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Restorative Justice

BY KAY PRANIS

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IS A NEW approach to dealing with crime. It is a way of thinking about and responding to crime based on an understanding of crime as an injury to the victim and the whole community, rather than as an affront to the power of the state. Restorative justice focuses on repair of the victim's injury to promote healing, where possible. Offenders in restorative programs are required to take full responsibility for their behavior, and act to repair the harm. This reconceptualization of crime and justice is being tried throughout the US and other countries.

Politicians of all parties now assume little risk in proposing ever meaner and more authoritarian measures to combat the problem of crime. At the same time TV and radio stations have discovered that crime stories are cheap, vivid ways to create ratings-grabbing news broadcasts. Media surveys have revealed an astounding increase in the amount of news time devoted to crime

stories in the past five years. Many of those broadcast images focus overmuch on people of color, particularly African-Americans, polarizing race relations in this country.

Independent of the actual risk of victimization, fear of crime is now in the driver's seat in every community across the country, regardless of size, demography or culture. When people act out of fear, they often do not act rationally. The expansion of private security industries, locks on doors, less eye contact on the street, and emphatic warnings to children to beware—all have a cumulative

Undoing the Harm of Offenders, Politicians and News Media

effect. As more Americans isolate themselves, or withdraw behind fences, communities ironically become less safe; tightly bonded neighborhoods with high levels of interaction are indeed safer places to live and work.

The mythology that criminal justice systems will solve the crime problem shunts communities to the sidelines. Citizens are then helpless to do anything but pay more

William W. Winpisinger 1924-1997

William W. Winpisinger, honorary chair of DSA and retired International President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), died of cancer on December 11, the day after his 73rd birthday, in Columbia, Maryland. Winpisinger was a vocal and active socialist and president of the IAM from 1977 until his retirement in 1989.

Winpisinger was described as radical, blunt and outspoken. In 1979, he was the subject of a CBS *Sixty Minutes* television feature entitled "Wimpy, a New Breed of Labor Leader." In addition to his positions with DSA and the IAM, Winpisinger served as a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council; a member of the Finance Committee of the Democratic National Committee; co-chair of the Collective Bargaining and Group Relations Institute; a trustee of the National Planning Association; President of the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition; a member of the Board of Governors of the National Space Institute; a board member of the Americans for Democratic Action; a member of the Executive Committee of the International Metalworkers Federation; and an Executive Board member of International Guiding Eyes.

He will be missed by DSA and the many organizations he supported during his life. In our next issue of *Democratic Left*, we will include a more in-depth appreciation of his life and work.

Restorative Justice/ continued from page 1

taxes for more lock-ups; there is no space for community intervention, for individuals to take responsibility for creating peaceful, harmonious cities.

As fear and a sense of helplessness grow, the public threshold is lowered for humiliating, dehumanizing chain gangs, caning and even capital punishment administered with the glee of Torquemada. Not to mention the use of prisoners as cheap labor substitutes for private industry, or military deployment in the "war on drugs." These debased standards threaten basic democratic rights, and many would have been seen as unthink-

able throwbacks to bygone times just twenty years ago. One can hardly remember Jimmy Carter's

As a society we have been caught in conceptual errors similar to those of the typical offender.

inaugural invitation to an inmate.

As a society we have been caught in conceptual errors similar to those of the typical offender. Offenders will frequently assert

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Editor: Christine Riddiough

Production: Michele Rossi

Editorial Committee: Dorothee Benz, Suzanne Crowell, David Glenn, Jeff Gold, Steve Max, Bill Mosley, Maxine Phillips

Founding Editor: Michael Harrington (1928-1989)

Democratic Socialists of America share a vision of a humane international social order based on equitable distribution of resources, meaningful work, a healthy environment, sustainable growth, gender and racial equality, and non-oppressive relationships. Equality, solidarity, and democracy can only be achieved through international political and social cooperation aimed at ensuring that economic institutions benefit all people. We are dedicated to building truly international social movements—of unionists, environmentalists, feminists, and people of color—which together can elevate global justice over brutalizing global competition.

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D S A O F F I C E S

NEW YORK, NY
Michele Rossi, DSA Locals Contact
180 Varick Street FL 12
New York, NY 10014
212.727.8610

Kevin Pranis, Youth Section Organizer
c/o DSA National Office
212.727.8610

WASHINGTON, DC
Christine Riddiough, DSA Political Director
409 Butternut Street, NW
Washington, DC 20012
202.726.0745

CHICAGO, IL
1608 North Milwaukee Ave., 4th floor
Chicago, IL 60647
773.384.0327

BOSTON, MA
11 Garden St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
617.354.5078

Prison Moratorium Project Initiated

BY KEVIN PRANIS

PROGRESSIVES HAVE FAILED TO RESPOND IN MEANINGFUL ways to the problems of crime and punishment, and this failure has had devastating consequences. Hundreds of thousands of Americans suffer unjustly at the hands of our criminal justice system. Even worse, our national prison-building binge has come directly at the expense of public education, health care, and other crucial public goods. Meanwhile, many of the poorest Americans still must deal with high levels of violent crime in their communities.

Why have progressives been so silent about these questions? One reason may be cowardice: crime is perceived as a "third-rail" issue in American politics, an issue on which many a liberal has been fried by conservative demagogues. But public opinion on many criminal justice questions is actually surprisingly progressive: Beneath the angry public rhetoric about crime there is a clear sense that we've failed in some crucial way to sustain (or build) a society in which our children can live happily and safely. Even when, out of frustration, Americans support the warehousing of people in prisons, they know at some level that it's wrong and that there should be a better alternative.

Now the DSA Youth Section has initiated a new national Prison Moratorium Project. This project has brought together young activists from throughout the country in an effort to challenge state governments' addiction to prison-building. I have seen more excitement around

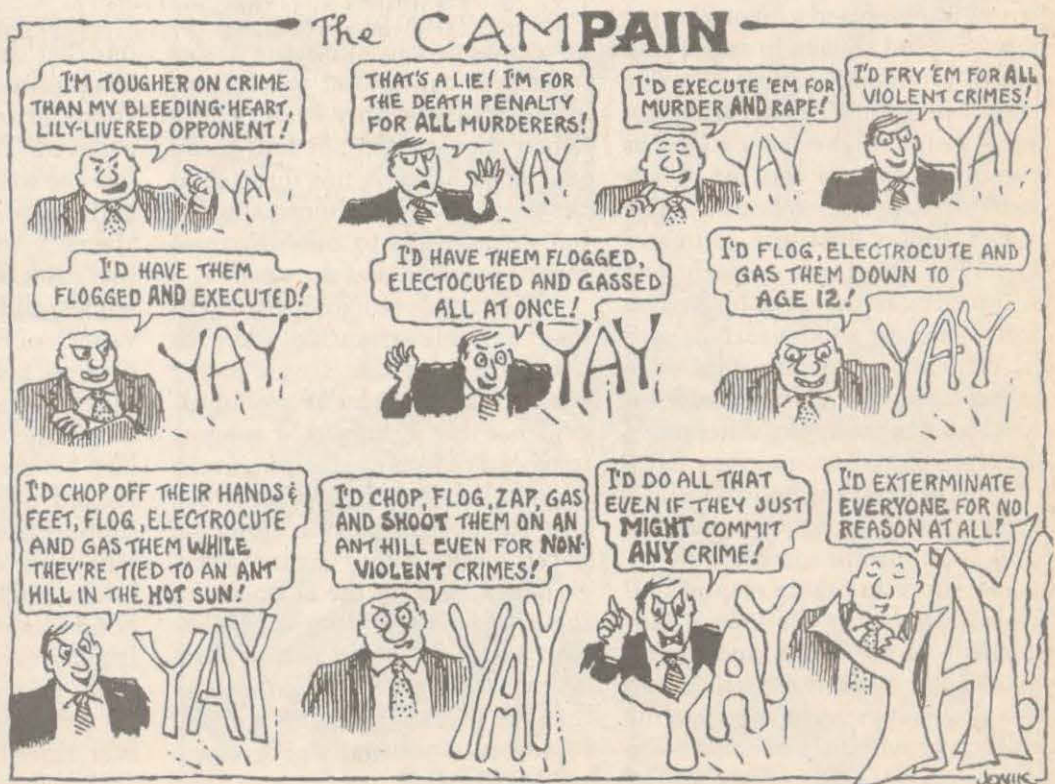
this project, from a more diverse group of people, than I have ever seen around any other issue in all my years of DSA activism. My own excitement comes in part from making new and unexpected alliances—with everyone from the Quakers to the Latin Kings to student labor activists to hip-hop artists—and in part from the sense that I'm working on a genuinely socialist issue, one that speaks directly to the consequences of our collec-

Beneath the angry public rhetoric about crime and criminals there is a very clear sense that we've failed in some crucial way to sustain (or build) a society in which our children can live happily and safely.

tive choices about our social and economic resources.

The Problem

Over the last twenty years, as prison populations shot up 500 percent and corrections spending rose 900 percent, most progressives kept silent, hoping that the problem



John Jonik

would go away on its own or as a result of the economic reforms we hoped to implement. This silence has done progressives no credit: the absence of credible policy alternatives on criminal justice helped to deliver the American public into the hands of the neoconservatives.

The impact of the exploding prison-industrial complex and attendant crime hysteria cannot be overstated. First, massive corrections spending has crippled the capacity of state governments to sustain—much less expand—the programs that the left was banking on to decrease crime. During the 1980s, state and federal governments were hit from both sides: on the one hand, progressive taxation suffered heavy blows at the hands of the Reagan administration and local anti-tax movements (following in the footsteps of California's Proposition 13); on the other hand, spending on the police state (as opposed to the welfare state) skyrocketed in the form of the military buildup and the prison buildup. Today's fiscal austerity is a direct result of these two trends.

At the state level, massive prison-building and a dwindling tax base have led to cuts in social provision—from housing to health care to jobs programs to education. Of these, public higher education has been most directly affected by uncontrolled prison spending. The Justice Policy Institute estimates that 1994 alone saw a nearly one billion dollar increase in corrections spending and a nearly identical decrease in spending on state colleges and universities. State students have made up the differences, suffering increases in class sizes, cuts in programming, and effectively subsidizing prison expansion with huge tuition increases.

As more and more responsibility is shifted from the federal government to the states, and the effects of draconian three-strikes and two-strikes laws begin to be felt, the fiscal crisis will only become more pronounced. Given the fact that,

for the present, progressive taxation is not even on the political map, halting prison-building may be our best and only chance to preserve the remnants of the welfare state.

Many progressives seem to believe that the best approach is to skirt the crime issue and instead focus on economic programs that enjoy broad popular support among working people. But this gambit misses the point. Regardless of the realities, Americans firmly believe that poor people benefit disproportionately from all government programs. Simply put, it will always be easy for the right to undermine mainstream support for social provision, so long as Americans believe that the primary beneficiaries are the same people who will rob, rape, and murder them. In conservative iconography, the gang-banger and the welfare queen are opposite sides of the same coin.

Even more insidious is the use of frustrated public expectations surrounding crime to undermine belief in the efficacy of any government program. The inflated rhetoric surrounding the war on crime leads the public to believe that the government can eliminate crime (which it can't) and the fear of crime (which it only exacerbates). When the government fails to do so, public anger is not directed at the failed strategy of incarceration, but displaced onto other government programs that do work.

Welfare "reform," disinvestment in public education, and even the failure of the single-payer health care movement are ample evidence that initial public support for social programs collapses in the face of a sustained right-wing attack that casts aspersions on both the government's ability to carry a program out, and on the character of the supposed beneficiaries. Unless we also take the crime issue head-on, we will be able to gather neither the financial nor the political resources to advance a progressive agenda.

Finally, the devastating consequences of prison expansion for Latinos and especially African-Americans threaten to eclipse any efforts to build a multi-racial progressive coalition. I'm not even referring here to the fact that roughly a million African-American males have lost the right to vote as a result of felony convictions, with obvious consequences for progressive electoral ambitions. I'm referring instead to the centrality of criminal justice to the life experiences of urban African-Americans and Latinos. Without addressing criminal justice issues—especially police brutality—it will be difficult to make the left relevant to communities where a third to half of all young black men are currently under correctional control.

The Solution

In the past, liberals, progressives and leftists have often chosen to retreat—either by ignoring the issue entirely, or by isolating ourselves in revolutionary and civil libertarian discourses, rather than engaging in a meaningful dialogue with our fellow Americans. Had we done so, we might have figured out that the public is significantly less punitive and more ambivalent about prisons than is commonly believed. Though most Americans like the sound of "tough-on-crime" and support incarceration in the abstract, when presented with actual cases (say, a low-level drug offender) and concrete alternatives (a variety of community service, restitution, and supervision programs) they tend to support non-incarcerative sanctions. And while they'd like to see dangerous criminals locked up, they don't generally support doing so at the expense of schools or even their own pocket-books, and they vote down prison bond-acts on a regular basis (leading states to build prisons with funds designed for other uses).

In order to turn the tide, however, three things need to be accom-

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Organizing to Close the Wage Gap and Reform Excessive Pay

BY MARC BAYARD AND CHUCK COLLINS

You have probably heard enough about the grotesque, excessive paychecks flowing to our nation's top executives and managers to last a lifetime. Even *Business Week*, in its 1997 round-up of executive compensation declared it "out of control."

There is something fundamentally unfair about an economy that fails to provide living wages and basic security for people who work hard—and yet lavishes dramatic rewards and benefits to the privileged few. "America's most fortunate few now prosper," in the words of labor writer Sam Pizzigati, "at the expense of everyone else." Unemployment rises, Wall Street cheers. Wages inch up, the Federal Reserve jams on the economic brakes. Profit margins stall, CEOs downsize their way into stock option heaven."

Since 1979, the real wages of the bottom sixty percent of households have stagnated or fallen. Meanwhile, the earnings of the top 5 percent of households have doubled. In 1996, the average compensation package of the top 350 corporate managers was \$5.8 million. At the top of the pack, Lawrence Coss, of Green Tree Financial, a company that finances mobile home purchases by retirees and low income workers, made \$102 million. It would take a low income mobile home owner over 7,000 years at the minimum wage to equal Coss's one year earnings.

The more these CEOs downsize, the more their personal compensation rises. According to a 1997 study, *Executive Excess: CEOs Gain From Massive Downsizing*, by the Institute for Policy Studies and United for a Fair Economy, the av-

erage executive salary and bonus packages at the thirty corporations who laid off the most workers rose at 67 percent, rising much faster than the national averages for top managers.

Corporations deduct the cost of these excessive paychecks and perks, reducing their own taxes. Our tax code allows corporations to deduct "reasonable business expenses" but does not define "rea-

sonable." Data from the Internal Revenue Service shows that tax-deductible executive pay, before inflation, climbed 182 percent, to \$307.6 billion in 1995 from \$109 billion in 1980. Imagine the billions that could be saved if we capped the amount of bloated salaries that corporations could deduct?

Campaign to Close the Wage Gap

The traditional approach to fighting inequality—to push up the bottom—is not enough in the current economic and political moment. If we allow great wealth to accumulate in the pockets of a few, then great wealth will set our po-



John Jonik

litical agenda and shape our culture—and the agenda and the culture that will emerge will not welcome efforts to make America work for all.

We therefore need a strategy that begins to address the power imbalance in our nation and advances changes in the rules to reduce inequality. And we need a program that talks not only about lifting the wage floor, but also reigning in the excesses at the top.

A program to address inequality must include efforts to build power through building independent political organizations, removing money from politics, and increasing worker power. But we also need a fair economy program that pushes living wages, cuts corporate welfare, asserts democratic control over corporations, institutes fair trade rules, regulates “temp” work, and restores fairness to the tax system. A good first step is insisting that government not subsidize wage inequality.

Few progressive populist issues touch the public nerve more than the incredible contrast between the compensation handed America’s CEOs and the paychecks of average Americans. The study, *Executive Excess*, won voluminous media coverage and even drew a gushing salute from Rush Limbaugh who said “I agreed with the liberals on this one—something ought to be done!”

Many organizations are already at work on the CEO compensation

issue. The AFL-CIO recently launched an imaginative “Paywatch” Web site that tracks and exposes CEO compensation outrages. The Teamsters and several national religious denominations are waging shareholder actions to reform or cap executive pay. The Preamble Center for Public Policy has polled public attitudes toward corporations and found wide public support for efforts to reform executive pay.

The federal Campaign to Close the Wage Gap offers up a policy proposal that will reduce inequality. The Income Equity Act: A Bill to Deny Employers A Deduction for Payments of Excessive Compensation (H.R. 687), sponsored by Martin O. Sabo (D-MN) would cap the corporate deduction for compensation that exceeds 25 times the lowest paid full-time employee.

One aim of the campaign is to introduce to the U.S. the concept of reasonable “wage ratio,” a concept common in European collective bargaining. This principle—that the pay gap between top and bottom ought to be limited—could be more integrated into all sorts of action arenas, from shareholder meetings to the ballot box to the bargaining table.

- Shareholder activists could push resolutions that advocate caps on executive compensation and oppose “golden parachutes” that enrich executives at the expense of other corporate stakeholders.

- Community groups could ad-

vance living wage proposals that would prohibit government contracts to any corporations that compensate top executives more than 25 times their lowest-paid employees. Local and state governments could also be pressed to deny tax breaks and subsidies to high wage gap companies.

- Unions could put proposals for setting wage ratios between top and bottom on the bargaining table.

The Campaign to Close the Wage Gap could, in turn, become the springboard for other initiatives that build on the same principles. Over the next two years, a coordinated campaign is planned that includes:

- Grassroots popular education programs about wage inequality intended to reach tens of thousands of people directly through religious congregations, unions and other civic organizations.

- Media work that draws attention to the wage gap and excessive CEO pay.

- Introduction of a U.S. Senate version of the bill and demands for Congressional hearings on wage inequality.

- Wage gap hearings, like the economic insecurity hearings sponsored by many DSA chapters, could be organized in swing congressional districts in order to produce additional co-sponsors for the Income Equity Act.

- Coordinated shareholder resolutions and direct action protests at specific companies with excessive pay gaps, timed to coincide with shareholder actions.

For more information about the Campaign to Close the Wage Gap and resources such as the “Wage Gap Organizing Kit,” contact: United for a Fair Economy, 37 Temple Place, 5th Floor, Boston, MA. 02111 (617) 423-2148, Fax (617) 423-0191 * or email: stw@stw.org.

Chuck Collins and Marc Bayard are on the staff of United for a Fair Economy.

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*A World to Win: From the Manifesto
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The DSA National Convention

BY MICHELE ROSSI

Ah, Columbus, Ohio! What better location for DSA's 1997 National Convention than a city which remains a wholesome emblem of America's heartland, AND the hottest test-marketing site in the United States? As if to facilitate DSA's commitment to making democratic socialism relevant and accessible to everyday people, the hotel playing host to most of our activities was conveniently situated across from a large shopping mall, and a McDonald's lay within easy walking distance.

Not that convention attendees (numbering around 200, plus a

before a standing-room-only crowd at Capital University.

Friday was another jam-packed day. Dan Cantor of the New Party, Lynn Chancer of DSA and Columbia University, Amy Isaacs of Americans for Democratic Action, Joseph Schwartz of DSA's National Political Committee and Temple University, and Cornel West, DSA Honorary Chair and Professor of Afro-American Studies at Harvard University; gathered at the convention's keynote plenary devoted to discussion of "The Challenges Facing the Broad Left." This discussion grew out of informal conversations between DSA leaders and others in progressive circles. They sense an increasing

convergence among liberals, socialists, and other self-described leftists who understand the need to confront and democratize global corporate power if there is to be any future for left politics.

Schwartz, the main organizer of the plenary, described how the old New Deal coali-

tion had collapsed. In the wake of the end of the Cold War, it can not be revived on strategic grounds or on the basis of appealing to its constituencies. Noting that there are few operative differences between DSA and other progressive organizations such as the New Party, he asked why there is no multi-issue mass-based progressive membership organization. "Conditions exist for building a true Rainbow Coalition, one much broader in focus and more multiracial in scope than any that has yet existed. DSA has a role to play in creating this coalition, but we can't do it alone."

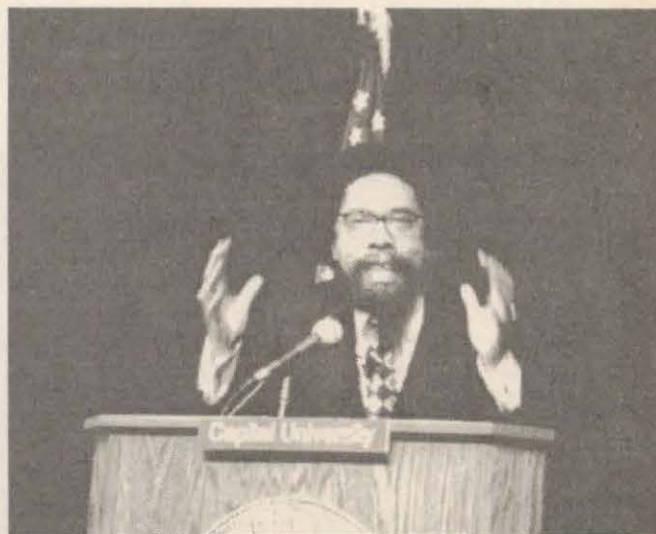
Cantor emphasized the importance of independent grassroots left electoral strategy. "Electoral politics is the most important aspect of consciousness formation in the U.S., and the left has to be there. We have to build a democratic electoral machine independent of both major parties." Isaacs reported on the growth in Washington, DC of what could become a national progressive coalition.

Chancer addressed the psychology of the left after a dreary period



Eric Ebel
DSA Honorary Chair Barbara Ehrenreich.

large contingent of participants from DSA's Youth Section) had much time to peruse the mall or munch beneath the Golden Arches. Many had arrived early Thursday to take advantage of "Arguing With the Right—And Winning the People," a conference organized by DSA's Center for Democratic Values. The highlight of the conference was Thursday evening's Left vs. Right debate on the topic "Does the American Economy Serve Democratic Values?" DSAers Barbara Ehrenreich and Cornel West wittily trounced right-wingers David Frum and Stuart Butler (Butler is a vice-president of the Heritage Foundation)



Eric Ebel
DSA Honorary Chair Cornel West during the "Left vs. Right" debate.



(L to R) George Bidermann, Jeff Lacher, and Karen Gibson lead the convention in song.

of retreat. "Since the 80s, the left has been on the defensive. We've become risk-averse. Now is the time for the left to step out in front, to take risks, and to rebuild a culture that is vibrant and inviting."

West was brief in his remarks. "In this icy period, we have to stand for hope. Democracy is difficult. As we stand in solidarity with the dispossessed, we have to fight our own despair." He noted that the left must remain open, without a fixed notion of what our institutional or discursive formations should be.

Delegates and other attendees' reactions to the plenary were mixed. Some questioned the institutional mechanisms involved in creating a progressive coalition. Others wanted to know how DSA in particular would maintain a socialist presence operating in the broader context sketched by Schwartz. Most agreed democratic socialists' unique contribution to progressive politics is our ideology, our analyses which confront the undemocratic character of corporate power head-on.

There was scarcely time to ponder the weighty implications of the themes touched on in the plenary before buses arrived to whisk us (well, at least some of us) off to attend Saturday evening's "Breaking

Bread" outreach event at Columbus University. Breaking Bread is a signature DSA event, where local DSAers invite community leaders representing a diversity of constituencies to meet with DSA leaders (in this case, Barbara Ehrenreich and Cornel West) to break bread and to speak candidly about how they think a particular issue, or cluster of issues, cuts at several political levels.

But before the event, the Youth Section hijacked the bright yellow school bus carrying West and half the convention to help stage a short protest downtown in front of the

county jail. Against a background of soft drizzle and rowdy chants of "Hey, Governor, We're Gonna Stop It—No More Prisons for Your Profit," DSA Youth Section Organizer Kevin Pranis and YS leader Rayyblin Vargas plugged DSA's Prison Moratorium Project. The project, initiated by the YS and the NYC-based Urban Justice Center, targets state governments, calling for a five-year freeze on prison building and redirecting the funds to education and community investment.

So it was that we arrived, albeit late and a trifle soggy, at the Breaking Bread forum, where West shared the stage with writer Barbara Ehrenreich, Reverend Dr. Jeffrey Kee, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church, multicultural consultant Luella Tapo, Baldemar Velasquez of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, and local activist Bill Moss. Referring to President Bill Clinton's recent call for a nationwide dialogue on race, moderator Bob Fittrakis put the question to the evenings' participants: Can we recreate a coalition, multicultural and multi-racial, that stands for social justice in America?

Responded West, "What is necessary—not just in Columbus, but in this nation and in fact around the world, is for visionary, courageous, sacrificial, service-oriented people of all colors to hold up the



(L to R) Mike Rabinowitz, Jessica Shearer, and perpetual Youth Section member Joe Schwartz.



Rep. Bernie Sanders addresses the convention with technical assistance from NPC member Bill McIver.

blood-stained banner called radical democracy."

Ehrenreich noted with characteristic tartness that President Clinton's call for a dialogue on race was limp and misdirected. "We don't need a dialogue on race, we need a dialogue on racism." The notion held by many whites that racism is a thing of the past has opened the way for attacks on affir-

native action and school "integration. Meanwhile, it is projected that by 2010 the prison population of the US will be 50 percent African American.

Ehrenreich urged us to keep in mind as we reach out to one another that on a deep level, we are related. "We know that we have one great, great, great ancestor, and she was an African woman. We are family. History has created terrible barriers among different parts of our family, but we have one mother. Sometimes, when I look at the persistent racism, the persistent misogyny and homophobia all around us, I can only wonder what Mother would say. And I know what she would say. 'You stop that, kids, 'cause I am pissed.'"

Some panelists testified how their religious faith has given them strength and guidance as they struggle for justice in a hostile world. Others remarked that tak-

ing a stand on behalf of justice entails many risks, including threats to one's physical safety.

When Breaking Bread concluded, convention goers stumbled wearily back to the hotel. Many of us, delighted to see old friends, stayed awake to gossip late into the night, before catching a few hours of sleep. Saturday's agenda was no less crowded, with commission meetings, activist workshops, and a plenary devoted to DSA's Campaign for Economic Justice. Then came the Resolutions Discussions, where the various resolutions submitted by individuals and DSA locals for consideration by the convention were presented to be debated, combined, and/or amended before being presented to the convention delegates with recommendations for voting. Based on their content, resolutions were steered to one of four committees: International, Domestic, Organizational, or pertaining to the Broad Left.

There was little controversy, with the exception of the Organizational Resolutions Discussion. Here there was a great deal of debate over the national organization's obligations to DSA locals and the creation of mechanisms to insure that locals get adequate resources for carrying out their political work. The resulting resolution called for DSA's National Political Committee to create a Local Development Committee to work with local activist leaders and staff on developing an or-

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1997-99 DSA National Political Committee

Theresa Alt, Ithaca, NY
 Ron Aranson, Huntington Woods, MI
 Marsha Barenstein, Brooklyn, NY
 Lynn Chancer, New York, NY
 Rachel Dewey, Princeton, NJ
 Bill Dixon, Chicago, IL
 Barb Ferrill, Denver, CO
 Julia Fitzgerald, Brooklyn, NY
 Virginia Franco, San Diego, CA
 Karen Gibson, Rochester, NY
 Jeff Gold, New York, NY
 Mike Heffron, Chicago, IL
 David Knuttunen, Belmont, MA
 Daraka Larimore-Hall, Chicago, IL
 Michael Lighty, San Francisco, CA
 Frank Llewellyn, Brooklyn, NY
 Bill McIver, Boulder, CO
 Tim Parks, Los Angeles, CA
 Katy Romich, Chicago, IL
 Joseph Schwartz, Ithaca, NY & Philadelphia, PA
 Raybblin Vargas, Chicago, IL & New York, NY
 Eric Vega, Sacramento, CA
 Juanita Webster, New York, NY

Youth Section Representatives:

Oscar Owens, Brooklyn, NY
 Jessica Shearer, Bryn Mawr, PA



A closing round of "The Internationale."

Bilingual Education in Jeopardy

BY DUANE CAMPBELL AND ERIC VEGA

Republican millionaire Ron Unz has qualified a ballot initiative that would effectively dismantle bilingual education in the state of California. It appears the Republican party and its leaders have mobilized a voting bloc that perceives immigrants as carpetbaggers, civil rights as reverse discrimination in favor of special interests, and multilingualism as a liberal bureaucratic mess that wastes taxpayers money. To paraphrase one leader during the last anti-immigrant campaign, "This initiative is the noose and you activists are the posse."

The Unz initiative, like the anti-immigrant Prop. 187 and the anti-affirmative action Prop. 209, are wedge issues that divide working people and drain the limited energy and resources of progressive activists who should be building the potential multiracial progressive electoral base that makes sense for California. The recognition that these proposals may be seen as attacks on women, people of color, and unionists has not visibly lessened their momentum. Even the huge Latino population is being groomed with care to vote against a basic language education policy that has proven to be ben-

eficial.

So here we go again . . .

What is the Unz initiative and what can democratic socialists do to help stop it?

Presently, California education policy calls for most students to receive native language instruction as they are learning English. Given the severe shortage of certified bilingual teachers, only a relatively small percentage (25 percent) of limited English proficient children actually receive bilingual education. Instead, many language minority students are already in a sink or swim learning environment, an

environment that Unz wants to codify into law.

The Unz initiative is an extreme, untested experiment on California's children. If it passes, it can be changed only by another initiative or by a two-thirds vote of the legislature and the Governor's signature. If the Unz initiative passes, the state has 60 days to put the 1.38 million limited English speaking children into one kind of classroom regardless of their differences in age, cultural backgrounds and academic abilities. These children are to be taught by a teacher who is forbidden under the threat of a lawsuit from speaking to their pupils in their native languages. After one school year (180 days) these children are placed in regular classes regardless of whether or not they've mastered enough academic English to succeed in school. Picture this: thirteen year old boys will be put into classrooms with five year old girls for an entire school year and the teachers can be sued if they attempt

Continued on page 22

DSA Convention / *Continued from page 9*

ganizing plan to strengthen local and state organizations, and to work with interested locals to help them develop their own organizing and fundraising plans. It was also recommended that the NPC explore the creation of a local development fund and investigate using resources generated by the next membership dues increase to finance this fund.

National Political Committee elections were held Saturday evening. This convention's NPC election was one of the most hotly contested within recent memory. Luckily, while the ballots were

being counted, candidates had ample opportunity to relax at Midwest DSA's Awards Banquet honoring Farm Labor Organizing Committee leader Baldemar Velazquez. Afterwards, everyone partied down at a multi-generational rump-shaking dance party.

The dancing lasted late into the night. Party-goers emerged Sunday morning, bleary-eyed, yawning, and a little sore, to cast their votes on convention resolutions and listen to Rep. Bernie Sanders give the convention's closing address. Sanders had been scheduled to attend the convention, but the battle over

fast-track trade legislation kept him in Washington. He addressed those assembled via conference call, and urged us to keep up the fight.

In keeping with tradition, the convention closed with a rousing, if occasionally off-key, rendition of the Internationale. Perhaps DSA's Convention in 1999 will make recruitment of the musically gifted one of our priorities for the new millennium. But with so many other demands pressing upon the country's largest democratic socialist organization, I doubt it.

When not working as DSA's Projects Coordinator, Michele Rossi fantasizes about being James Bond.

Copping Out on "Welfare-to-Work"

BY BILL MOSLEY

Last year Congress passed, and the President signed, legislation to "end welfare as we know it." Simple financial assistance to poor families is out; henceforth, anyone formerly on the welfare rolls—mostly unmarried women with children—will have to either get a job and graduate from the welfare rolls, perform a "public service" job, or face possible hunger and homelessness.

It soon became apparent to everyone that one of the main obstacles to the job requirement was the shortage of jobs in the communities where the poor live. Half of all welfare recipients live in central cities, from which the galloping suburbanization of the past half-century has, like a giant vacuum cleaner, sucked jobs—particularly those that could be filled by workers without advanced education or specialized training, such as manufacturing and service work. On the other hand, shop windows in many a suburban mall are decorated with "help wanted" signs. As Andrew Cuomo, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, said, "Either you have to get the jobs into the most distressed neighborhoods or you have to get the person to the job."

It is the latter option that the architects of welfare "reform" have seized upon. The federal government, backed by a number of communities and civic groups, jumped into the fray with plans to transport welfare recipients from the job-poor central cities to the outskirts where the jobs are—and, not to alarm the backyard barbecue set, to ship them back at the end of the day. The Clinton administration has proposed to spend an average of \$100 million annually over the next six years to support these reverse commutes. It also is backing the five-city "Bridges to Work" program—in Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Denver and Milwaukee—to

see what transportation strategies work best.

Problem solved, right? Now we can all get back to thinking up new ways to cut taxes for the rich.

Not so fast. While hardly anyone can object to providing city-to-suburb transportation as a short-term fix to urban unemployment, we on the left—indeed, anyone who cares about the urban poor and the cities themselves—should look warily when these programs are being sold as the fix that makes welfare repeal acceptable, even desirable. Consider:

- In most cases, the distant jobs to which cities workers will be ferried pay the minimum wage or only slightly more. Many of the jobs will offer no child care, which in some cases parents will have to pay out of their own pockets. Even when local governments provide child care, its quality can vary widely. The *New York Times* reported that New York City exercises no quality control over the child care it provides to the 17,000 children of welfare recipients; these children are exposed to providers "with no training, experience or aptitude, or with criminal records." Start with a day's gross pay of about \$40, then take out taxes, child care expenses and other work-related costs such as clothing and lunches—and the city-to-suburb commuter ends up with hardly anything left to support her family, even assuming transportation is free or heavily subsidized. In addition, the dis-

Rather than bring people to the jobs, we should bring the jobs to the people.

tances from home to work may require a half-hour or longer commute each way. And few of these jobs contain opportunity for advancement. Many welfare recipients working toward a high school or college diploma to enhance their long-term employment prospects will have to drop out and take a dead-end job to fulfill the work requirement.

- More fundamentally, to regard transportation as the ultimate answer gets government and corporations off the hook for robbing the central cities of their jobs in the first place. The flight of jobs from the cities is a result of conscious government policy, carried out largely to benefit corporations and the wealthy. Between the 1930s and the present, a coalition of corporate interests—consisting of developers, automakers, oil companies and others—has manipulated all levels of government to facilitate their withdrawal of investment and resources from the central cities and place them instead in increasingly far-flung suburban communities. Such programs as the Interstate Highway System and federally subsidized mortgages for suburban homes encouraged the flight of both jobs and more affluent taxpayers from the city. The result is diminished economic opportunity for those left behind and who could not afford to leave if they wanted—and low-cost housing is generally not a feature of the suburban mall

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It's a Dirty Job, But . . .

BY HARVEY J. KAYE

I have been arguing for some time that, however powerless the democratic left feels (and is), we should not fail to appreciate the worries and fears of our antagonists. More recently, I have been insisting that the forces of the right are growing increasingly anxious. They recognize that their days of ascendance may well be numbered. "Promise Keepers" aside, they see that the politics of the New Right have run out of steam and—though capitalism is apparently triumphant—the conservative movement is crumbling. In fact, I find my assertions affirmed by authoritative voices on the political right.

The Weekly Standard (September 1) featured a symposium titled "Is there a Worldwide Conservative Crack-Up?" with contributions from 30 different conservative figures ranging from Francis "The End-of-History" Fukuyama, to Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council, to Michael Joyce of the richly-endowed and endowing Bradley Foundation, to Paul Weyrich of the reportedly-troubled National Empowerment Television network (on whom, see David Grann's "Robespierre of the Right" in *The New Republic*, October 27). Of course, opinions varied widely. But there's just no avoiding reality...

Indeed—contrary to the claims of the reactionary columnist, Joseph Sobran, who referred to the issue as the "Mugging of Conservatism"—*The Weekly Standard*, after an uneven start, has become the most politically astute magazine of conservative commentary. And I must quote David Frum, a contributing editor, who agreed to appear at DSA's Center for Democratic Values' inaugural conference "Arguing with the Right" to debate Cornel West and Barbara Ehrenreich: "The Republicans are wrong to accuse Democrats of waging 'class war.' Clinton Democrats are pandering to the prosperous" (*Weekly Standard*, August 18). Con-

servative words? Hell, these are words to which we democratic socialists can readily subscribe.

Further attesting to the "conservative crack-up" at home and abroad—don't forget the recent wave of leftish election victories—the right has taken to following the example of the Socialist International: Under "co-chairmen" Margaret Thatcher and William F. Buckley Jr., they convened the First International Conservative Congress in Washington DC in late September in hopes of "Reinvigorating Conservatism Worldwide." American participants were a remarkable lot, including "I was a contender" Robert Bork; *National Review* editor John O'Sullivan (who Buckley seems to have sacked from his editorship in the wake of the Congress); *New Criterion* editor Hilton Kramer; former-feminist Christine Hoff Sommers; ABC-TV celeb George Will; "PC-hunter" Dinesh D'Souza; and neo-con Godfathers Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz and their young kinfolk William Kristol and Elliot Abrams. Matthew Scully's "The New Malaise?" (*National Review*, October 27) offers a summary of the Congress. But, as much as I hesitate to again recommend the pages of *The New Republic*, Jacob Heilbrunn's report, "Con Games" (October 20), is far

A Quarterly Look at Conservative Periodicals and Pundits

more entertaining.

I would be cheating you of a cheap thrill if I did not recite, as well, the titles of a few other conservative columns I picked up this past summer by way of my paid subscription to Townhall's *Conservative Current* (go on-line to <http://www.townhall.com>): "GOP Turmoil" by Bill Buckley; "The Gut-tering Out of the GOP Revolution" by Pat Buchanan; and "Visionless Congressional Republicans Play Farce" by Cal Thomas. Then there's Thomas Sowell's "Random Thoughts" which included the remark: "I have never believed in a third political party. But the Republicans are making me reconsider." It's tough being a rightwinger....

There's more to the conservative crisis than disunity and a lack of direction. Sure, capitalism has triumphed—only a fool would fail to see that. But that doesn't mean we've reached the end of history—only a trickster would try to get away with that line. Class struggle comes in many forms and degrees, and the right well knows it. It's not just that a variety of capitalists like George Soros are having second-thoughts about restoring a pre-New Deal political economy in America and globally. Working people themselves are starting to fight back. Ever sensitive to developments from below—we should be so sensitive!—conservatives have started to renew their traditional attacks on the labor movement.

Eugene Methvin's "The Union Label" (*National Review*, September 29), Linda Chavez's "The Truth About Teamsters" (*Conservative Current*, August 11), Don Feder's "The State of Union Violence" (August 29), Robert Novak's "Investigating Labor" (August 29), and Paul Craig Roberts' "Truckers on Wrong Road" (September 16)—in the wake of the Teamster/UPS workers' victory, they all reveal the right's deepening fear that John Sweeney (a fellow DSAer) and the AFL-CIO are serious about restoring "the movement" to labor movement. Furthermore, attention is also being accorded to the new alliance of labor and the academic left represented by the mushrooming of Labor Teach-Ins and the formation of Scholars, Artists and Writers for Social Justice, a national network

of pro-labor intellectuals and cultural workers.

By the way, did you all catch the *Reader's Digest* 75th Anniversary

There's more to the conservative crisis than disunity and a lack of direction.

Issue, "The American Dream: Today & Tomorrow"? Surprisingly, the *Digest's* stock-price and earnings have fallen this year, in spite of the bull market. Capitalism is just filled with contradictions. Yet before you celebrate the *Digest's* demise (which is not on the horizon), just

think how much greater it would be if we progressives could secure control of it.... Anyhow, to close on a festive note, I send out Happy Anniversary Greetings to our friends and enemies at *Reader's Digest*.

Harvey J. Kaye is professor of social change & development at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (kayeh@uwgb.edu) and the author of "Why Do Ruling Classes Fear History?" and Other Questions (St. Martin, 1997 paperback).

Welfare-to-Work / Continued from page 11

communities. Today, malignant neglect of the urban poor is an established practice.

Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, writing in the *New York Times*, called subsidized transportation "a stopgap measure at best. Door-to-door long-distance shuttles simply are not cost effective. Over the long term, we need to stop subsidizing suburban sprawl."

"Transportation is one of many elements of getting from welfare to work," said Stuart Campbell, senior program associate at the Washington-based Coalition on Human Needs. "You need a combination of creation of jobs, transportation, education, support services and child care."

While governments and civic groups develop their transportation schemes, we on the left must demand *real* answers to the problems of the urban poor: namely, massive investment in our cities to create employment opportunities that past policy destroyed. *Rather than bring people to the jobs, we should bring*

the jobs to the people. Not only do many city dwellers need jobs; they also need health care and other social services, child care facilities and retail stores—grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing outlets, places to buy household goods. One needs little imagination to perceive the irony of a city dweller working all day in a suburban shopping mall—that Mecca of redundant consumerism—to return home at night to a neighborhood where the only businesses within walking distance are a liquor store and a check-cashing service.

There is plenty of money for urban revitalization; all that is lacking is political will. The government seems to have no problem coming up with a Cold War-level \$244 billion for the military in a post-Cold War world and \$95 billion in tax cuts over five years, mostly for the wealthy, when it claims to be trying to balance the budget. A tiny fraction of this spending would provide badly needed funds to begin revitalizing our cities. These need not be

"make-work" jobs or the current type of municipal or nonprofit public service employment schemes being used in New York and other cities paying poverty wages and threatening the jobs of unionized government employees. (DSA is one of nearly 70 organizations which have pledged not to employ New York "workfare" recipients). The first priority should be to establish public services where there are too few, and to provide seed money and low-cost loans for start-up small businesses serving, and employing, the communities where they are located.

So let's not let President Clinton fool us into thinking he's solved the "welfare-to-work" dilemma. The battle for the real solution has yet to begin.

Bill Mosley is an activist with DC/MD/NOVA DSA and a member of the Democratic Left editorial board.

Corporate Takeover of Higher Education

BY AARON JOHNSON

As the unemployment level plummets and the Dow continues to soar to new heights it can be tempting to look favorably on our corporate-dominated society. Indeed, President Bill Clinton, famous for promoting capital gains tax breaks and free trade, earned a record approval rating this past summer of 64 percent. Street crime is down, and welfare recipients are "earning" their benefits through workfare programs while relieving businesses of high labor costs. Family-friendly establishments such as Price Club, Wal-Mart and McDonald's permeate the country from the cities and their suburbs to the farthest reaches of rural America.

So What Could Be Bad?

One of the lesser-known effects of the runaway boom of corporations is their encroachment on public higher education. Conservative state governments are shirking their responsibility to provide access to a decent college education to their citizens. Instead of fighting back, many schools are looking to corporations to bail them out. University administrations claim it is more effective to patch governmental budget cuts by courting corporations. As a result, public campuses are increasingly littered with the signs of privatization: from chain stores and ubiquitous advertisements to low-wage labor and high tuition. Meanwhile, as corporations move in, minority and lower-income students are squeezed out. This pattern betrays the greatest function of state universities: to extend the opportunity to get a college education to those of modest economic backgrounds.

An example: the University Center at Binghamton of the State University of New York. Located in the Susquehanna River valley,

"SUNY-B" perches in the forests just outside a deindustrialized city. Above the campus to the east are a Marriott Hotel and the offices of Time-Warner Cable. A quick drive west takes you to Barnes and Noble, Wal-Mart, and a SONY theater, while Gannett's *Press* and *Sun* headquarters lurks directly opposite the campus main entrance and a sign welcoming you to "Binghamton University." These corporations literally and symbolically surround SUNY-B, now dubbed "Binghamton University." Chosen by university administrators in 1992, this name change was part of a vigorous campaign to attract corporate sponsorship. "BU," as it is confusingly renamed, represents a conscious distancing from a commitment to the public education system under-funded by a state hostile to tax increases. "SUNY," once associated with quality, had to go.

But might this corporate takeover benefit the students? Maybe the name change to "BU" really is in their best interest. Students entering their dorms every fall are greeted by corporate care packages that contain sample-sized products,

Instead of fighting back, many schools are looking to corporations to bail them out.

all to help ease them into the unfamiliar college environment. Enclosed are mini deodorant sticks, aftershave lotion, as well as crackers and cheese so that one need not worry about that first late-night hunger pang or the sundry toiletries one sometimes forgets at home. Gillette and Frito-Lay come across as friends, for they help to make the college stay more comfortable.

Pretty soon telemarketers harass students into buying such products as the "Binghamton University Alumni Association Mastercard." Each purchase with this plastic sends a small contribution to the school, so how could one refuse? The idea that credit cards could put one in debt is obscured as Mastercard flaunts its aid to the alumni and students of "BU." Is it not enough that many will spend the rest of their lives repaying tuition loans? Credit card companies have a captive market of students who are already going into big debt. Living on credit, therefore, appeals, and students amass even greater debts while corporations reap the profits.

Union Renovation

On another front, in the spring of 1998, Barnes and Noble and Marriott will lead the way in a \$10 million renovation of the University Union. The two companies have already pledged more than \$1 million each toward the construction work. Barnes and Noble,

which already has a monopoly on coursebook sales on campus, can now look forward to moving out of its cramped basement location in the library to a new two-story superstore in the Union. Marriott, which holds a virtual monopoly over campus food services, will get an expanded Minimall, meaning more opportunities to hire non-union workers and to charge exorbitant prices to students. Indeed, the only alternative food source is the Food Co-op. This student-run store is currently located on the Union's second floor—it sells only local organic products, and enjoys a spacious room and high visibility to people walking outside. However, the "BU" Administration plans to hide it in the new Union by moving it to the basement.

So what exactly is so harmful about a larger corporate presence on campus? The fundamental purpose of corporations is to make a profit—and this clashes directly with the goal of a public university, which is to provide an affordable higher education to state residents. All on-campus students, for example, are required to purchase a Marriott meal plan. This gives Marriott an uncontested monopoly on campus—for even if students choose to patronize the Food Co-op, they still must pay nearly \$1,000 per semester to Marriott.

Marriott is a notorious union buster. The workers in "BU's" campus dining halls are not unionized, and many fear that they would be fired if their managers learned of their desire to form a union. "It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to form a union," says a former Marriott employee I will call Mike. In the meantime, they are paid close to minimum wage, and work with the fear of being replaced at the slightest sign of discontent. According to Mike, "no one is content." He tells of many dangerous working conditions in the dining halls, such as grills set up with insufficient maneuvering room that scorch workers with

grease.

Other campus employees suffer from prolonged physical injuries as a result of the repetitive motions they are required to perform while on the job. "You'd see people with bandages on their hands," said Mike, "and then they would get these sudden, sharp pains... That's part of carpal tunnel syndrome." Suffering of this sort is commonplace, and can be found in most departments.

Marriott's student employees endure even harsher conditions. Some work as many as 22 hours per week (usually three days), but are only allowed one 15-minute break per shift. They are often detained in the dining hall until 11:30 at night—sometimes on successive nights—long after the "full-timers" have gone home. But do they receive overtime compensation? No. Marriott skirts any legal regulations concerning overtime or benefits by

The fundamental purpose of corporations is to make a profit—and this clashes directly with the goal of a public university, which is to provide an affordable higher education

hiring all students *part-time*.

Finally, who receives the \$1,000 that students pay each semester? When one buys a Marriott meal plan at SUNY-B, only a portion of the check is applied to one's meal card. The rest disappears in the name of operating costs. But according to Mike, "it's not going to the employees." He received \$4.35 per hour when the minimum wage was ten cents less. Cooks, who earn only \$5.15 an hour, send their dirty pots and pans to be cleaned by a \$75 thousand dishwashing machine.

Tuition Bills Mount

The amount of money extracted from students might soon skyrocket if Governor Pataki and the SUNY Board of Trustees get their way. They propose that each SUNY school determine its own tuition. Differential tuition, as it is called, means more power for the SUNY-Binghamton—a hem, Binghamton University—Administration. Phrased more accurately, it means more freedom to pursue a corporate/privatization agenda. The cost of SUNY-B would soon approach that of most private schools (in the \$16,000 to \$25,000 range). The Administration can, no doubt, get away with this, due to the prestigious academic reputation SUNY-B has gained over the years. It is also certain that fewer minorities would apply to the school—due to tuition increases—and those already attending will most likely drop out, as has happened in the University of California system. So much for the "talented and diverse student body" that the University President flaunts in the Annual Report. Enrollment of black students in 1995 (the last year for which data were available) was only 5.7 percent of the entire freshman class. Latinos constituted 7.1 percent, while whites made up the obvious majority at 64.4 percent. Once "BU" is allowed to set its own tuition level, can anyone really expect it to sustain even this disgracefully lopsided racial and ethnic enrollment? One of the appeals of the SUNY system is that students can choose a school based on their academic level, not their income level.

To further raise "BU's" profile, Division II athletics, which is more professionally-gearred and thus more expensive to sustain than Division III, has been proposed—along with the construction of a new sports arena. This complex would exacerbate traffic, require facilities for parking, and might tear up the school's nature preserve. (Indeed, the only other place to build would be on top of the state highway.) How does the administration

plan to fund this project? It has raised the student athletic fee to \$50 per semester, up from \$45—and, according to *Pipe Dream* 6/11/97 (a SUNY-B paper), will soon demand \$100. Furthermore, Mary Ann Swain, SUNY-B provost and vice president for academic affairs, is reported to have predicted a drastic increase in corporate advertisements and promotional fees.

Interlocking Directorates

Not only have businesses such as Marriott, Barnes and Noble, New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG), Partnership 2000, and New York Telephone bought up segments of our campus—or pushed their money-making agendas through large contributions—but many have personal representatives moonlighting as SUNY-B administrators. Take the case of University President Lois DeFleur. Has she really done her best to oppose Albany's budgetary assaults? Her real efforts are doubtful. As Errol Schweizer, a SUNY-B student activist, wrote after a meeting with DeFleur, "Despite her claims to 'lobbying' on 'our' behalf in Albany several days a week in order to get cuts restored, she could not see the connection between 14 years in SUNY cuts and a new billion dollar prison expansion project that [Governor] Pataki has in the budget." Her lobbying efforts have produced little. But again, just how devoted is she to restoring the cuts? The move to privatize SUNY-B is, after all, in DeFleur's personal interest. As a board member or wage-earner in nearly every corporation in the area, she would benefit from the big profits made off of unsuspecting students. As she herself admits in the Binghamton University Annual Report 1995-96, she "served on the boards" of M&T Bank, NYSEG, Partnership 2000, the United Health Services Foundation, and WSKG television—in addition to the Center for Commercial Competitiveness (C3), mention

of which she conveniently omits. (C3 is a cobweb of private industries, organizations and councils, and its stated goal is to "help industry become globally competitive.") Class I board directors at NYSEG earn \$22,000 per year, in addition to \$1,000 for every NYSEG shareholders' meeting they attend and \$500 for each conference call. This "service" is what DeFleur calls "advocacy for the University." I call the promoting of 12,000 college students as a corporate grazing pasture advocacy for herself.

These "efforts" to "raise the University's visibility" must be credited not only to DeFleur. *Leftward Ho!* June, 1996 (CUNY Graduate School) reports that Thomas Kelley, the Vice President for External Affairs at SUNY-B, is also Project Director for C3 at the SUNY-Binghamton Foundation. His commute between jobs can hardly be taxing, since C3 uses office space on the SUNY-B campus. In other words, a corporate beneficiary is at the helm of the main money-raising body for the university.

It is in DeFleur's and Kelley's interest to spread corporate profit-making to the SUNY-B campus—and creating the private aura of "BU" was the first step toward opening the floodgates to profit-

hungry corporations. But who else can save SUNY-B, DeFleur might argue, other than corporations? It is true that only 49 percent of the University's budget comes from the State, down from 84 percent just a few years ago. But instead of effectively fighting Pataki's cuts, DeFleur has catered to the greed of mega-companies.

Conveniently, DeFleur brags that SUNY-B is "rated in *Money Magazine* as Best Buy in America's colleges" and that "*U.S. News & World Report* ranked Binghamton third most efficient and 13th of 20 best buys in the nation." *If it were not for "SUNY" the school would never be worthy of "best buy" ranking.*

The precise outcome of this privatization trend remains to be seen. What is certain, however, is that at SUNY-B the bottom line has taken top priority. Government is pulling out from its responsibility to provide an affordable education—and instead of fighting against this trend the SUNY-B administration has taken the path of least resistance and greatest profit.

Aaron Johnson, who once upon a time interned with DSA, is a student at SUNY-Binghamton. An earlier version of this article appeared in The Activist, published erratically and with love by DSA's Youth Section.

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Turning Anger Into Action

BY BILL MOSLEY

On Sept. 3, some 1,000 marchers descended on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to present their grievances to Congress. Marches in Washington are a regular occurrence, but this one was out of the ordinary in that it consisted almost wholly of D.C. citizens with a demand from the city's neighborhoods: to stop trampling on home rule in the District.

Speakers at the rally—including the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dick Gregory, Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) and local activists—decried recent actions by Congress that had robbed the District of the limited measure of home rule it once enjoyed. The citizens expressed their frustration that while they paid taxes and fought in America's wars, they were more than ever a colony, without voting representation in Congress—a unique condition among national capitals in democratic countries—or a meaningful voice in local government. Jackson called the rally “a gathering for the soul of our democracy.” The old American Revolutionary phrase “taxation without representation is tyranny” held more than historical significance for this gathering.

The Sept. 3 rally was not the first pro-democracy demonstration in D.C. It did, however, signal the rebirth of a new, larger and more determined movement to resist federal assaults on the city and empower citizens in the struggle to address the city's real economic and social problems.

The District's battle for the same rights as other Americans has been underway at varying levels of intensity for the city's entire two-century history. Ever since the early federal government took control over a 10-square-mile enclave on the Potomac River, the United States has had to reconcile its advocacy of democracy with the colonial status of its own capital. A

federally controlled capital was thought necessary to protect the seat of government from local intimidation after Congress suffered a fright when a group of Revolutionary War soldiers marched on Philadelphia in 1783 to demand back pay. Armed uprisings were hardly a concern in later years, but the federal government continued to rationalize its political control over the capital by insisting that Washington is “the city that belongs to all Americans.”

As time went on, race grew as a factor in the city's disenfranchisement. In 1861 the *Washington Star* raised alarms over the prospect of the District becoming “the harbor for at least 50,000 negroes, practically freed as an incident of the war” which would render the city “nothing less than hell on earth for the white man.”* A century later, with the city's population now majority-African American, few editorialists or politicians would publicly express such sentiments. But privately, many members of Congress—especially conservative Southerners such as Rep. John McMillian of South Carolina, who was practically D.C. czar in those days—still regarded as unthinkable a black-led government in the beloved city of monuments.

While racial politics were long

*Gillette, Howard Jr. *Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D.C.* Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 27.

Washington, D.C. Democracy Movement

instrumental in denying home rule to the District, they eventually played in the city's favor. In the wake of the civil rights movement and the wave of urban riots that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.—including a devastating riot in D.C.—the federal government saw fit to appease District residents by granting a limited version of home rule. During the early 1970s the city gained a nonvoting delegate in Congress, an elected school board and, finally, a city council empowered to enact legislation and a mayor with executive powers.

But this favor did not come without strings. Congress retained the right to overturn any District-passed legislation—indeed, it still could enact laws over the head of the local government. Members of Congress from the Virginia and Maryland suburbs were on guard to assure that no District government measures would inconvenience their constituents. Congress continually vetoed commuter tax measures, robbing the city of a revenue source that numerous other cities depend upon. It overturned a requirement that city employees live in the District. And it interfered in the city's social policy in numerous ways, from overturning domestic partnership laws to requiring a vote on adopting a death penalty (which the city's voters ultimately rejected). The city's delegate to Congress had no vote, hence little clout to defend the Dis-

trict.

Over the two decades of limited home rule—or “home fool” as late D.C. Councilmember Julius Hobson called it—the federal government did their best to convince city residents that their civic participation mattered but little. No matter what the District did to improve the lot of its citizens, Congress often rendered these efforts meaningless. This civic disengagement certainly played a role—how large a role is subject to debate—in the pattern of corruption, favoritism and mismanagement that developed during Marion Barry’s early

Barry’s resurrection was a stark illustration of the gap between black and white in their perceptions of reality.

years as mayor. Such problems were not unique to the District, but the city’s peculiar political culture—diminished by federal heavy-handedness and shot through with racial divisions—seemed to make it impervious to reform.

In the meanwhile, many citizens fought to expand democracy, but without success. A proposed constitutional amendment to gain voting rights in Congress failed to win ratification by a sufficient number of states. A movement to make the District the 51st state—one of whose leaders has been Councilmember and DSA Vice-Chair Hilda Mason, with the local DSA chapter an active participant—gained momentum in the early 1980s. The beauty of the statehood idea was that it would require only a vote by both houses of Congress and the signature of the president. The portion of the city containing federal buildings would remain the constitutionally-prescribed “federal enclave,” while the rest of the Dis-

trict would become the state of New Columbia. For a brief time, it looked as if statehood might become a reality; President Clinton supported the concept, and the House held a vote. But the vote fell short, and the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994 ended any near-term prospects for statehood.

Two other developments in 1994 completed the groundwork for the federal takeover to come. The first was the return of Barry to the mayor’s office after one term in exile. Seemingly discredited and banished from politics after being arrested for crack possession in an FBI sting, Barry’s resurrection was a stark illustration of the gap between black and white in their perceptions of reality. While most whites saw Barry as a symbol of corruption and decline, to many blacks he represented both the rising black prosperity of much of the 1980s and the personal tragedy of addiction—as well as the possibility of redemption.

The second development was the arrival of the full brunt of the city’s fiscal crisis, the bitter fruit of a decade of suburbanization and federal neglect. A \$722 million budget deficit faced the incoming Barry administration. At the opposite end of Pennsylvania Ave., the newly-elected Republican majority in Congress, led by Newt Gingrich, saw an opportunity to remake the city.

Using Barry as a bogeyman and the fiscal crisis as a club, Congress, between 1995 and 1997, passed a series of laws which chipped away at home rule until little was left—first establishing an appointed control board with expansive powers, then stripping the elected school board of its powers and transferring them to another appointed body. Finally, in August 1997, Congress—under the cover of a fiscal rescue package—enacted legislation, signed by President Clinton, that eliminated virtually all of the remaining authority of the elected government, vesting virtually ab-

WHAT YOU CAN DO

At its national convention in November, DSA adopted a resolution urging its locals to join the campaign for democracy in the District of Columbia.

DSA activists and locals around the country can help by writing and calling their members of Congress and demanding that they work with the people of the District to address the city’s problems by expanding democracy and empowering the citizens—not through enacting punitive legislation and treating D.C. as their personal plantation.

DC/MD/NOVA DSA will provide materials to participating locals containing background information on the state of the District, sample letters and phone scripts, op-eds and other materials. Besides contacting their members of Congress, locals can place op-eds and letters to the editor in their local newspapers, speak to other local organizations and apply other strategies to educate their communities and build support for democracy in D.C.

For more information, call DC/MD/NOVA DSA at (202) 483-3299.

solute power in the control board. In addition, the authority over the city’s criminal justice system was transferred to a “truth in sentencing” commission dominated by the federal Department of Justice.

Now that Congress had political control over the city, they made haste to exercise it. In line with Gingrich’s pledge to make D.C. a “laboratory” for Republican ideas, Capitol Hill began considering measures such as vouchers for private and parochial schools, the outlawing of funding for reproductive choice for poor women, an arbitrary cap on welfare and imposition of a death penalty. Big business salivates at the further disempowering of pesky citizens who have, with some effectiveness, fought developers who aimed to make a profit at the expense of neighborhoods—especially poor neighborhoods—and the environment. Wealthy interests are confi-

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Religious Socialists Meet in Finland

The fifty representatives from fourteen countries who met August 1-4 in Espoo, Finland, at the ILRS Congress were keenly interested when Dr. Harry Heino, former Prime Minister of Finland, described the work of the Interaction Council of former state and government heads under the chairmanship of Helmut Schmidt.

The Council has formulated a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities which it is working to persuade the United Nations to adopt as a necessary parallel to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This document put a new perspective on the price of freedom and the cost of poverty that participants had met to consider.

Delegates to the Congress included members of the Swedish and Hungarian parliaments, the Lord Mayor of Norwich, England, and a member of the Council in Slovenia's largest city. The Hungarian delegate also represents his country at the European Union, and the President of ILRS previously served thirty-five years as a member of the Swedish parliament, as well as a representative of his nation to the UN General Assembly. Judy Deutsch (a DSA member from Sudbury, MA) was the official delegate from the United States, which Andrew Hammer, Rod Ryon and Joan Stanne also represented. All are DSA members.

For the first time, Muslims were included. They came from Algeria, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Sweden. Unfortunately, three expected Muslim representatives from Bangladesh suffered a serious automobile accident before boarding their plane, and so did not attend. Only Christians, and Judy Deutsch, a Jewish Unitarian Universalist, have attended previous

Congresses, and all participants except those from the United States have represented Christian Socialist movements. DSA does not have religious affiliations and DSA's Religion & Socialism Commission, which is affiliated with the ILRS, is interfaith.

The participants from former Eastern bloc nations (Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovenia) described their countries' varying stages of economic recovery from the difficulties brought about by their newly-gained freedom, particularly from the loss of Russia as their principal market. Congress participants had an opportunity to visit Tallin in Estonia—the first of the Baltic states to free itself from the USSR. Participants from western nations (Austria, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the US) described their nations' efforts to reduce national debts as the expense of the poorest and weakest in their societies and the varying successes they and their allies have experienced in working against this trend.

Paavo Lipponen, the current Prime Minister of Finland, gave an informative address on the future of the Nordic state, and Ahmed Al-Rawl, President of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe, presented an address which disturbed some participants when it stressed the value of traditional families, in contrast to other life

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styles. This point highlighted the work that must be done to develop solidarity among people with differing approaches.

The ILRS has been accepted as an Associate Member of the Socialist International. One of the eleven planks included in the Congress's Report was that freedom, not capitalism, should be the winner of the Cold War; that poverty should not be the price of freedom, or of reforms of social security or of the welfare state; that the nonchalant arrogance and unrestricted egoism of modern capitalism cannot be tolerated; that there are religious and social values of justice, older than capitalism, which must be maintained; that the idea of human dignity is universal and individual, as is solidarity; and the rejection of any accommodation towards the development in our countries in the direction of a two-thirds society, in which one-third of the population no longer shares in the prosperity of the country.

Copies of the Congress's Report, which includes the proposed Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Judy Deutsch, 41 Concord Rd, Sudbury, MA 01776.

that they had no choice; they had to steal something because they needed it, or hit someone because that person caused an offense. Offenders often have difficulty identifying other behavioral options. So do elected officials who advocate no option but severe punishment, frightening people into behaving as we wish. That is not the only choice in managing behavior. Fear is not the most powerful motivator.

We now know from years of research that positive motivators are often more effective than negative sanctions; that relationships shape behavior more than fear. We are making some changes in the way we rear children and run workplaces based on that research. It is time to apply that knowledge to the way we discipline community members who violate our rules. It is also time that we re-evaluate the needs of crime victims, heretofore thought to desire stern revenge for the sins of offenders. The latest data here too indicate that the primary needs of victims and their families are simply not served by retribution to offenders.

Under the restorative justice model, offender accountability is dealt with in several ways: understanding how anti-social behavior affected other people, not just courts or officials; acknowledging personal choice in an incident; consciousness of the harm done to others; action to repair the harm where possible; and making necessary behavioral changes to avoid criminal acts in the future.

Several of these restorative processes for supporting victims and holding offenders accountable have been adapted from indigenous cultures. These move us in the direction of a more complex understanding of the human context of an offense for both victims and offenders, and encourage democratic and community participation by citizens. One component, Family Group Conferencing, was devel-

oped from a Maori tradition in New Zealand and is being implemented in North America, Britain and Australia. Family, friends and key supporters of the victim and offender help resolve a criminal incident with the help of a trained facilitator. Conferencing is currently used most often for juveniles as a diversion from the court process. Early feedback indicates high levels of satisfaction by all participants, especially victims.

Sentencing circles, or peacemaking circles, which are spreading across Canada but have only

Democracy cannot survive
without . . . a commitment to
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whom we dislike.

recently been introduced in the U.S., typically involve not only victim, offender and their families, but interested community members, judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, police and corrections workers. This process is directed towards developing a consensus on the elements of a sentencing plan. This plan might incorporate commitments by the judicial system, the community, family members and of course the offender. Follow-up circles are used to monitor the progress of the offender.

Community Panels or boards are another approach. Typically composed of a small group of citizens, these panels meet face to face with offenders to discuss the nature of the offense, its negative repercussions, and specific actions the offender will take to make reparation for the crime. Vermont has developed the most extensive statewide programs of this sort with adult offenders. Other communities around the country are using some

form of the Community Panel model with juveniles.

All of these processes are using criminal events as opportunities to build fundamental community capacity for problem solving and constructive collective action. Even in this harsh political climate, where talk of crime involves much inflamed rhetoric, community members have responded to restorative programs with large quantities of common sense. They fully comprehend the need to get at the underlying causes of crime, how offenders can fully take in the consequences of negative behavior, and change it. Increasing public participation helps provide an antidote to fear and the sense of hopelessness around criminal justice issues.

Research and direct experience indicate that abstract questions about crime and punishment elicit harsh survey responses. Direct involvement in a case, with contextual information, usually elicits a humane response, one that may be more effective in the long run.

Democracy cannot survive without a sense of efficacy by citizens and a commitment to fair play even for those whom we dislike. Both of these are seriously eroded by our current climate of fear and hate. Exclusively martial responses to crime is causing rot at the center of our commitment to and capacity for democracy. One thinks immediately of the shameful incarceration statistics of the U.S. as compared to enrollments in higher education, or the much lower incarceration rates of other industrial nations.

We can undo the harm of cynical politicians and the mass media by creating many small opportunities at the local level for community members to actively engage in the human drama of understanding and healing a criminal event.

*Kay Pranis is a Restorative Justice
Planner with the Minnesota Department
of Corrections.*

plished. First, we need to educate the public about the extent of prison-building, its failure to reduce crime, and the bait and switch used by politicians who rail against violent offenders and fill prison cells with non-violent offenders. Second, we need to educate the public about the financial and social costs of uncontrolled prison expansion, and build support for prioritizing educational and community investment. Third, we need to advocate strategies that provide resources and control at the community level, so that crime-stricken communities can use community investment and social services as well as policing and prison-cells to reduce crime. Much of the fear and anger surrounding crimes results from the ways in which communities and victims (as well as offenders) are disempowered by the criminal justice system, and could be resolved by strengthening victim and community involvement.

These ideas, of course, are not particularly new. While few have focused on community empowerment, liberal criminal justice lobbyists, advocates, and policymakers have been arguing for twenty years that prison-building is wasteful and dangerous. Unfortunately, while these individuals and organizations know a lot about criminal justice policy, they know not enough about politics and virtually nothing about organizing, and as a result, the arguments lack both an effective vehicle for reaching the public at large and any sort of grassroots political strength to force politicians to listen. As is the case with many policies that hurt the vast majority, there is no constituency against prison-building to counterbalance the prison guards' unions (who have one of the most powerful PACs in California), the private prison industry, economically depressed towns in search of jobs, and public fear of crime that makes prison-building look like a "no-lose" proposition for politi-

cians.

The Prison Moratorium Project is intended to create just such a constituency by reaching out to the populations most directly harmed by prison spending (students, educators, community and social service organizations, state employees) and those who oppose the devastating impact on prisons and communities (civil libertarians, religious institutions, civil rights activists, progressives, and prisoners, their families, their friends, and their communities). While the PMP began as a very small effort involving a few activists in New York and Chicago, it has begun to gather momentum and promises to be a viable strategy for challenging both the growth of the prison-industrial complex and the hegemony of right-wing ideas over politics in general.

In New York, where the effort is most developed, the PMP has focused on Governor George Pataki's attempt to secure \$800 million for the construction of new maximum security facilities, while proposing cuts in education and social services. In 1996, the proposal was defeated entirely by the opposition of the Democratic-controlled Assembly, but in 1997, it was clear that the Assembly's resolve was slipping, and that the proposed prison-expansion was a real possibility. The Youth Section chose to use its limited resources to educate students and mount a small letter-writing and petition-gathering drive at State University of New York campuses in Geneseo and Binghamton and in New York City (led by DSA activists at Columbia and NYU). We gathered about 500 letters and signatures—not many, but enough to attract some notice from Democratic state legislators—and made prison-building an issue in some of the SUNY budget mobilizations, a move that put a scare into local Republican representatives who wanted to sup-

port prisons without appearing to abandon education. In the end, only a quarter of the Governor's proposed prison expansion was approved, setting the stage for a budget fight in 1998 (an election year for Pataki).

Over the summer, the PMP began serious work, first, to make prisons the centerpiece of the fight around the 1998 budget in New York, and second, to turn the PMP into a truly national project by initiating efforts in a number of key states. We benefited from the work of Paul Johnson, the Youth Section's first PMP intern, who was partially funded by a PMP benefit concert held last spring at NYU. With Paul's help, the PMP put out its first mass mailing and radically expanded its base of support, particularly among community and religious organizations. The PMP began encouraging organizations to send letters to Governor Pataki expressing concern about prison-building and support for a moratorium.

Recently, there have been other exciting developments on the national scene. Youth Section activists in California, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio have already begun researching local prison-building issues and will begin mounting educational efforts this fall. The PMP has also begun to work in partnership with the United States Student Association—which represents more than a million students nationwide—to develop a PMP training program in conjunction with USSA's GrassRoots Organizing Weekends program (with trainings held at UCLA in November and tentatively planned for New York in February), and to develop materials (with help from the Center for Campus Organizing) for use by USSA's state and campus organizations.

Kevin Pranis is DSA's Youth Organizer.

to communicate with the students in a language they understand!

Why another anti-immigrant initiative?

During the last decade the U.S. has experienced its largest immigration since the early 1900's. As the world economic order becomes more integrated, with corporations able to move from country to coun-

try to exploit workers, and to force workers to compete with one another, we must anticipate that working people will also move to improve life opportunities for themselves and their families. Millions will migrate. Global capitalism produces global migration.

When immigrant workers arrive here, their children deserve an opportunity to earn a quality education. These children will require several years (researchers estimates three to seven years) to learn sufficient English to survive and become productive in our economy. The children need an education to prepare them for entrance into the economy. The entire community benefits from a well-educated work force.

The Unz initiative is an attempt to deal a crippling blow to these young people. It is not about the best method of teaching English to non-native speakers. The research is clear on this point. This initiative is about a would-be political leader (Ron Unz) working with xenophobic and right wing extremists, and many poorly informed people, in a vain effort to halt immigration and to punish immigrants for coming to the United States.

Mainstream political activists err in not joining in the defense of immigrant communities. Many Democrats, for example, encourage immigrant voter registration and plan to benefit from the immigrant votes, but they are doing little to defeat this harsh measure.

DSA has an obligation to defend the democratic rights of language minorities in this country. As democratic socialists our activism should advance democracy, the common good, and long-range unity among progressive people in the U.S. The campaign against the Unz-Matta initiative allows us, as a primarily European American organization, to join with other groups in defense of the fundamen-

tal educational rights of immigrant children.

It is our role, as democratic socialists, to show the way to building a new society where immigrants are treated as humans. DSA, and the Anti-Racism and Latino Commissions, will join with the immigrant communities to defend the right of children to attend school in classes where they understand the language of the teacher and where they learn English.

Mainstream political activists err in not joining in the defense of immigrant communities.

Only a multi-racial coalition can win elections for progressives in California and in many other areas. To build a multi-racial coalition, we must be willing to stand with the immigrant communities in defense of their children. We should devote available time and resources to this important campaign.

Here are the things you can do to help defeat Unz.

IN CALIFORNIA. Work to get every organization you are part of to take a "No on Unz" position. Our goal is to have as many school districts, educational organizations, child advocacy groups, unions, business groups, et cetera, as possible on record with a "no" position. Sample "resolution" statements are available from the campaign if you need one. Be sure that every organization that takes a "no" position is reported to Kelly Hayes-Raitt at Citizens for an Educated America, (310)392-8715.

If you are a member of a large union, professional association or other group that has a political action arm and gives contributions to campaigns, and if you already have achieved a "no on Unz" resolution

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Bilingual Education Strategies

Bilingual education is a series of strategies that have as their goal the development of English proficiency and assisting the student to comprehend the mainstream curriculum. Quality Bilingual programs unusually include time spent on:

- English language development
- Primary (or home) language instruction (about 20 percent of the time)
- Specially designed academic English to help students understand courses such as science, and
- Mainstream academic English.

Meanwhile, another initiative that is expected to share the June '98 ballot would effectively neutralize the political activities of unions in the state. Entitled the Campaign Reform Initiative, the proposal would prevent unions from using a member's dues for political campaigns unless the union member gives written permission on an annual basis. Governor Pete Wilson has worked to qualify the initiative which was signed by approximately 775,000 people.

A preliminary poll taken in November by the Field Institute found strong support for the anti-union initiative that masquerades as campaign finance reform in defense of worker's rights. Democrats favored it 66 percent to 29 percent opposed, Republicans, 82 percent to 14 percent opposed, Union members 70 percent to 26 percent opposed. Results were taken from a telephone survey of 527 adults.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

BY DSA NATIONAL DIRECTOR ALAN CHARNEY

Now is the time to beginning posing this question: if a progressive candidate runs in the Democratic Presidential primary should DSA and other organizations on the broad left make this campaign a major focus of their political activity? Could such a campaign resurrect the momentum of the 1988 Jackson campaign? Could a permanent "Rainbow Coalition" type organization be built that would help revitalize and enlarge a progressive movement in America?

These questions take on a special urgency as Senator Paul Wellstone is seriously considering a run for the Presidency. And, even if Wellstone ultimately decided not to throw his hat in the ring, another progressive candidate may emerge, or Dick Gephardt may run on enough of our issues so that he becomes a clear alternative to Gore.

This question become even more complicated when we add in the potential stance of the AFL-CIO. Under what circumstances would Sweeney and other labor leaders reject Gore and unite behind a progressive alternative? What, if anything, can progressives do now to make this scenario more likely? Moreover, could a candidate like Wellstone enthuse and mobilize an African American and Latino base that would be essential for a serious primary challenge?

Finally, I believe these questions have to be raised in conjunction with an even more fundamental one: Why is there no national leadership for progressive forces as a whole? What is the best strategy for uniting progressive organizations and constituencies? Would a "Wellstone for President" campaign, for example, create more opportunities for such a national leadership to emerge?

Right now, the new AFL-CIO leadership is serving as a surrogate

leadership for progressive forces. With its financial and organizational resources and an activist base that dwarfs any other group or constituency, the AFL-CIO is clearly able to set an electoral and issue agenda. In fact, there are those who argue that the question of national progressive leadership will be "solved" by the AFL-CIO; that only labor ought to lead; and that

Contemplating the 2000 Presidential race.

it's only a matter of time before the AFL-CIO will build a broad coalition dedicated to social and economic justice. Others maintain that the new union leadership is clearly progressive, but institutionally constrained; and without strong leadership and mobilization from outside the unions, such a broad coalition cannot be built.

Many more questions than answers here! It's particularly frustrating because there is no institutional forum on the broad left in which these questions can be discussed and some agreements reached; where leaders and activists, on both the national and local levels, can come together to make decisions.

In the absence of such a forum, let's start the discussion right here. Should Paul Wellstone run for President? There are three reasons I believe it would be a great opportunity for revitalizing the progressive movement. First, it would give the progressive viewpoint a national focus around a national spokesperson. That was clearly what Jackson did in 1988 and, given Wellstone's track record, he could do in 2000. Second, it would clearly enthuse and mobilize an activist

base far exceeding anything any organization alone can do on a national level. But, from the beginning some groups would need to commit to building a permanent organization that outlasts the Presidential primary. Third, it would pose just the right challenge to the AFL-CIO leadership. The unions need a to see strong progressive leadership and activism outside their ranks. This would make it much more likely that they could overcome some of their institutional constraints and embrace building a much broader, national organization/coalition.

I know that it seems we go through the same deliberations every four years, and, when the dust settles, we are no further along on a progressive agenda than before. Some remember Kennedy in 1980; Jackson in 1984 and especially 1988; and, lest we forget, the modest hopes some people had around (gulp) Clinton in 1992. But, there are three reasons why 2000 would be different. First, the right-wing was on the ascendancy starting in 1978. Ironically, 1994 marks the high water mark of conservative hegemony. Today, the ideological terrain is beginning to open up to the left. Second, there is broad consensus emerging on the progressive end of the spectrum around program. As Joe Schwartz says, nearly all progressive organizations and constituencies have become "operationally social democratic." A Wellstone candidacy, for example, could articulate this program explicitly in a way that even Jackson could not. Third, The AFL-CIO leadership is clearly in the progressive camp, and its economic justice issues—"America needs a raise"—would be the centerpiece of a Wellstone, or other, campaign.

For these reasons, we should encourage Wellstone to run.

dent that the business-friendly control board will run roughshod over public opinion to approve an elephantine convention center in the historic Shaw neighborhood, as well as a theme park on an ecologically-sensitive island in the Anacostia river. They are probably right.

This latest assault on democracy accomplished something Congress failed to anticipate—the awakening of grassroots activism in the city. Days after last August's coup, citizens began meeting across the city to formulate a strategy to fight back, resulting in hastily planned yet peaceful and controlled demonstrations on Capitol Hill and at the White House. Stand Up for Democracy in Washington, D.C., an umbrella coalition of local and national organizations (including DC/MD/NOVA DSA) organized the Sept. 3 march on Capitol Hill. In August, a bus caravan carried 400 District activists to Faircloth's hog farm in Clinton, N.C., where there they found considerable local sympathy with their cause. On the same day, another pro-democracy team conducted a peaceful march on the home of Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va.), who has tirelessly

blocked D.C. initiatives that might inconvenience his suburban constituency.

Building a grassroots movement for democracy is essential. But equally important is enlisting the support of people beyond the District's borders for the cause. This part of the effort already has borne fruit. Due to the tireless ef-

People who marched and lobbied for democracy and human rights in South Africa and Haiti are discovering the lack of human rights in their nation's capital.

orts of District activists, the humans rights committee of the United Nations found the status of the District a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights—a story ignored by the mainstream media.

In the United States, national organizations such as the Rainbow

Coalition, the NAACP and the ACLU are putting their nationwide networks into action. Calls and letters to members of Congress around the country are beginning to drive home the fact that many of their constituents do not approve of the District being used as a laboratory or a whipping boy. People who marched and lobbied for democracy and human rights in South Africa and Haiti are discovering the lack of human rights in their nation's capital. The message is simple—restore at least the degree of self-rule enjoyed prior to the creation of the control board; actively engage the citizens of the District in solving the city's problems; and support efforts to expand democracy in the nation's capital through real voting representation in Congress, the elimination of congressional review over District legislation, and—ultimately—a binding decision by District residents on the city's ultimate status, with statehood an option.

At the 1997 DSA National Convention, DSA urged its locals to join this struggle by educating their members of Congress—as well as their neighbors—about the true story of the District and why it deserves the same rights as the rest of the nation. Justice demands no less.

Bilingual Education / *Continued from page 22*

in that organization, apply pressure internally to give funds to the campaign.

Wherever you are, whatever you are doing to defeat the Unz initiative, be sure that you are hammering on the major points of the campaign! Citizens for an Educated America has a talking points and fact sheet available. The key idea is that this is NOT a referendum on bilingual education, and we do NOT want to be pulled into a debate about bilingual education. We NEED to keep the focus on the specific Unz plan that is in the initiative—an extreme plan that is

untested, applies a single cookie-cutter approach to all schools, limits local flexibility and control, and is wholly unsupported by research.

Write letters to the editor, call in to voice your opinion on radio shows. See the "tips" and sample questions/points developed by Citizens for an Educated America for ideas.

ACROSS THE NATION. Donate! Help us raise money! It will cost us millions to defeat this initiative. Ron Unz can just reach into his own pocket to fund his effort to get the initiative passed. We need whatever people can give and raise.

We need everyone to give and to raise money. Contributions should be made to: Citizens for an Educated America (I.D. #971609). We cannot deposit any check of \$100 or more without the following information about the donor: name, address, occupation, employer, phone number. Send contributions to: Citizens for an Educated America, 555 South Flower Street, Suite 4510, Los Angeles, CA 90071.

For more specific information on Unz check out this website: <http://www.jps.net/lryder>