which they could get involved. Since a disproportionate number of our members are what I'd call 'intellectual activists,' CDV is the best way to let people marshal their professional expertise while advancing our politics."

Another problem, according to DSA member Ron Aronson, a philosopher teaching at Wayne State University in Detroit, is the need to "clarify what our values are, what remains living from past lefts to pass on to the next left. At this time of right-wing hegemony and a broad international eclipse of the left, it is urgent for us to rethink what we believe, what we're for. This means the values motivating us, as well as our starting points, our first principles. We need more than knee-jerk reactions from the past; we need ideas that respond to what people are really thinking and feeling today."

The seeds of CDV were sown while Aronson -- a battle-scarred New Left veteran and an international authority on French existentialism -- was enduring the fallout from his book *After Marxism*. Although his book was much praised, it also drew Aronson into tiresome quarrels

with diehards given to outbursts like, "The victory of socialism is inevitable!"

"I said to myself, I don't even know what socialism is anymore. So many on the left talk as if they already know the truth. I don't. We need to start with our values and rethink exactly what we believe, but without the luxury of retreating from today's struggles." Discussing these frustrations with Charney and another DSAer, sociologist Neil McLaughlin, Aronson hit on an elegant idea: utilize the existing intellectual resources of the DSA membership – including professors, to be sure, but also social workers, teachers, lawyers, clergy, even businesspeople – to pursue two inseparable objectives. First, bring intellectual activists together to discuss our ethical principles, fundamental beliefs, and policy goals. Second, get radical, democratic ideas into mainstream discourse by training left intellectuals to speak to the public and providing them with a platform from which to do it.

After several months of intensive volunteer labor, DSA is ready to launch the Center for Democratic Values, with Aronson as its coordinator.

Listen, academic. You've written a prize-winning study on why a higher minimum wage won't cause inflation. But have you written any newspaper op-ed pieces on the subject? The folks in the faculty lounge have heard your ten-point explanation of why Bill Clinton is bad for the labor movement. Have you cobbled it into a letter to the editor? Lit crits are abuzz with kudos for your article in the MLA Newsletter on how affirmative action has enriched the intellectual lives of your colleagues and students. Have you made yourself – don't laugh – available to talk show hosts? More importantly, could you answer if called? Rabbi Hillel, a first century B.C. sage, once answered a man who demanded he recite the whole Torah while standing on one leg, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The rest is commentary." Are you equal to the modern version of this challenge? Can you, within the space of a single soundbite, explain what you believe about race relations, and why? Can you sit in a coffee shop and summarize what's wrong with health care in the U.S.?

That's where CDV will come in. CDV's volunteer leaders will connect radical intellectual activists with already-existing media networks, including the Progressive Media Project, which works to place progressive opinion pieces in mainstream publications; and the "Profnet" Internet service which makes academic experts available to reporters. CDV leaders will coordinate intensive workshops on how to talk to the mass media, how to present radical policy ideas in terms that are grounded in widely-shared democratic values. A moderated e-mail group will be set up to facilitate discussion of our first principles. A

New York publisher is interested in putting out a series of short books on major policy questions under a CDV imprint.

The grand hope is to establish a network so broad and effective that every major media outlet in the country will get a steady stream of clear tough talk from the left on any political issue under the sun.

Modesty first, though. Building CDV will require a thousand small tasks, and unfamiliar kinds of discipline from its participants. In his letter floating the idea for the project, Ron Aronson asked, "Isn't it rather remarkable that this enormous human resource – thousands upon thousands of sophisticated and skilled people trained to produce ideas and analysis – count for so little in current national and local political debates?" The fact is the left is consistently stymied by its inability to win over people's hearts, to express political sentiments Americans hold dear (the stronger shouldn't run roughshod over the weaker; everyone deserves a fair shake) and the notion that to care about these values means calling big corporations to account, extending government protections to the weak, and attending to the original sins that mar the American past.

Richard Viguerie, one of the pioneers who built today's conservative movement from scratch back when organized conservatism hardly existed as a serious voice in American politics, told an interviewer in 1978, "We have been thirty years late in realizing how the left did it. We've taken close to 100 percent of the left's tactics." By this he meant something simple: learning to talk to ordinary Americans about why a vote for the conservative side was a vote in their own best interests and the best interests of the country.

It is a cruel irony: the left seems to have forgotten most of its own good tactics. CDV will be a place where our side can relearn them, slowly and meticulously, one op-ed at a time.

For more information about the Center for Democratic Values contact Ron Aronson at 810.548.5824. Rick Perlstein is a writer who lives in New York City.

The purpose is to bring intellectual activists together to discuss our ethical principles, fundamental beliefs, and policy goals—and to get radical, democratic ideas into mainstream discourse.

Putting Principle into Action in Southern California

On the morning of July 20th, a hot, stuffy, and crowded room in the West Los Angeles community center was packed, standing room only, with 55 enthusiastic students and community volunteers preparing themselves to walk the walk and talk the talk to defeat the Proposition 209, also known as the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI). Helping to organize precinct mobilizations of this sort is the local implementation of DSA's activist agenda to beat back the right-wing assault on the poor and working people.

Proposition 209, purposefully misnamed as California Civil Rights (wRongs) Initiative (CCRI), is anything but civil or right, and would end voluntary affirmative action programs in the state of California, turning back 30 years of civil rights achievements. This initiative would make illegal the consideration of gender and racial discrimination in decisions pertaining to college admissions, employment and awarding of contracts. This divisive attack follows in the footsteps of Proposition 187's scapegoating of immigrants, as another racial wedge issue intended to distract attention from underlying issues of low paying jobs; job flight; inequitable education; increasing college costs; and diminishing social services. Just as Proposition 187 in California spearheaded the passage of mean-spirited anti-immigrant legislation in Congress, the CCRI/Proposition 209 will probably lead to a repeal of equal opportunity programs throughout the nation.

The West Los Angeles/Santa Monica/UCLA mobilization was the latest in a series of mobilizations in seven targeted areas in Los Angeles, including South Los Angeles, San Pedro/Wilmington, Echo Park/Silver Lake, Pico Union/Korea Town, West Los Angeles/Santa Monica, East Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley. The mobilizations are joint efforts by activist organizations such as Americans for Democratic Action, Coalition LA, Democratic Socialists of America-Southern California region, HERE Local 814, Santa Monicans for Renters Rights, and the UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition.

The date of this mobilization was especially significant for UCLA students. July 20, 1996 marked the one-year anniversary of the University of California Regents' decision to end affirmative action programs on the UC campuses, and the students are far from discouraged—they are organized and eager to go door-to-door with their coalition partners defending affirmative action. The UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition consists of numer-

ous student organizations, including the African Students Union (ASU), the Student Association of Graduate Employees (SAGE), Samahang Filipino, Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, and MECHA; and was started in response to the UC Regents' decision. The lead UCLA student organizer, Kande Mosley, chairs the African Student Union and works as a summer intern for Students for Social Justice, a system-wide coalition of campus affirmative action coalitions in the University of California.

With guidance and support from Steve Cancian, lead organizer of Coalition LA, the mobilization was designed to register and educate voters on the issue, track those voting No on CCRI/Proposition 209, and turn out the progressive vote against CCRI. After receiving a letter, a flyer, a phone call and a follow-up reminder call from their organization, volunteers arrived at a local community center where they received a packet including information sheets, voter registration cards, tally and tracking sheets, a precinct map highlighting the assigned precinct, and an accompanying list of registered voters.

Kande Mosley and Grace Chee, also from UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition, gave briefings on the affirmative action issue and what's at stake. Tim Parks, Southern California DSA's regional organizer, gave a training on walking precincts, voter registration, identifying supporters, and Getting Out the Vote (GOTV). Liz Ryder, local DSA leader, facilitated the program. Roy Ramirez, John Du, Alberto Retana, York Chang, and Danise Kimball of UCLA participated extensively in the program and organization of the event.

Over forty UCLA students joined DSAers and members of Americans for Democratic Action in hitting the streets. By identifying over a hundred and eighty No on CCRI/Proposition 209 voters, including registering thirty new voters, the precinct walkers laid the foundation for an effective field operation in West Los Angeles.

Southern California DSA's bold commitment to defending affirmative action has led to our prominent involvement in two important coalitions which have long-term implications for progressive politics in Los Angeles, the Metropolitan Alliance and Coalition LA. Southern California DSA is part of the Steering

Committee of the Metropolitan Alliance, and is one of the lead organizations (along with Coalition LA and the UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition) coordinating precinct activity in the West Los Angeles/Santa Monica area.

The Metropolitan Alliance is a coalition of organizations formed in Los Angeles with the specific mandate of organizing against the CCRI by creating "a permanent grassroots structure to build and exercise progressive political power in the greater Los Angeles region, through organizing a neighborhood-based precinct network composed of progressive organizations and individuals." In addition to Southern California DSA, the member organizations include the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), AGENDA, Asian Pacific Islanders for Affirmative Action, Californians for Justice, Coalition LA, Community Coalition, Comunidades Latinos Unidos, Echo Park Metropolitan Alliance, Korean Immigrant Workers Association, Multicultural Collaborative, San Fernando Valley NOW, SLAAAP - South Los Angeles Affirmative Action Project, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition, among others.

Coalition LA, the successor of the Progressive Precinct Network, with twelve years of precinct organizing experience in Los Angeles county, is the other progressive coalition working to defeat the CCRI and build grassroots political power in Los Angeles. In 1996 Coalition LA shifted its geographic focus from the whole of Los Angeles county to narrower geo-

graphic regions within the city of Los Angeles. It has led the way in organizing in the West Side of Los Angeles, a traditional liberal and Democratic Party stronghold, with many pockets of low income communities, communities of color, and UCLA students. It aims to build enduring grassroots organizations that will be effective in local campaigns beyond the November 1996 election.

DSA members in the Los Angeles area have plenty of opportunities to get involved in the grassroots precinct work in their neighborhoods through these mobilizations. "Precinct walking is one of the most rewarding electoral activities you will ever experience," notes Tim Parks, Southern California DSA's regional organizer. And since anti-CCRI coalitions are forming in many areas of Southern California, DSA members throughout Southern California can participate in precinct activity. Thanks largely to the work of members who were precinct leaders in 1994, and the promise of what we can accomplish in 1996, DSA is becoming a vital, well-respected force within the Left/Progressive community in Southern California. Put your activist principles into practice—join us as we pound the pavement this fall!

To get involved call Tim Parks at DSA's Southern California Regional Office, 213-951-1960. In Orange County, contact Jeff Pilch at 714-551-7636.

Southern California DSA holds monthly membership meetings the first Sunday of each month at 1 PM at the Peace Center Building, 8124 W. Third Street, Los Angeles (between La Cienega and Fairfax, enter and park in the rear of the building).

Organizer Wanted

Help organize statewide campaign against massive state tax cuts for the rich and against the corporatization of health care; work closely with leadership to plan strategy, recruit and train activists; support our educational program—and raise money. Half-time job pays \$10,000 plus benefits. Send resumé and letter by September 15 to Miriam Bensman, NYDSA, 180 Varick Street Floor 12; New York, NY 10014.



Philadelphia DSA Puts Newt on Trial

At high noon on May 15, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and US Representative Jon Fox from the 13th Congressional District in Pennsylvania were the defendants in a mock trial held outside the Montgomery County Courthouse in "The Court of Public Opinion." The indictment charged that both had violated their oath of office to "protect the general welfare of the citizens of the United States" through their support of legislation that harms senior citizens, workers, women, society as a whole (by damaging the environment), taxpayers, and children and students.

The event was sponsored by the Coalition for a Newt-Free America which includes a wide variety of area organizations: the Action Alliance of Senior Citizens; Brandywine Peace Community; Citizen Action; the Montgomery County Labor Council; the National Council of Senior Citizens; PA NARAL; PA NOW; PennPIRG; Social Democrats USA and UNITE. The idea for the mock trial originated with Kathy Quinn, chair of Philadelphia DSA, who worked tirelessly to coordinate the presentation.

Witnesses representing groups harmed by the defendants' policies testified for the prosecution about the damage done and the danger posed by the defendants' legislative program. Testifiers included: Bob Bernstein, a member of the National Council of Senior Citizens; Stephanie Morris, a graduating senior at Rosemont College who addressed

women's issues; Diana Oboler, a local high school student; John Meyerson, representative of Local 1776 of the UFCW; Charles Sherrhouse, a member of the Green Party; and Bob Smith, director of the Brandywine Peace Community.

The defense had its turn with testimony by Norman Augustine, CEO of Lockheed Martin, which has facilities in Montgomery County and in Gingrich's home district, and Ralph Reed, Executive Director of the Christian Coalition (played respectively by Bob Neveln, a professor at Widener University, and John Hogan of Philadelphia DSA) who testified about the beneficial effects of the defendants' policies for business and "family values."

The cast was rounded out by Judge Jean Q. Public, people's prosecutor Vox Populi (played respectively by DSAers Kathy Quinn and Lisa Moore) and defense attorney C. Leo Lyons of the mythical law firm Lyons, Tyger & Baer (played by Bucks County Community College professor and poet Allen Hoey.) The defendants were represented using life-size cardboard cut-outs with a hidden actor (DSAer John Strauss) reading lines based on the real figures' own words.

Closing remarks for the defense were the usual platitudes about business being the backbone of the economy and a strong economy benefitting all of us. The prosecution responded that the plaintiff groups—i.e., the people—have been harmed and that a backbone doesn't do much without a heart; and asked whether "family values [are] promoted when huge numbers of children live in poverty; when parents cannot make enough to support their families; when Congress intervenes in women's most private decision—whether or not to bear children; when healthcare costs impoverish senior citizens; when higher education becomes a luxury which only the elite can afford; and when business is given priority over the environment." The trial's outcome was left to the public who were told they were the jury.

Attendance--which included many lunch hour passersby,

was healthy--and the local and Philadelphia press were well represented.

The trial was one of a number of events in Montgomery County aimed at educating the public about Jon Fox's voting record. Citizen Action, which just inaugurated a new chapter in Montgomery County, had been particularly active in these efforts.

Copies of the materials used for the trial, including the script, "jury summons" flyers, subpoenas to the press and programs are available to groups considering similar activities. Contact Kathy Quinn at 215.702.9739 or quinnkm@aol.com.

Attention Florida DSAers

Charles Willett, Secretary-Treasurer of North Central Florida DSA, wants your e-mail address! He is creating a listserv for Florida members. The listserv will keep you updated on national and state issues of concern to progressives. Send your e-mail address to: willett@afn.org or snail mail it to: DSA of North Central Florida, PO Box 140454, Gainesville, FL 32614-0454.

How the House Voted on Welfare Reform

The lopsided House vote on the so-called welfare reform bill shows how important it is for Democrats to retake the Congress and to increase the number of members in the Progressive Caucus. (Note: Three members of the Progressive Caucus are non-voting delegates from the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and American Samoa, and one is a member of the Senate.)

	YES	NO
Republicans	230	2
Democrats	98	98
Progressive Caucus	4	45

DSA PAC

1996 Endorsements:

EARL HILLIARD AL 7	JESSE JACKSON IL 2
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ED PASTOR AZ 2	JOHN OLVER MA 1
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GEORGE BROWN CA 42	JOHN CONYERS, JR. MI 14
RONALD DELLUMS CA 9	LYNN RIVERS MI 13
JULIAN C. DIXON CA 32	BENNIE THOMPSON MS 2
BOB FILNER CA 50	CHAKA FATTAH PA 2
GEORGE MILLER CA 7	MAURICE HINCHEY NY 26
NANCY PELOSI CA 8	JERROLD NADLER NY 8
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ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON DC AT LARGE	ROBERT C. SCOTT VA 3
CORRINE BROWN FL 3	NYDIA VELAZQUEZ NY 12
ALCEE HASTINGS FL 23	DONALD PAYNE NJ 10
CARRIE P. MEEK FL 17	CHARLES RANGEL NY 15
JOHN LEWIS GA 5	CLEO FIELDS LA 4
CYNTHIA MCKINNEY GA 11	BERNARD SANDERS VT AT LARGE
NEIL ABERCROMBIE HI 1	WILLIAM COYNE PA 14
PATSY MINK HI 2	CARLOS ROMERO-BARCELO PR AT LARGE
LANE EVANS IL 17	LOUIS STOKES OH 11
LUIS GUTIERREZ IL 4	JAMES A. McDERMOTT WA 7

PAUL WELLSTONE MN SENATE

NON-INCUMBENTS:

CLEM BALANOFF IL 11	TED STRICKLAND OH 6
STEVE DE LA ROSA IL 6	JOHN HOEFFEL PA 13
DANNY DAVIS IL 7	HARVEY GANTT NC SENATE

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Three strikes, you're out. That's my verdict on Bill Clinton.

First there was NAFTA. He was on the wrong side, supporting the agenda of the transnational corporations. A majority of Congressmembers from his own party voted against it. Yet, his support for NAFTA was not a betrayal. After all, he had made it clear in the 1992 primaries that he was pro-NAFTA. No one who voted for Bill Clinton could hold NAFTA against him...and that included me.

Second, there was health care reform. Clinton made it the centerpiece of his first term. We knew from the beginning that he wasn't for single-payer, but we thought that with enough grassroots organizing and public pressure progressives could build up strong support for single-payer in Congress and have a decisive impact on the final shape of health care legislation. The counter-attack against reform from the insurance industry, the AMA, and the right-wing Republicans was so intense that Clinton and company wound up caving in completely. By September 1994, health care reform was totally off the agenda. Still, this abandonment was not a betrayal. Incompetence, yes; spinelessness, yes; but still not a betrayal.

Third, there is so-called welfare reform. This is a betrayal, pure and simple. Contrast Clinton's initial 1992 proposal for welfare reform with the reactionary Republican version that Clinton has signed into law. Clinton's proposal to "end welfare as we know it" called for a major increase in expenditures for child care, job training and other programs, while preserving AFDC as an entitlement for citizens and immigrants. The bill he just signed ends entitlements, cuts funding and stigmatizes immigrants. For the first time since the New Deal, rights have been taken away and a universal program has been gutted. Even the stolid *New York Times* proclaimed that it is "not reform,

but punishment." More to the point, it is the scapegoating of immigrants, the poor, and women of color.

So, Clinton is "out." Now there are two Republicans running for President. One is a conservative Republican; the other is a New Democrat. It is easy to say that Dole must be defeated. It is hard to choose Clinton as one to do it. Unfortunately, Perot and Nader don't help matters - Perot because he's more or less another Republican, and Nader because he's just a protest candidate from which nothing will be built. The important independent party efforts - like the New Party and the Labor Party Advocates - are no

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help because they don't even have a national electoral agenda.

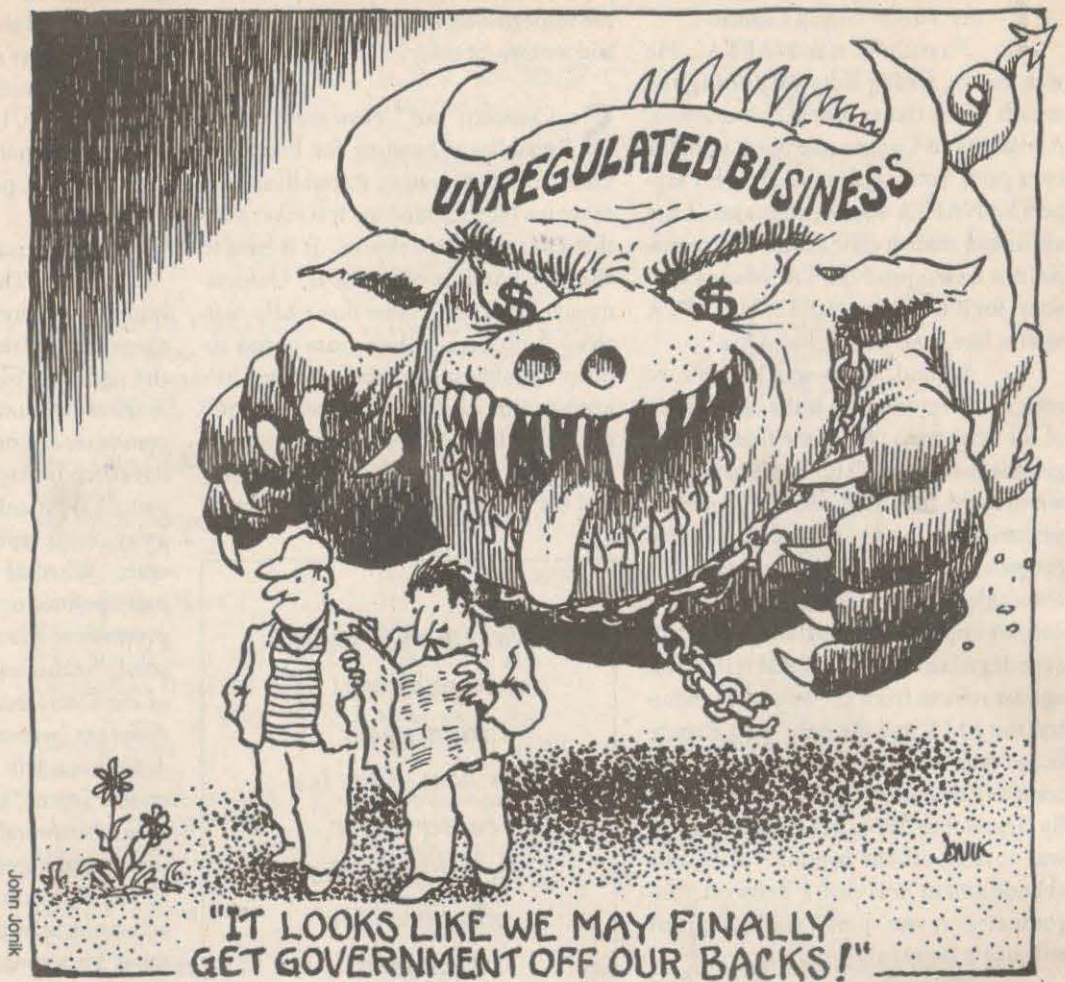
It would be a serious mistake, however, to equate Clinton with the Democratic Party in toto. Today, the new Democrats control the Democratic National Committee and probably a majority of the state parties. But, there is a class struggle swirling within the Democratic Party. Just look at the vote on welfare bill. Half the Congressional Democrats voted "yes" and half voted "no." A majority had voted against NAFTA. Over 90 had supported single-payer. The Pro-

gressive caucus has grown to 54 members. Poll after poll shows that Clinton is considerably to the right of the electoral base of the Democratic party - African-Americans, unionists, Latinos, liberals of diverse social backgrounds, gays and lesbians, many senior citizens, progressive women, etc.

This polarization should come as no surprise. The so-called New Deal coalition was always a coalition of the right, the center and the left - the Dixiecrats on the right, the big-city political machines in the center, and key labor and civil rights constituencies on the left. The Dixiecrats have become Republicans, and the big city political machines have withered away...both replaced by the new Democrats. Whether you're into Democratic party politics or "third party" efforts, no progressive advance is possible without strengthening and expanding the left base of the Democratic party. We may have different assessments of whether this democratic left will "leave" the Democratic Party or "take it over." (I think this is an unanswerable question at this time; that is, pure speculation.) But, what we all can agree on is that the social forces and institutions that comprise the left base must be strengthened and expanded, and that they must forge an independent political agenda. This will take a variety of forms...from the Progressive Caucus in Congress, to "inside" independent organizations like LEAP in Connecticut, and to "outside" independent organizations like the New Party in Wisconsin.

Still, none of these long-term opportunities help us grapple with the most immediate question for 1996 -- the Presidential vote. I'm talking about the private decision each of us has to make by November. My heart says "no" to Clinton; my mind wants to leave the decision open. How are you feeling?

Parting Shot



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