



Annual Labor Issue

Building International Labor Solidarity

Labor and Health Care

Exciting Times in the Labor Movement

A Dinner in the Trenches

plus

The Current Jobs Crisis

Supreme Court vs. Democracy

DSA Locals Report • Letters to the Editor

A Dinner in the Trenches of the Low-Wage Economy

By Ron Baiman

As Chicago DSAers walked into the foyer of the Congress Hotel on Friday, May 2 to attend this year's annual Debs-Thomas-Harrington Dinner we were met

tions between the Congress Hotel and HERE Local 1. None of this was expected at the time that arrangements for the dinner were scheduled and booked, but perhaps no better "introduction" could have been devised to the balance of the evening. Rank and file members of the speaker's union were invited to the dinner - including some who worked at that very same hotel.



PHOTO BY ROBERT ROMAN, CHICAGO DSA

by a sidewalk demonstration and related street theater by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 1. Workers at the hotel were demonstrating against Congress Hotel management demands for the unilateral right to subcontract out work, to eliminate health coverage, and to cut workers' wages by 7 percent (down from their original 25 percent position!). This, just after a historic agreement with other major downtown hotels with substantial increases in wages and benefits for hotel workers!

Such is the world of low-wage organizing, the theme of this year's Dinner. This was a dinner on the front lines of the class struggle, a window-seat view of the depths to which capital has sunk in its effort to exploit low-wage and vulnerable workers in the United States in 2003.

But it gets worse! Our keynote speaker, who just happened to be Henry Tamarin, the President of HERE Local 1, the union to which the Congress Hotel workers belong, had quite a bit more to say about the behavior of management in relation to the failed contract negotia-

gal immigrant workers. He invited all dinner participants to a Freedom Ride, sponsored by HERE, on September 27th down Michigan Avenue and on to Washington, DC, in support of legalization of immigrant workers.

The low-wage economy and the Congress Hotel

Henry Tamarin noted that "the U.S. labor movement has not yet mastered the challenge of organizing low-wage workers." To do so it must devote more resources, forge more cooperation between unions, and rely more on methods that fall outside of usual National Labor Relations Board procedures. Tamarin said that it was very important to gain legal status for new immigrants, as low-wage labor markets are rife with abuse and discrimination against ille-



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Tamarin pointed out that as low-wage employers use the “stick” of fear and intimidation, it is most important for organizing to train workers to act collectively. This is very difficult both because of a pervasive individualistic culture and because the political arena and collective bargaining process is stacked against labor. This is why HERE, along with the Service Employees International Union and United Food and Commercial Workers, often pushes for a “card check” instead of an NLRB process. Tamarin argued that unions cannot just fight on bread and butter issues. In this struggle we need to remember how far we have come with other formerly low-wage workers like teachers and even college faculty.

Finally, Tamarin noted that the situation at the Congress Hotel was especially bad. This hotel had been “shunned” by all the other downtown hotels that agreed last year to a four-year contract with major increases in pay and benefits. Moreover, the intimidation climate at the Congress in particular was severe: they went so far as to call the police and wanted to arrest the HERE workers who came to the Dinner for trespassing because they had not asked permission from management to attend. After the workers refused to leave the dinner, management backed off, but the next day it threatened in-house punishment for this “violation.” This ended up amounting to a written warning placed in each worker’s personnel file. This outrageous treatment of our guests has been grieved by Local 1.

Six weeks later the Congress Hotel employees went out on strike. Chicago DSA contributed \$500 to the strike fund and did a postcard mailing to bring out supporters to the picket line and add more contributions to the fund. The class struggle continues, as ever.

[In October, WBEZ reported that the NLRB had filed an unfair labor practices complaint against the Congress Hotel for, among other things, threatening workers with disciplinary action if they didn’t leave the Debs-Thomas-Harrington Dinner at the hotel. – Editors.]



PHOTO BY ROBERT ROMAN, CHICAGO DSA

DSA Web Poll

DSA has organized an on-line presidential ballot and issue survey to measure progressive opinion on issues and candidates. Please join us in this project by casting your vote in the poll and filling out the survey. You can access the survey directly from the DSA web site, www.dsausa.org. You can help even more by urging your like-minded friends and associates to participate.

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Striking workers from the Hotel Employee & Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 1 picket outside the Congress Hotel in Chicago.

Photo by Robert Roman, Chicago DSA.

The Jobs Crisis in 2003

By Larry Mishel

The recession that started in early 2001 has continued to batter jobs, wages and income, providing little good news for working families in 2003. Although the recession was “officially” over in November 2001, this has not meant much for workers since unemployment continued to rise through this past summer and the economy shed an additional 1.2 million jobs. This has not only been one of the most prolonged labor market slumps, it has also been the sharpest job contraction – a 2.9%, or 3.2 million, loss of private sector jobs, the largest employment contraction twenty-nine months into a business cycle since the great depression.

As is, or should be, well known, the officially reported unemployment (9 million unemployed workers, or 6.1% of the workforce) does not reflect all of the underemployment in the economy. Counting those working part-time but wanting full-time work (4.6 million) and those too discouraged to look for work – yields an underemployment rate of 10.7% in early 2003. Over the course of a year, probably 20-25% of the workforce will experience some form of underemployment.

These are only averages, which do not reflect the experiences of particular groups who suffer much more in recessions. For instance, when the national unemployment rate was 6.2% in the summer, unemployment among African-Americans was 11.2% and among Hispanics was 8.1%. Similarly blue-collar workers, construction workers and manufacturing workers experience greater than average unemployment.

It is true that the unemployment rate in recent months, about 6.2%, is not far different from the lowest that unemployment fell in the late 1970s or the late 1980s. This has led many

economic pundits, particularly Wall Street brokerage house economists, to dismiss concerns about the labor market. After all, many economists

Although the recession was “officially” over in November 2001, this has not meant much for workers

have believed that “full-employment” is an economy with 5.5% to 6.0% unemployment. Such a view misses, of course, that we achieved unemployment of 4% in 2000 without any explosion of inflation and, equally important, the period of falling unemployment in the late 1990s was the only time that incomes and wages grew across-the-board since the early 1970s.

The rise of unemployment, coupled with the loss of 3.2 million private sector jobs since the recession began in March 2001, has made people feel vulnerable about losing their jobs. They are right to worry, of course, because those losing jobs are unlikely to find as good a job with as many benefits (if lucky enough to have health insurance and pension benefits in their current job) as they have now.

It is critically important to note, and articulate, that continued high unemployment also takes its toll on the paychecks of those remaining employed, as employers raise wages more slowly. Wage growth has a lot of momentum, so that changes in unemployment affect the rate of wage growth with a substantial lag. For instance, the strong wage growth of the late 1990s carried forward throughout 2001 even though unemployment started rising at the end of 2000. However, the sustained higher unemployment knocked

down wage growth in 2002 and in 2003. Whereas wages grew roughly 2% faster than inflation in 2001 wages have grown more slowly than inflation since the end of 2001. Higher unemployment and its effects fall hardest on the least advantaged in our society. Not surprisingly then, low-wage workers have experienced the largest reduction in the purchasing power of their wages over the last year – a 1.2% reduction in their hourly wages. Perhaps surprisingly, wage erosion has also occurred among middle-wage and high wage workers.

Household incomes fall in recessions as unemployment, hours and hourly wages fall. This downturn is no exception. In 2001, household incomes fell among all households except those in the upper 5%, with the typical household losing \$934, or 2.2%. These large income losses occurred with unemployment rising from 4% in 2000 to 4.8% in 2001. The larger rise of unemployment – up to 5.8% – in 2002 surely led to an even larger hit on incomes (the data won't be available until late September 2003). Moreover, the continued high unemployment in 2003 and the onset of rapid wage erosion will take incomes down another notch. President Bush will end his term having presided over three years of declining income.

If the economy recovers strongly in 2004, the public may well forgive this dismal performance. At least that's what the Bush Administration and its friends hope for and want us to believe. It is true that economic growth will be stronger in late 2003 and in 2004 than it has been over the last year or so. The combination of mortgage refinancing, \$210 billion of tax cuts, war spending and a some-

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*Is grateful
for the many
accomplishments
we've made together
on behalf of Michigan's
Working Families.*

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Supreme Court vs. Democracy

By Jamin B. Raskin

It's good to celebrate the back-to-back decisions for affirmative action and gay rights in the Supreme Court this term, but let's refrain from toasting the Rehnquist Court itself. The historic 6-3 decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which overruled *Bowers v. Hardwick* and struck down laws treating gay people as criminals for having sex, was a triumph not for the Court but for the freedom-minded gay and lesbian movement that has challenged the rule of sexual bigotry and unreason at every turn in American society. Similarly, the Court's 5-4 defense of "diversity" as a compelling justification for affirmative action in higher education is a victory for universities, the civil rights movement, and even conservative institutions such as the military and corporations that have defended purposeful desegregation of America against the ferocious segregationist undertow of our history.

Many liberals have lionized Justice Sandra Day O'Connor for playing her favored swing role in the Michigan affirmative action cases this term, but for those with longer memories, this is a bitter pill to swallow. Justice O'Connor has been a depressingly loyal member of the Court's conservative bloc, which has meant big trouble for interracial democratic values since the 1980s.

If we take a sweeping view of the Rehnquist Court, we find relentless assaults on the essentials of political democracy. Forget the self-flattering right-wing rhetoric against "judicial activism" - this is the most activist Court we have seen since the *Lochner* period of 1905 when crusty right-wing

Justices worked to dismantle the early regulatory state. About five laws a year were struck down during that period of judicial invalidation of federal and state laws in the name of due process and property rights; in 1999 and 2000, the Rehnquist Court knocked down more than fifteen laws each term.



PHOTO BY KEITH STANLEY

This time around, federalism - a word that does not appear in the Constitution and did not surface in Court opinions until the 1930s - is the key ideological trick in the move to dismantle progressive federal civil rights laws. In the last dozen years, the Rehnquist Court has overturned or gutted major parts of the Violence Against Women Act, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Gun-Free School Zones Act, and the Voting Rights Act. Where the Court has not guillotined progressive civil rights laws, it has used a straitjacket.

More egregiously, the Supreme Court has thwarted and distorted the formation of the public will in the first place through malign supervision of the electoral process. The most spectacular example of course is the Court's atrocious

decision in *Bush v. Gore*, when it overturned Florida's Supreme Court and ordered it not to proceed with the manual counting of more than 100,000 ballots left on the table in the 2000 presidential election (See DL, Spring 2001). But that unprecedented intervention against political democracy was the culmination of several long-running trends.

One such trend was the Court's vigorous denial of the very existence of a constitutional right to vote. This right was, of course, the hallmark of the liberal Warren Court's jurisprudence in the 1960s. Chief Justice Warren described the "one person, one vote" line of cases - *Baker v. Carr*, *Wesberry v. Sanders*, *Reynolds v. Sims* - as his proudest and most

significant accomplishment. In *Wesberry v. Sanders* (1964), where the Court struck down mal-apportioned Congressional districts, Justice Black wrote: "No right is more precious in a free country than that of having a voice in the election of those who make the laws under which, as good citizens, we must live. Other rights, even the most basic, are illusory if the right to vote is undermined."

But in the Rehnquist Court it is the right to vote itself that has become illusory and it is the Court doing the undermining. The federal courts have been steadily rejecting Equal Protection voting rights lawsuits by disenfranchised populations, including more than a half million Americans living in Washington, D.C., who have no voting representation in Congress, mil-

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Building International Labor Solidarity

By Benjamin Davis

These are not easy times for the global trade union movement. A recent report from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) documented 213 assassinations of union members in 2002. Of these, 206 occurred in Latin America, 184 in Colombia alone. The ICFTU report lists almost 1000 union activists attacked and beaten, 2,562 detained, 89 imprisoned, 30,000 trade unionists sacked and some 20,000 victimized by harassment.

This assault comes on top of global economic trends that undermine workers' rights and living standards. The global expansion in trade and investment has not been matched by increases in growth rates. The share of investment flowing to developing economies has declined, while global inequality is increasing. Sweatshops, once widespread in the US, have become a serious international problem in the era of globalization.

These problems are truly daunting. Yet a growing alliance of trade unions, students, consumer activists and human rights groups is using innovative strategies to build new links of solidarity between U.S. and third-world workers. These strategies often depend not just on a principled commitment to support core labor rights everywhere in the world, but on immediate practical benefits to unions on both sides of the border. Increasingly, solidarity is truly a two-way street.

When the workers at the Korean-owned Kukdong maquiladora in Atlixco in the Mexican state of Puebla struck against intolerable working conditions and the imposition of a sweetheart union

in 2001, they received assistance from a Mexican labor support organization, the Workers' Support Center (CAT). After efforts to form



A concrete program of solidarity is helping to take labor solidarity to another level.

an independent union were violently suppressed by the Puebla state police, CAT contacted the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS), who immediately engaged the corporate brands Nike and Reebok (whose college-logo sweatshirts were produced at the factory). The brands accepted the intervention of the university-funded Workers' Rights Consortium, and also sent their own monitoring organization, the Fair Labor Association, to verify the workers' complaints.

As the complaints were fully documented, and the struggle at Kukdong was featured in articles in the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times* and the *Washington Post*, Nike and Reebok used their influence with Kukdong and the Puebla state government to encourage a fair

settlement in which the workers could choose their own union representative. The CAT also engaged the local company management, with the assistance of a Korean NGO. As Nike, Reebok and the local management began to press the Puebla state authorities to allow a democratic process for the solution of the dispute, US Representative George Miller visited the plant, spoke with the workers, and met with the governor of Puebla, who said that he would accept an independent union. Kukdong recognized the workers' newly formed independent union and negotiated a collective bargaining agreement providing for wage increases of up to 40 percent; the Puebla labor authorities recognized this outcome. This is the first, and until now, only independent union victory in Mexico's over 3,000 maquiladoras.

Similar strategies brought a key organizing victory in the Dominican Republic, where workers at the BJ&B factory in the Villa Altagracia free trade zone won recognition for their union, FEDOTRAZONAS (Dominican Federation of Workers of the Free Trade Zones), in November 2002. BJ&B is a Korean-owned factory producing caps bearing the logos of colleges, universities and major league baseball, NFL and NBA teams.

Ignacio Hernandez, General Secretary of FEDOTRAZONAS, and a team of four organizers led the union drive. The organizers built an organizing committee of 30 workers, mostly young women, that used daily house visits and frequent lunchtime rallies to sign

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Labor and Health Care: Wedge or Squeeze

By Jeffrey Gold

There is probably no way to achieve universal health coverage in the US without labor as a central part of the fight. But this doesn't mean that unions will be storming the barricades for some sort of single-payer solution to the health crises that beset this nation. Since DSA was a strong, union-oriented part of the original single-payer push in the 90s, we have some experience as health care activists with the mixed role of some unions in the universal health care fight. In the early Clinton period, for instance, the Postal Employees Union served a problematic role in internal AFL-CIO Executive Council debates about how to address the national health care crises, the Clinton proposals, and our single-payer legislation in the then Democratic Congress. In part this was because many large unions in the public sector were covered under the Federal Employees health program, and one notion from our side was to use that structure to potentially expand coverage to all. I was told at the time that some public unions feared "dilution" of their own negotiated benefits.

Unfortunately, one axiom of health care reform is that the corporate bad almost always drives out the good; that is, for-profit hospitals eventually drive out or absorb non-profit institutions, or tempt formerly non-profit state Blue Cross (after decades of special tax exemptions as 'public benefit organizations') plans to go private and skim all that *medica\$h*. Unions have been buffeted by this axiom along with the rest of us, so that we now that we have the worst of all possible worlds in health care: Large bureaucratic for-profit networks designed from the

ground up to limit access, with Karl Rove & Company helping to make it more dire by destroying the rest of the medical (Medicare, Medicaid, graduate medical educa-

Union members are not exactly storming the barricades to complain at the moment.

tion, and the political perversion of basic science) social wage, and the ability of unions to organize at all. In addition, the health care inflation that unionized firms were so concerned about in the early 90s, which was temporarily slowed by the move to managed/mangled care and dis-insurance, is now back. So unions are again getting pinched, and more contract negotiations are again bogging down on health issues. But most sources inside the union movement do not tell me that union members are exactly storming the barricades to complain at the moment.

If Only

As pollster Celinda Lake has reported, most Americans, including union workers, still don't treat health care the way socialists, activist left-liberals or intellectuals do, as a national crisis to be solved with universal public provision. Rather they consider "health problems" what they themselves have to do to get treatment, or the higher co-pays they have to cut personal checks to cover. One prominent public sector unionist informally polled some members and said members often grumble about health costs in the same vein as they complain about the costs of their kids' confirmations, their

cable bill or car repair fees. Of course, unionists who have to wrestle with chronic conditions or life-threatening diseases are, like all Americans, usually more attuned to the defects of our current system. But that isn't the majority, and most health care activists inside and outside progressive labor have long ceased to make the old, naive left assumption of "if only": *If only* voters could see the P&L statements of Humana Corp. *If only* we had the money for a pro-single payer Harry & Louise. Not that simple.

At the moment there is little pressure from the bottom, at the same time there is a vague general unease with the current system, and unionist fears of continuing job destruction/export under George W, and thus loss of benefits. I know many Union Benefit Fund administrators across the US who are more interested in universal health care solutions than many rank and filers. But they aren't the norm. Less progressive Benefit Fund managers are often either cynical about government provision, or our collective ability to rehabilitate public provision concepts, or are sometimes the happy recipients of internal union patronage positions; they may or may not have an interest in changing the existing state of affairs. Other union leaders have frankly told me that while they are unhappy with the current state of affairs, they are more comfortable with the current Devil-You-Know mix of employer-based benefits, however shredded, than a hard to achieve vision of comprehensive reform.

At the moment there are ongoing debates within union locals and Internationals of the AFL-CIO about the best way to deal with

the health crisis. Many activists have been urging the AFL to spend the next year developing a center within the Fed to write a plan that embodies universal health care principles, and integrate those principles into the general political fights that realistically builds a future on the current, admittedly lousy system. One would think here that health care unions would play a key role in this, but with some exceptions like the California Nurses Association, they have played a fairly conservative role in many debates. The most dramatic example was the endorsement, later regretted in some ways, of Republican George Pataki for New York governor in 2002 by Dennis Rivera of the large healthcare union, 1199. This was the result of a calculated plan to protect the remaining bricks-and-mortar public income streams of much health care employment in unionized hospitals and clinics.

Of course, many Internationals have been publicly supportive of universal health coverage for years, whatever their internal workings, and have at times used the phrase 'single-payer' in official statements: SEIU, UNITE!, the CWA, showbiz craft unions, UAW locals and many others. Some of these unions now tend to avoid specific laundry lists of health care objectives, or even a vague nod to "Medicare for All," or large resource commitments to the few universal coverage coalitions they may have supported. The recent organizing against the Bush triangulation plan to destroy Medicare with an illusory drug benefit *was* joined by many major unions. Since the drug issue is a major concern to union retiree groups, we can expect to see more agitation on this in the future.

Bargaining Chip

Whatever the outcome of the 2004 national elections, the current health system is becoming more

and more unsupportable. Trade unions have traditionally viewed health benefits as a bargaining chip, and for the most part as a selling point in organizing. There is much pressure within unions to stay in the health care business, which is historically built into the structure of the labor movement. The recent Physicians for a National Health Program *9,000*

Doctor Call for Single-Payer reflects the best desires of some of our comrades, but isn't necessarily going to be the clarion call for unions. However, as doctors and other formerly independent providers

are 'proletarianized,' however comfortably relative to average Americans, or further deprived of professional autonomy by corporations, there has been a small upsurge in interest in unionization. Chiropractors affiliated a few years ago with a major International, and clinic dentists have been voting for union cards in certain states.

Since most US citizens are unfortunately not unionized, the number of uninsured will continue to go up unless we can beat back current trends. Wendy's, the fast food chain, recently offered its nonunion employees, most at or just above minimum wage, a "Health Insurance Plan" that would cost employees thirty to seventy percent of all their net earnings. For obvious reasons, hardly anybody signed up.

The U.S., for complex historical reasons, developed a compara-

tively threadbare social wage mostly dependent on where one works. Whatever the internal interests of organized labor in this country, to get all Americans covered and healthy we can't do it without labor. There is currently no other political force with the income stream (however pressed) or organizing resources (however limited) capable of carrying the



fight for universal coverage. Those of us, including me, that would dearly like to fully disconnect employment from health care and make it a publicly provided right, have to heed the internal political workings of unions as we work side-by-side with them and really think through the basis for expansion of health coverage.

Jeff Gold, of DL, chairs the Steering Committee of the Metro NY Health Care for All Campaign, the community-labor coalition sponsored by founding organizations NY DSA, AFSCME, CWA, UNITE, AFM, NYSNA-Nurses and others.

Long-time NY DSA Chair Steve Oliver produces the award-winning Health Care on the Air, a volunteer-run monthly cable show that can be seen in streaming video at www.mnn.org Check listings at website for airdates.

Exciting Times in the Labor Movement

By *Fabricio Rodriguez*

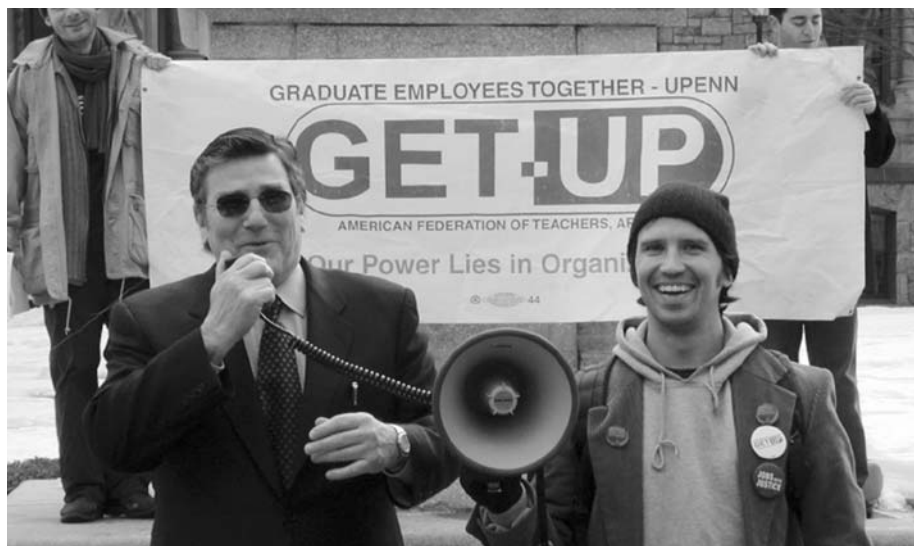
In recent years we have witnessed a broad change in union tactics. The union lingo you hear uses phrases like: “global unionism,” “culture of militancy,” “social movement unionism,” and “constituency group organizing.” These pro-active phrases demarcate a new trajectory for an ailing movement for worker rights.

This new approach manifests itself in many ways. A new openness to cultural diversity is seen in new union formations like Pride At Work, The Asian Pacific America Labor Alliance and the Labor council for Latin American Advancement.

A new emphasis on organizing is seen both in the Federation and in particular unions. New tactics have been adopted as unions work around the domination of the NLRB by management. In fact, the level of support for organizing is now something of an issue inside the labor movement.

No single issue more strikingly demonstrates the shift in the position of the Labor movement than immigration. Earlier this year, the AFL-CIO announced plans for a mass mobilization in favor of immigrant rights – the Immigrant Workers Freedom Rides. The Rides, modeled upon the civil rights movement’s Freedom Rides of 1961, brought busloads of immigrant workers from across the country for a day of lobbying in Washington, D.C., on October 2, followed by a mass rally on October 4 in Queens, New York.. The rides were a response to the October 2002 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that stripped immigrant workers of almost all workplace protections. The *Hoffman Plastics v. National Labor Relations Board* ruling eliminated the right of undocumented workers to organize unions and to fight for

back pay and other elementary workplace rights. In confronting the modern day slave situation that many immigrants in America face, organized labor is again doing the right thing. It is also laying the



Fabricio Rodriguez (right) at a rally in support of graduate student organizing at the University of Pennsylvania.

groundwork for major organizing efforts among this crucial working-class constituency. Organized labor has become a champion of the fights of immigrants, something that anyone familiar with the trade union movement even twenty years ago would have thought impossible.

More changes once deemed unthinkable have come in another surprising place: foreign policy. The AFL-CIO, breaking with historical precedents, opposed the war in Iraq before the conflict “officially” began (one could reasonably date the beginning of the war to as far back as 1990). As time wears on and the proposed evidence of an Iraqi threat remains uncorroborated, the AFL-CIO’s position appears to have been a smart evaluation of the facts – that this war was one more of political convenience than of major security concerns. Organized labor is taking big gambles with its moral and political capital. Taking a stand against the war could have caused a backlash by the many union members that supported George Bush’s war. And this act of social courage did not immediately enhance the prospects for union

organizing. The AFL-CIO's stand against the war was equal parts: opposition to an administration that had been vehemently anti-worker; sincere concern for the effects of war on the labor movement; and finally, a risky, political gamble and act of moral courage.

In August of this year, the AFL-CIO put another block in place that will further change the face of labor with the introduction of "Working America." Working America is a coalition effort designed to organize and energize non-unionized workers, through neighborhood-based communi-

lawyers, the fight over legalese is unlikely to produce meaningful gains. Even mainstream labor leaders are now embracing organizing strategies that go around the delays and entanglements of the NLRA. The AFL-CIO is now placing the struggle for labor rights within a broader struggle for human rights.

To aid this new struggle for human rights, the AFL-CIO has joined with Jobs with Justice, a national community-based organization that unites community, civil rights and labor organizations in the fight for social justice. The AFL-CIO



ty organizing. Working America aims to increase the support for union rights among non-unionized workers, as well as to create a channel for non-union workers to fight for workplace rights. The long-term strategy involves the creation of an alternative culture among working people that values collectivity and the right to organize. The dividends of this approach will take time to realize. But if the project comes to fruition it could transform public consciousness in regards to union and workplace rights.

"Working America" takes on one of the biggest cultural barriers to union organizing in modern America – a rampant individualistic culture that is at the root of widespread political apathy and alienation. In the past thirty years, the United States has seen civic participation and union membership move hand-in-hand in a downward spiral (a recent study has shown a .4 percent decrease in voter turn out for every one percent decline in union membership).

Unions are now choosing to approach the fight differently. For decades, labor lawyers have been fighting anti-worker actions by employers through the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) machinery. While at times the NLRA has empowered workers, over the past thirty years it has been used effectively by major corporations to erode the rights of workers. Much of organized labor has now decided that prolonged wrangling in the courts over the murky provisions of the NLRA is a losing battle. As long as global mega-corporations can pour endless resources into teams of well paid

and Jobs with Justice have together called for nation-wide demonstrations on December 10, International Human Rights Day, in favor of guaranteeing the right to organize as a basic human right.

The AFL-CIO is also enhancing global solidarity this November when it faces down the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement for the Americas) Ministerial meetings with a mass demonstration in Miami, Florida, the city that hopes to host the headquarters for the hemispheric trade agreement. The AFL-CIO and its coalition partners will highlight the fact that the FTAA predecessor, NAFTA, has brought more harm than good to workers and the environment since its passage in 1992.

The AFL-CIO is returning to the tactics that made it a vital venue for the struggle of human rights by organizing and fighting for low-wage workers, workers inside and outside of unions, and workers both north and south of the US-Mexico border, as well as for the concerns of women and minorities. It is exciting and exhilarating to come into the labor movement at this crucial time.

Fabricio Rodriguez is a former miner and is currently the national co-chair of the Young Democratic Socialists. Fabricio is also the Executive Director of Philadelphia Jobs with Justice. More of his writing can be read at <www.red-dazibao.blogspot.com> and he can be reached at <fabriciomrodriguez@yahoo.com>.

Tyson Foods: Wrapped in Greed ▶

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- Eliminating and freezing pension benefits
- Making family health care coverage unaffordable for most families
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Wal-Mart: Greed Always Above Worker Need ▶

- A 46 percent participation rate in Wal-Mart's high-cost, low-coverage catastrophic health plan leaves taxpayers and responsible employers picking up the health care tab for the rest of Wal-Mart million workers.
- Average yearly wages of \$16,200 force many Wal-Mart workers to public assistance for health care and other needs.
- Wal-Mart's principal owner, the Walton family, is worth about \$102 billion—approximately one percent of that could provide affordable health care for its workers.
- Wal-Mart is guilty of coercion, surveillance, terminations, threats, bribery, confiscations, and interrogations against workers who try to form a union.

America can't live on a Wal-Mart paycheck.



Support living wages, affordable health care and secure pensions for workers.

Send a message to **Tyson—Negotiate a fair contract!**
comments@tyson.com or 479-290-4000.
More info: www.tysonfamiliesstandup.org

Send a message to **Wal-Mart—Stop suppressing workers' democratic freedom to exercise their right for union representation.** Call 800-925-6278.
More info: www.walmartswaronworkers.com

Labor Solidarity

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up over 800 workers. The company deployed a strong anti-union campaign, which included the firing of union activists (some of whom were fired three times during the campaign) and threats to close or move the plant.

The victory was a sweet one not only for FEDOTRAZONAS, but also for the U.S. apparel union UNITE, which has a long history of support for the BJ&B workers. In 1998, UNITE brought a BJ&B worker to the United States to tour university campuses in one of the earliest examples of student involvement in the anti-sweatshop movement. The worker, who had been fired for leading a protest against the company's policy of forced overtime, went on to become one of the four organizers who led this year's successful union drive at BJ&B. UNITE publicized the labor rights violations at BJ&B on its website; www.behindthelabel.org; its leaders visited BJ&B workers at Villa Altigracia; and it made other important material and moral contributions to the struggle.

The UNITE-sponsored tour of BJ&B workers on U.S. college campuses led to the establishment of both United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS), a network of activists at over 200 U.S. colleges and universities, and the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) – a group led by students, university administrators, and leading anti-sweatshop campaigners including AFL-CIO Executive Vice-President Linda Chavez Thompson – which investigates labor rights conditions at companies that manufacture college-logo apparel. Both USAS and the WRC played key roles in supporting the BJ&B workers' right to organize their union.

Representatives of the WRC made several trips to Villa

Altigracia to secure respect for the labor rights of the BJ&B workers. Their vigilance encouraged university licensees like Nike and Reebok to pressure BJ&B to reinstate fired workers, restrain the fierce anti-union campaigning by company supervisors, and finally to agree to a "card-check" recognition supervised by former Dominican Labor



Secretary Rafael Albuquerque, the first time the procedure has been used in that country.

On March 24, 2003, FEDOTRAZONAS and BJ&B signed their first collective bargaining agreement, providing for wage increases, increased productivity incentives, improved health and safety protection, scholarships for workers' children, and other benefits, as well as job security and union rights.

US labor has also shown solidarity with unions in Colombia, the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist. In February 2000, the AFL-CIO Executive Council passed a resolution in defense of Colombian labor and civil society that opposed any increase in US funding of Colombia's military under Plan Colombia. Since then, unions including the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Workers (AFSCME), Communications Workers of America (CWA), International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), and Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) have passed similar resolutions calling for improved protection programs, prosecution of those responsible for the assassinations, and enforcement of U.S. law that

requires the Colombian military to break ties with the paramilitary in order to receive US funding.

Since February 2002, the AFL-CIO's Solidarity Center has brought 27 threatened Colombian labor leaders to the United States for a one-year exchange program. For several months, participants study English and labor issues and meet with national and local union leadership as well as representatives of major human rights and Latin American policy NGOs in the Washington-D.C. area. The core of the program are six- to nine-month internships hosted by local unions including AFSCME, CWA, LIUNA, SEIU, UNITE and USWA. Most of the interns have worked on organizing campaigns involving Spanish-speaking workers. These have included two organizing campaigns in New Jersey, where many of the workers were themselves Colombian immigrants. Through these internships, the Colombians have not only gained organizing experience, but also demonstrated the immediate value of solidarity to U.S. unions that are committed to organizing in immigrant communities. The internships have also afforded the Colombians the opportunity to educate local unions and community groups about the labor rights situation in their country.

Focusing on a concrete program of solidarity that builds human connections between union members while strengthening the capacity of unions to defend fundamental rights – both in overseas factories, where U.S. unions and labor rights advocates can focus pressure to respect core labor rights, and in the United States, where international solidarity can help win support from immigrant workers – is helping to take labor solidarity to another level.

Benjamin Davis is Regional Program Director for the Americas in the Solidarity Center, AFL-CIO.

Jobs Crisis

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what lower dollar will fuel growth this year and next.

Whether that stronger overall growth will quickly translate into a broad-based feeling of growth is far from certain. First, even in the best of times there is a sizeable lag between when growth occurs and the consequent job creation and lower unemployment occurs. Second, in the current setting, employers seem addicted to aggressive cost-cutting as a way to achieve high profitability in troubled times. This behavior manifests itself by reducing wage gains (next year will be the lowest in many years), outsourcing work overseas or to lower-wage producers and radically reducing capacity. The cumulative impact of the reduced jobs, lower wages and benefits, outsourced work and temporary jobs that result from employers' cost-cutting is to weaken the recovery as overall wage income growth is insufficient to fuel consumption. Third, an overvalued dollar, excessive debt, and higher fuel prices could possibly derail the recovery.

In the meanwhile, if the Bush administration crows about faster growth and the marvelous recovery they will appear out of touch to the many Americans who will be untouched by any improvements in the economy. If aggressive cost-cutting persists and the trade deficit continues to expand, it will be a year or more before workers and their families achieve solid income gains and several years before families regain the ground lost since the recession began. The Bush administration, of course, promised that its tax cut proposal (labeled the "Job and Growth Plan of 2003") would address the jobs problem. In fact, the President's own economics staff, the Council of Economic Advisers

(CEA), produced a study that projected that the tax cuts would create 1.4 million jobs by the end of 2004 (a number continuously touted by the President last spring). The CEA also noted that even without any tax cuts the economy would generate 4.1 million new jobs between July 2003 and the end of 2004. Thus, the Administration projected a total of 5.5 million new jobs (or 344,000

The tax cuts were designed with two purposes: to shrink government, and to shift the tax burden onto those earning income from work.

each month) between this past July and the end of 2004. My colleagues and I are tracking actual job growth and comparing it to these promises (visit JobWatch.org for more information, the CEA study and labor market data). In the first month of this period the economy lost 93,000 jobs, a shortfall of 437,000 from the 344,000 jobs the Administration projected.

It is unlikely that the promised jobs will appear. The tax cuts were ill-designed for immediate job creation. Tax cuts for the rich generate far less spending than a more equitable package would have achieved. Tax reductions on capital gains and dividends will not lead to job creation in the short-run, if ever. Giving business tax breaks won't lead to more investment and jobs when there's weak demand. We've already seen how very low interest rates have not fueled business investment in plant and equipment, so strategies to lower costs will also be ineffective. The truth is that the tax cuts were designed with two purposes: to permanently erode revenues so as to shrink government, and to shift the tax burden away from those earning income from wealth and onto those earning income from work. Selling the tax cuts as a job cre-

ation tool was just another instance of the administration shamelessly and opportunistically employing a mistruth to advance a hard-to-sell policy.

A better policy could have yielded far more jobs by now. A temporary, one-time tax rebate targeted at low and middle-income households could have easily boosted demand and fueled job growth and it could

have been passed far earlier than the Bush tax cuts. A temporary boost in the funding of infrastructure development—roads and bridges—could have produced jobs and yielded some public assets we need. Renovating and building schools is desper-

ately needed and could have relatively quickly generated jobs and growth. School districts are canceling projects, so extra money would get them to carry out already existing plans! Boosting unemployment benefits and extending them for more months is one of the most effective ways to boost demand and jobs. Last, providing fiscal relief to the beleaguered states raises growth because it prevents the states from taking expenditure out of the economy (by raising taxes and cutting programs). Using just a small share of the three trillion dollars of tax cuts passed in the last few years for these purposes would have moved us back toward the 4% unemployment we need to reach as soon as possible. The struggle for higher wages, better jobs, retirement security, expanded unionization, and adequate social insurance is a continuous struggle, but one which is helped by a labor market where employers desperately seek workers rather than vice-versa.

Larry Mishel is the President of the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, DC, a nonprofit, non-partisan think tank that seeks to broaden public debate about economic strategy.

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Supreme Court

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lions of people in Puerto Rico who have no voice in federal elections, and more than a million and a half citizens who once served time in prison and are disenfranchised in eight states, mostly in the Deep South (including more than 400,000 in Florida). In *Alexander v. Mineta* (2000), the D.C. case, the Rehnquist Court upheld a lower court finding that "the Equal Protection Clause does not protect the right of all citizens to vote, but rather the right of all qualified citizens to vote." One becomes qualified, you see, only by having a state grant you the right to vote.

No Rights

It thus comes as no surprise to find the Court in *Bush v. Gore* matter-of-factly declaring, "The individual citizen has no federal constitutional right to vote for electors for

the President of the United States." Rather, the states have the power to appoint electors and if the legislatures choose to abolish or disregard a popular election for president, more power to them. This statement became the premise of the Court's attack on popular political rights.

The Court's judgment was profoundly racially inflected. The Court rushed to install as the Electoral College winner the popular vote loser, George W. Bush, who received one to nine percent more of the white vote over the total popular vote winner, Al Gore - the clear favorite of non-white America. But the Court had already developed impressive experience with using the Equal Protection Clause to impose racial double standards in politics.

The seminal case was *Shaw v. Reno* (1993), in which Justice O'Connor, for herself and Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, Thomas and Kennedy, invented a new constitu-

tional claim for white plaintiffs challenging so-called "bizarrely drawn" majority-African American and Hispanic legislative districts. The case came from North Carolina, whose legislature in 1990 created two majority African-American districts out of twelve, a plan that still left white citizens, who were 76% of the state's people, as a voting majority in 83% of the districts, and still left most African-Americans living in majority-white districts. But even this slender slice of political empowerment for African-Americans was too much for the conservatives in the state and on the Supreme Court. Amazingly, Justices O'Connor and Thomas described these districts, the most integrated in the history of the state (both were about 53% African-American and 45% white), as a form of "apartheid" and "segregation," words they have never used to describe racism in the

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Supreme Court

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criminal justice system or the administration of the death penalty or our re-stratified public schools. Never mind that the Court had never before required districts to

If the Court can give us a two-party system, why not a one-party system?

be of a certain shape or size. Never mind that the privileged white plaintiffs enjoyed all the same political rights they had before: the right to vote, to give money, to run for office and so on. The Court essentially made Constitutional the right of whites to be in an electoral majority unless, of course, racial minorities can be drawn into "compact" districts, i.e., real residential apartheid, the kind that does not bother the Rehnquist Court, which has also eviscerated the fair housing laws. Under the Shaw double standard, the Court has proceeded to dismember numerous congressional and state legislative districts at the instigation of white plaintiffs.

Two Party Lock

Another trend has been the Court's alarming consecration of our made-up "two-party system." The Constitution does not speak of political parties, much less a two-party system, much less two specific parties. Yet the Rehnquist Court has repeatedly allowed two specific parties to entrench themselves at the expense of all others. In 1997, in *Twin Cities Area New Party v. Timmons*, the Court upheld state laws banning cross-party "fusion" tickets, a coalition practice that gave life to progressive parties in the 19th century. Chief Justice Rehnquist found that state legislatures are authorized to "decide that

political stability is best served through a healthy two-party system." Five years before, in *Burdick v. Takushi*, the Court even upheld Hawaii's practice of sharply narrowing access to the ballot and then throwing away all write-in ballots without counting them. The Court has also repeatedly allowed discriminatory ballot access rules that require third parties to collect tens of thousands signatures to get on the ballot while major party candidates need only sign their names.

Perhaps the most egregious example of this trend has been the Court's vigorous defense of the practice of "debate gerrymandering" where government or corporate institutions invite "major party" candidates to debate on television in general election campaigns and exclude Independents and third party candidates. In 1998, in *Arkansas Educational Television Commission v. Forbes*, the Court actually upheld a decision by a government-run and taxpayer-subsidized cable channel to exclude an Independent from a congressional candidate debate even though two years before he had received 46% of the statewide vote in his bid for Lieutenant Governor as a Republican. Justice Kennedy had no problem finding the balloted candidate was not "viable," a judgment one would have thought should have been left to the voters of the state, not a couple of un-elected state bureaucrats who had not even articulated any standards in making this undemocratic judgment.

The Court's decision has emboldened the private Commission on Presidential Debates, a pure creation of the two-party system that uses millions of dollars from large corporations like Philip Morris and Anheuser-Busch to promote the

Democratic and Republican presidential candidates. The co-chairs of the CPD, Paul Kirk and Frank Fahrenkopf, are former chairmen of the Democratic and Republican National Committees. They have consistently acted in a most partisan fashion to institutionalize the two-party arrangement and make outside competition impossible.

Thus, while tens of millions of Democrats may have been astonished by the transparent partisanship of the *Bush v. Gore* decision, members of third parties and Independents could only shake their heads in knowing recognition of the Court's dramatic departures from neutrality in the electoral field. Was it really so unpredictable? If the Court can give us a two-party system, why not a one-party system?

The Supreme Court's continuing erosion of democratic values and corresponding push of our pol-

The right way to face a Court determined to overrule democracy is for the people to overrule the Court.

itics to the right may well muffle our justified enthusiasm for the Texas sodomy and Michigan affirmative action decisions. Those cases reflect the fact that progressives may be winning the culture war against religiously inspired irrationality. But we have been losing the struggle for political democracy.

That is why, in the face of the Rehnquist Court's activism, the Left must pick up the banner of constitutional change once more. The Right comes up with a new proposed constitutional amendment every month: on flag 'desecration', school prayer, crime victims' rights, balanced budget (actually, you don't hear much about that anymore),

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DSA LOCALS REPORT

NORTHEAST

Boston DSA cosponsored a forum in April on the consequences of the Iraq invasion. June 5th was Health Care Action Day, when people wore stickers supporting publicly-financed health care for all. DSA had helped to start the coalition that is gearing up for a single payer bill in the state legislature. In August, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Communication Workers of America reached out to DSA for support for Verizon workers. The Boston local prioritized mobilizing for the impending strike. However, it looks as if preparedness paid off, and there may well be a settlement.

Greater Philadelphia DSA was involved in the planning committee for Philadelphia activities surrounding the Immigrant Workers Freedom Rides and held a

Free Speech Café featuring a local activist and a local attorney speaking about the Freedom Rides and the issue involved.

Ithaca DSA continues making locally-focused videos for Community Access cable television. Recent topics include: “The Fight for a Living Wage,” “Latin America: Not for Sale,” “Who’s Afraid of a Living Wage?,” “Up Against the Wal[Mart],” and “Workers’ Rights Center.” The City of Ithaca and Tompkins County have both passed living wage policy resolutions, not real laws with teeth, but a start.

MIDWEST

Columbus DSA is currently involved with the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, through the local Jobs with Justice chapter. Riders will be arriving September

29th, starting from Minneapolis and stopping in Madison, Milwaukee and Indianapolis. Lodging and food provision are still being worked out, as is fund-raising and security issues. This has provided an opportunity for outreach into the local Somali community (the second largest after Minneapolis) as well as the Latino community. Long, slow work on living wage (temporarily in limbo) has led to a relationship with the Central Labor Council. DSCO is working, through its connections to the Jobs with Justice chapter, with the UFCW local on its ongoing Wal-Mart campaign, and also with some local Teamster issues on contracting out of delivery driver jobs.

Twin Cities DSA members were at DSA’s Midwest Conference in Chicago. Since one of the Twin Cities executive committee members is the co-chair of the Kucinich campaign in MN, the local is moving towards becoming more active there. The Twin Cities website, www.twincitiesdsa.org, is now linked to the DSA website.

WEST COAST

Alaska DSA continues to work for progressive change in a conservative state. It played a key role in the formation of a Progressive Interior of Alaska coalition, bringing together labor, Greens, Democrats, liberal-to-radical faith-based members of different clergy, gay rights and peace activists. DSA members in Anchorage are involved in the formation of “Alaskans for Income Tax Fairness,” which is working to implement a progressive income tax to solve Alaska’s budgetary shortfalls. Members are also active in the Fairbanks Peace & Justice Coalition, which demonstrates against the present administration’s



Up to 50,000 people gathered in Washington on August 23 for a civil rights march, rally and teach-in to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights March and to launch a 15-month voter registration and mobilization campaign. [Above] The crowd stretched as far as the eye could see from the Lincoln Memorial. [Inset] DC/MD/NOVA DSA member Bill Mosley with Anise Jenkins, President of Stand Up! for Democracy in DC.

DSA LOCALS REPORT

continued

policies and against the war every Saturday, rain, snow or shine. The local's chair, Niilo Koponen, continues to send information packets out to all members. The Left is nearing a majority on the local Democratic Party committee, and even long time Republicans are recognizing something is wrong in America.

The California locals, led by the **East Bay**, put on DSA's Western Regional Conference, "The War at Home: Organizing for Economic and Social Justice," in April in Berkeley. About 150 people attended this weekend-long event which included speeches by Dolores Huerta, Holly Sklar and Eliseo Medina; workshops on organizing; and a discussion of DSA's current state; and sharing of "best practices" for local organizing (for a write-up of "best practices" contact talt@igc.org).

East Bay DSA, in addition to hosting the conference, has been active on many fronts, playing key roles in a Socialist Unity Group with non-DSA socialists, which has had a number of forums on topics such as the war and the CA recall campaign; in United For Peace and Justice, and thus the large anti-war movement in the Bay Area; in the Paul Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club of Alameda; and in planned canvassing against the recall of the CA governor and the Racial Privacy Initiative.

Sacramento DSA is working on the Kucinich presidential campaign and "No on Prop. 54." The proposition would ban state and local agencies from compiling any information on race or ethnicity, making it impossible to find out how many minority students are graduating, whether the state is awarding more contracts to minori-

ties, or what illnesses may be striking disproportionate numbers in a minority community.

San Diego DSA is involved in many efforts for economic and social justice, including the San Diego Housing Coalition (campaigns for affordable housing) and the San Diego Living Wage Campaign. They were also involved, along with San Diego WTO Alert and other organizations, in protests leading up to the Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization in Cancun, Mexico. This included protests at the California-Mexico border. Prior to the California elections on October 7, San Diego DSA worked with the campaign to oppose the California recall election and with the San

Diego Coalition for an Informed California to oppose the racist Proposition 54. **Santa Cruz** has birthed a new Young Democratic Socialists chapter. Activists Ryan Frayne and Brendon Constans have been busy working with the United Food and Commercial Workers to organize Peet's Coffee and Tea. SC YDS has been volunteering with the Kucinich for President campaign, and the chapter is planning to do some tabling and perhaps bring a speaker to talk about the gubernatorial recall and Prop. 54 campaigns. Longtime YDS activist Jessica Shearer has just moved to the central coast and will be helping them organize. The chapter plans to establish itself on campus and work with the Students for Labor Solidarity.



Some participants in the DSA Midwest Activist Conference pose outside the International House on the University of Chicago campus, site of the conference.

Supreme Court

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and now a ban on gay marriage. Where is our constitutional agenda?

Liberals have become the biggest constitutional conservatives for fear of the other side's malign tinkering. But the Left should be fighting for amendments to protect those basic democratic rights that people think are already protected but, in fact, are not: the right to vote, the right of the people to choose the president, the right of the young to an equally funded public education. The right way to face a Court determined to overrule democracy is for the people to overrule the Court.

Jamin B. Raskin is a professor of constitutional law at American University, director of its Appleseed Project on Electoral Reform, and author of We the Students and Overruling Democracy: The Supreme Court versus the American People, a recent Washington Post Bestseller.

Letters to the Editor

To the editors:

Re the DSA PAC statement on the 2004 elections (DL, Summer 2003): In addition to the usual mantra about the need to mobilize "working people, women, people of color, peace activists" etc., maybe it's time that DSA explicitly acknowledged the need for cross-class coalitions as a prerequisite for the success of any Democratic presidential candidate, whoever it turns out to be.

Middle-class voters will have to vote for him or her in sizable numbers. And as for the inclusion of the word "women" in the list: it's true there is a gender gap in voting and a gender gap in income, but women are not a monolithic category. They are all over the political map. It would make nearly as much sense to include a generic reference to "men."

I agree with the statement's assessment of the Bush administration's reactionary character, but a bit more nuanced articulation of political strategy would seem to be in order.

Sincerely,
Louis F. Cooper
Wheaton, MD

To the editors:

As a life member of DSA, I am appalled at the hesitation of the DSA-PAC to endorse Dennis Kucinich for the Democratic nomination to run for President. ALL the values of DSA are shared by Kucinich - and no other candidate comes even close. Above all, the aim of DSA should be (and IS, according to "DSA first statement on 2004 elections") to move the Democratic Party to the left, especially on foreign policy and economic issues. If you are waiting for a reincarnation of Eugene V. Debs, you need look no further than Dennis. If you are hesitating on grounds of "electability," you're really no better than the politicians who use the wet-finger-in-the-wind test.

And, by the way, WHY DOES DL NOT HAVE A LETTERS COLUMN? Are you afraid to publish what your rank and file thinks? If not, then please publish this critique!

Michael Rice
Delmar, NY 12054

Socialist Activist Chuck Sohner Dead at 74

Chuck Sohner passed away May 11, 2003, after a lifetime of social justice commitments. During his years in Los Angeles, he worked to create the Socialist School in the 1970s as well as working with the early DSA movement. He hosted a radio show on the Pacifica station, KPFFK, called Socialist Perspectives. He was also a union leader in the California Federation of Teachers and negotiated the first labor contract for community college faculty in the state.

Chuck wrote prolifically, including articles and textbooks. His *California Government and Politics Today* is now going into the tenth edition and remains a bestseller in its genre.

Chuck retired from El Camino Community College in 1988 and relocated to Kentucky, where he became active in Living Wage battles and other progressive efforts. At the time of his death at age 74, he was serving on the Lexington Fayette County Ethics Committee.

Chuck was remembered with sadness and great love at services in Kentucky and Los Angeles. At the Los Angeles memorial service, his grieving friends and family determined to "Don't Mourn, Organize" and passed around petitions for a ballot initiative to enable the California state budget to pass by 55% instead of the current 2/3 majority.

Chuck Sohner's wisdom, humanity and passion for justice lives on.

Submitted by Mona Field, co-author, California Government and Politics Today.

DL does *invite readers' comments. Send your communications Democratic Left at 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10012 or email them to us at letters@dsausa.org. Please keep your letters to 200 words or less; otherwise they may be edited.*

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