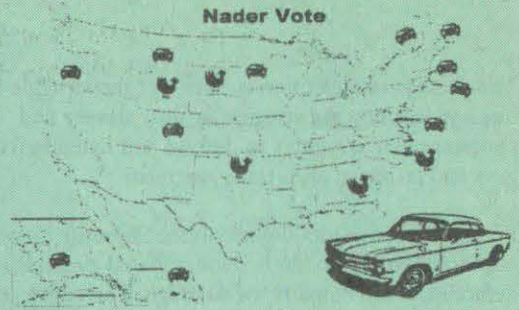


# LEFT

**DEMOCRATIC**

STILL ANGRY ISSUE VOLUME XXVIII NUMBER 3-4 \$1.50  
 PUBLISHED BY THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA

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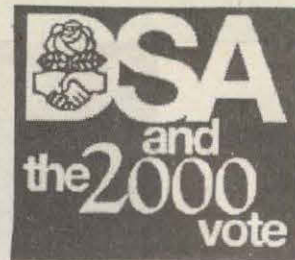
Nader: 5% or more = 
 2.7 - 5.0% : AZ CA CT KS NE NH NJ NM NY ND UT WA WI
 2.0 - 2.7% : DE ID IL IA MD MI NV OH PA TX VA
 0.1 - 2.0% : AL AR FL IN LA KY LA MS MO SC TN WV
 Not on ballot:



## The Popular Vote



# DSA Statement on the 2000 Election and Democracy



The presidential election is over, yet the struggle for democracy continues, as it has in our nation since the struggle against slavery and in favor of women's suffrage down to contemporary struggles to defend and extend civil rights to people of color, immigrants, gays and lesbians, and trade unionists.

Five conservative ideologues on the Supreme Court determined that their desire for an expeditious conclusion to the presidential contest, one conforming to their own political preferences, should take precedence over the most fundamental principle of representative democracy: the equality of suffrage. The entire state of Florida's contested under-and-over-counted votes could have been recounted by standard hand-counting procedures in a matter of days. But in a blatant perversion of logic, the Court's majority suspended the recount only to then claim that this suspension precluded the recount from being completed in a timely manner.



**Return  
FULLER  
WARREN  
YOUR  
GOVERNOR**

Democratic Socialists of America believes that protesting the theft of the 2000 presidential election must go beyond short-term outrage to the building of a long-term, mass movement for the achievement of true political and social democracy in the United States. One person-one vote, legally achieved only in 1965 through the heroic sacrifices of the civil rights and suffragette movements, exists more in rhetoric than in reality. Voter turnout is abysmally low in this nation for clear systemic reasons. We are the only democracy where elections do not take place on a weekend or on a national holiday. Only in American democracy must the individual make a time-consuming, conscious effort to register to vote. In almost all other democracies, the state prepares the voter rolls, using census data or other public records. And the individual voter can easily update the rolls, even on election day, if they are not properly listed. How can we supervise demonstration elections around the world when the American way of democracy yields an electorate disproportionately whiter and richer than the nation as a whole.

STATE OF FLORIDA )  
COUNTY OF DADE } ss A F F I D A V I T

Before the undersigned authority personally appeared FULLER WARREN, who, being duly sworn, says on oath:

...That no Negroes will be admitted to White schools and colleges of this state if Fuller Warren is governor.

Subscribed and sworn Fuller Warren  
to before me this 23rd Fuller Warren  
day of April, 1956.

Wally S. Schraton  
Notary Public

Notary Public, State of Florida at large  
My commission expires Dec. 26, 1958  
Bonded by Mess. Bonding & Insurance Co

In addition, the Electoral College is a profoundly anti-democratic institution. Created by the founders to build a firewall between political elites and democratic voters, it also formed an integral part of the Great Compromise which, through the Senate guarantee of two seats per state and the inhumane 'Three Fifths Compromise' gave disproportionate representation to the slave states. Even today, a state's electoral college vote of two Senate seats plus the proportionately determined House seats means that a citizen of Wyoming's vote counts six times more for president than does a Californian's.

*The 21<sup>st</sup> Century was supposed to be different*

Absent reforms to make registration and voting easier, American democracy will remain an unfulfilled promise. But the theft of the election in Florida reveals an even seamier side of American democracy: persistent and widespread practices aimed at denying the suffrage to poor, working class, and minority communities remain widespread, some thirty-five years after the Voting Rights Act. Often police harass voters of color driving or walking to the polls. All too frequently, county poll workers illegally demand picture ID or citizenship papers of legal voters who are already registered. State election officials

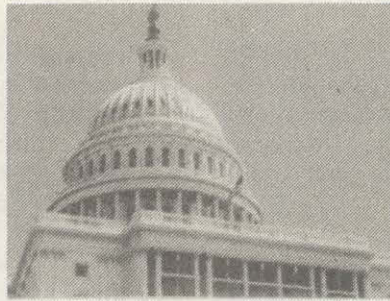
**We fairly COUNT our votes!**  
**DSA Biennial Convention, November 9-11, 2001**  
**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Save the dates!**

*Continued on Page 15 >*



# The Next Agenda

Several hundred of the policy makers, political consultants, trade union officials and staffers, Congressional aides and elected officials that make up the "Beltway Left" gathered recently at the National Press Club after President-select Bush's first budget speech. This meeting was organized by the Campaign for America's Future.



The conference made no claim that it would organize the Democrats out of the mess they are in. In contrast to the Democratic Leadership Council, this conference offered a set of positions and political analyses which you can read in a newly published book, *The Next Agenda*, which organizers hope can be a tool in charting a political path for progressives to assert themselves in the Democratic Party.

And assert themselves they did. Panel after panel featured well deserved shots at the Bush program, as well as Bill Clinton's political legacy. There was little in these attacks or policy prescriptions that DSA members would disavow. This was refreshing after the tepid response of Democratic leaders to Bush's cabinet choices, and his recent attacks on labor, the environment, and social and health

benefits for children. Angry Reps. Jesse Jackson, Jr. and Jan Schakowsky were invited to speak, excoriating the Bush agenda, particularly his tax giveaway schemes benefitting the rich. One wondered if the left and left-liberals could sufficiently challenge ourselves and our institutions to out-organize the right.

Until those of us in the field take responsibility for building a broad-based movement capable of organizing voters to support progressive candidates, the Campaign for America's Future may simply fade into history as another good coalition idea we couldn't collectively bring forward. Pity. The Campaign for America's Future has a program worth fighting for.



*Editorial Committee:*  
**Joseph M. Schwartz, Jeffrey Gold, Paul Buhle, Charity Crouse, Bill Dixon, Kathy Quinn, Gene Prosnitz, Jason Schulman, Bill Mosley, Steve Max, Maxine Phillips, John Strauss**  
*Founding Editor:*  
**Michael Harrington**  
 (1928-1989)

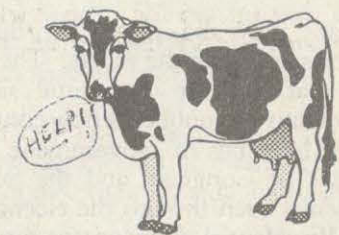
Democratic Socialists of America share a vision of a humane international social order based on equitable distribution of resources, meaningful work, a healthy environment, sustainable growth, gender and racial equality, and non-oppressive relationships. Equality, solidarity, and democracy can only be 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.

**DSA NATIONAL OFFICE**  
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*Citation of the Month:*  
**As Social Security dwindled, Americans gambled on the stock market to protect their futures. They're losing.**  
 —Gary Yonge, in *The Guardian* (London), March 5, 2001

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*Bosse the not-so-Mad Cow wishes we were bossing around the agribusiness industry.*



*From those wonderful folks who demanded food safety and inspection laws 100 years ago, the SOCIALISTS, the next DL will digest Fast Food Nation*



# IF YOUR VOTE WAS COUNTED

Jim Chapin on Elections 2000

In case socialists haven't learned that the specific nature of the American political and constitutional system has more to do with the "failure" of socialism in America than any alleged American exceptionalism, this election should have served as a reminder.

While no country has become socialist, most advanced nations have had socialist or labor parties competing for power, and socialist ideas are, in one way or another, an accepted part of their political discourse. That has never been true in the United States. That's what people mean by American "exceptionalism."

This election should have reminded us of the following facts: The United States of America is not a democracy, but a federal republic. The block vote Electoral College system means that the candidate with the most votes may not win. The same Electoral College also acts as one of the main backstops of the "two-party tradition" in American life. The Supreme Court, an unelected body of lifetime appointees, remains the final arbiter of American politics.

As the majority decision of that Court points out, there is no "right" to vote for President -- we vote for Electors for President and the choice of the way we do resides entirely in State Legislatures. The two major parties control access to the ballot, to the debates, and even count the votes as they -- or one of them -- chooses to do so. "Deregulation" in America is considered a "good thing" for everything but political parties.

That's why the results of this election were so out-of-synch with the voters. The result of the election was that, for the first time since the New Deal, conservative Republicans now control (if only notionally) all the branches of government: the Presidency, both Houses of Congress, and the Supreme Court. This happened even though the elections of 2000 were the best Presidential showing for the broad American left since the election of 1964. It was not just that the Republican candidate got only 47.9% of the vote, it was that the combined votes of Nader and Gore broke 51%. As one analyst put it, "The politics of this country have moved dramatically to the left, because the problems the right was elected to deal with have basically been solved."

That analyst was Dick Morris, the guru of Clintonian moderation.

The campaign itself was rhetorically on the left: as conservative columnist George Will points out, the two main discussions of the campaign concerned "saving" Social Security and expanding Medicare, the advances of FDR and LBJ, respectively--the only two liberal

Presidents in American history. The rhetorical leftism adopted by both candidates didn't mean that Ralph Nader was inaccurate in saying that the two candidates didn't differ very much. Both were Ivy League graduates from political families. Gore and Bush talked about as little about guns and abortion as they could get away with; they took largely indistinguishable stances on such questions as morals, family life, and the morality of the entertainment industry; they both did their best to avoid the racially polarizing debates of past years; and one could barely find an example of either man talking about rural or urban issues. Both endorsed NAFTA, GATT, free trade, open immigration, and promised to continue Alan Greenspan in office. As Kevin Phillips pointed out many years ago: "the American Democratic party is the second most capitalist party in the world."

Although the candidates spent all their time talking to suburban moderates, the suburbs ended the campaign by yawning and delivering a divided and diminished vote, while the urban homelands of the Democrats and the rural homelands of the Republicans turned out at extremely high levels despite the limp appeals being made to them by their putative spokesmen.

## RALPH'S WAY

It was that turnout which showed the way that Nader was wrong. Let's imagine Ralph Nader at the Battle of Antietam. He could have said, with total accuracy, that the generals of the two armies weren't different at all: Robert E. Lee and George McClellan were both professional Army men who had graduated West Point with honors and served in the Mexican War. They were both Democrats who supported the institution of slavery. Indeed, neither government in the battle had even said a word about slavery. Therefore, Nader could have concluded, it made no difference which side won the Battle of Antietam. In fact, of course, it made a huge difference. The Emancipation Proclamation was issued shortly after the Union won the battle (of course, our imaginary Civil War Nader would have popped up and pointed out, rightly, that the proclamation did not free a single slave).

What Nader overlooked in this election was how different the armies headed by these similar generals were. 58% of Gore's voters were women, but 53% of Bush's voters were men (as were 58% of Ralph Nader's voters). George Bush's best seven states (60% or better) were Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. His support was concentrated in states with more acres than people, in places where people are pretty much alike racially and culturally,



and where the Federal government is seen as an outside and unnecessary intruder, enforcing gun controls, environmental restrictions, and the like on an unwilling people. His vote was heavily Southern (35%) and weak in the Northeast (19%). 35% of his vote came from



*I'll do the counting.*

rural areas, 44% from the suburbs, and only 21% from urban America.

George Bush's America was white (90%), indeed white Protestant (59%) with another 22% white Catholic. It contains few Jews (2%), and few Blacks (2%), and only 5% is Hispanic, despite Bush's efforts to reach that group. It is made up of married people (72%) and gun-owning families (59%). 52% of its members attend church at least weekly (and 24% are self-defined members of the religious right). Few of its members are gay (2%) and few from union families (20%). Ideologically, it is 49% conservative, 46% moderate, and 5% liberal. 61% think that abortion should be always or mostly illegal. The issues they cared most about were taxes (23%), education and world affairs (14% each).

There are substantial minorities on some issues in this group. Only 25% of the group favors school vouchers..

Even in this group 43% supported stricter gun control laws, and 24% approved of Bill Clinton's performance in office.

Al Gore's America is only 69% white and only 32% white Protestant, 19% Black, 9% Hispanic, 6% Jewish, 32% from union families, and 6% gay. Only 36% are from gun-owning households, and only 59% are married, and it is more moderate (55%) than liberal (34%), with 11% conservative. 51% of its members seldom or never attend church. 77% think that abortion should be always or mostly legal. Al Gore's voters are to be found in the great urban areas with a sharply polarized economic, racial and social structure, where government is a necessity to organize life; neo-social democratic America. If Bush's America is hundreds of people in thousands of acres, Gore's is thousands or hundreds of thousands of people in hundreds of acres. The issues they cared about most were the economy (22%), social security and education (17% each). 82% favor stricter gun laws, and 93% approved Clinton's performance. Al Gore's best 7 states were Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Hawaii (and the District of Columbia). More than 20% of his vote came from each of the four sections of the country, thus over-representing the Northeast, and under-representing the South. 37% of his vote came from urban areas, 42% from suburbs, and only 21% from rural areas.

Ralph Nader's relatively tiny America was 58% male, 88% white, 33% under 29 (as compared to 17% of all voters), 52% unmarried (as against 35% of all voters), and 39% (as compared to 15% of all voters) practiced non Judeo-Christian religions or none at all. His best states included four of the six New England states, as well as Montana, Hawaii, and Alaska. 71% favor stricter gun control. His vote was heavily concentrated in the Northeast (29%) and West (36%), and a very small portion from the South. 53% of his vote came from the suburbs, with the rest equally urban and rural. Nader's vote was strongest in college towns in rural America.

Let's look briefly at the significance of these votes, and then what happened in the other races on the ballot this year.

## TWO PHILADELPHIAS

George Bush's campaign put a mild face on a typical Republican platform. The greatest contrast can be seen in the difference between two Philadelphias: Philadelphia, Mississippi, where three civil rights workers were murdered in 1964, and where Ronald Reagan just happened to open his campaign in 1980, and the Philadelphia Republican convention this year, where every person of color in the convention hall was on the stage. "Hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue," and if Bush's campaign means anything, it means that racial exclusion no longer has much of a political future. But Bush's appointments of Linda Chavez (failed) as



Secretary of Labor, John Ashcroft as Attorney-General, and Gale Norton as Secretary of the Interior, show just how conservative even this "new model" Republican party still is. No matter how rhetorically "bipartisan" this administration is, their idea of bipartisanship is to get some conservative Democrats to sign on to their program.

That means that the Democratic party will face choices about how to respond, and it's where a lot of the action for the next four years will be. While Al Gore's campaign failed to make a clear link between his positions on the issues and the economic triumphs of the last eight years, his difficulties were not entirely his own: it should be remembered that the average showing of Democrats in the last 8 Presidential elections was 43%, of Republicans 49%, so Gore's one-half point win (48.4%-47.9%) was a very good Democratic showing.

Ralph Nader's 2.7% of the vote was the best showing for a left-wing third party since that of Robert LaFollette in 1924, beating both Norman Thomas' 1932 showing of 2.2% and Henry Wallace's 2.4% in 1948. Nader was horribly squeezed at the end, as third parties usually are in close races.

There were many oddities in his vote -- it was 88% white, almost as white as George Bush's, and it was only 1% Jewish, the lowest Jewish percent for a left party in the century. He broke 4% in 5 New England states, Minnesota, the District of Columbia, and 6 Western states. He scored above average in California, NY, NJ, 3 more western states and four more farm states.

Nader's showing was strongest in college towns and in resort counties such as Dukes (Martha's Vineyard) in Massachusetts. His left was a left without Blacks or Jews, and with few union members. By directly assaulting the Democrats and by doing the best he could to elect Bush, Nader made a strategic mistake for the Greens -- parties of opposition always do better when being betrayed by their "friends" than being dissed by their enemies. That's why Pat Buchanan drew only 438,760 votes (0.4%) this year instead of the three million he drew in his two runs inside the Republican party in 1992 and 1996. With Democrats out of power, it will be hard for Nader or any other Green to come near his vote. However, we do know from history that parties that break 2% of the vote do show something about the future -- though not enough to know just what that something will be.

In terms of national politics, in the last nine Presidential elections, four states have been "right" every time -- Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and Missouri. If you want to think of a candidate who will win in 2004, think of those four states.

In the Senate races this year, the Democrats surprised everyone by winning enough seats to get to a 50-50 tie. Part of their secret was self-financed millionaire candidates like Mark Dayton, Maria Cantwell, and Jon

Corzine, as well as candidates with the capacity to raise lots of money, like Hillary Clinton. This election leaves Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota, the Senate "minority" leader, as the only Democrat with the power to shape or limit the Bush agenda, and with most people thinking that the Senate is almost sure to be Democratic in two years.

In the House of Representatives, the Democratic offensive gained just two more seats, to 213 (counting Socialist Bernie Sanders of Vermont). Although "off-year" elections usually favor the party out of power, reapportionment is likely to shift half-a-dozen more seats in a Republican direction. On the other hand, the Republican majority in the House was not elected on an ideological basis, but by a combination of incumbency, K Street money and locally tailored campaigns, reminiscent of the campaigns that kept House Democrats in power for four decades.

What do these elections mean for the world, the nation, the democratic left and DSA? For the world, it means an American government that will follow the same general policy, but be less sympathetic to "humanitarian intervention," more sympathetic to the Arab oil states, and will be unsympathetic to the social democratic governments in Europe. For the U.S., it means that the gains in environmentalism, abortion rights, civil rights, and the recent gains in the incomes of poor people and minorities may all be at risk. Taxes on rich people will go down, and there will be a desperate struggle over the Bush proposal to privatize Social Security. Recent union gains will be at risk, as the scuppered Chavez appointment makes it clear that there will be an all-out assault on union rights. And, above all, there will be an escalation in what has become a continuing war over control of the Court system.

For the democratic left, divided between a "green" Nader wing and a much larger Black and union wing, the probability of common struggles will, hopefully, end some of the bitterness associated with the campaign. But third-party efforts, unless and until the American electoral system is democratized, will generally not prove very successful.

## TUDOR POLITY

DSA members often boast of being "democratic socialists," thinking that they are living in a democratic country. In many ways, they are not. This is a country whose political system is so archaic that conservative political scientist Samuel Huntington once called it a "Tudor polity."

The only feature of the Constitution which is unamendable is the feature that guarantees that each state has two Senators. Yet 71% of our immigrants live in six states. Down the road, it is going to become obvious that our country will be divided into large multicultural states and small white states. Meanwhile, not only is there no way to cast a direct vote for the

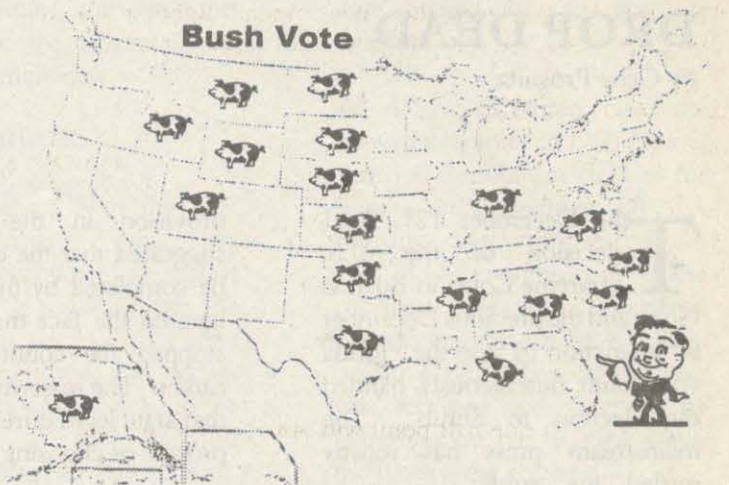


office of the Presidency, but far more of Bush's entire margin in the Electoral College was derived from the "Senatorial" part of that malapportioned body.

Meanwhile, increasingly conservative Courts are playing an increasingly great role in our life. And we remain just about the only "advanced" nation in the world in which access to the ballot is controlled by a two-party monopoly which does its best to deny access to competing forces.

Maybe it's time to think more about the "democratic" part of our name than the "socialist" part. If true socialism is impossible without democracy, there may be more allies for a crusade for democracy, and more immediate need for it. Electoral politics should not be the primary concern of DSA, but insofar as we must be concerned about it, we need to play a more active role in the struggle to bring democracy to America.

*Political Analyst James B. Chapin is a National Vice-Chair of DSA, former National Director, and a Washington columnist for United Press International.*



= Bush +55% of Vote  
 48.5 - 55% of Vote (Carried by Bush): AZ AR CO FL\* LA MO NV NH OH TN VA WV  
 45 - 48.5% of Vote (Carried by Gore): IA MI MN NM OR PA WI  
 Less than 45% (All Carried by Gore): CA CT DE DC HI IL ME MA MD MA NJ NY RI VT WA

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**43<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
Debs-Thomas-Harrington Dinner**

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**HENRY BAYER**

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**SENATOR MIGUEL DEL VALLE**

Illinois State Senate, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

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Holiday Inn Mart Plaza

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Cocktails 6 p.m. Dinner 7:30

(773) 384-0327 or [chiildsa@chicagodsa.org](mailto:chiildsa@chicagodsa.org)

**Young Blood Wanted  
DSA Seeks New Organizer**

DSA will be hiring a new Youth Organizer, effective June 1, 2001. Salary: 25K p.a., + Health + 3 weeks Paid Vacation.

The Youth Organizer is primarily responsible for the maintenance and growth of DSA's youth section, Young Democratic Socialists (YDS). S/he works under the guidance and day-to-day supervision of DSA's National Director. S/he is responsible for helping to develop and institute the political and organizational priorities set by the elected, volunteer leadership of YDS. Workplans for the Youth Organizer shall be developed by the Organizer and YDS leadership, of which the organizer is an ex-officio member. The Organizer will also aid the national organization as the need arises.

The Youth Organizer must have good organizational, public speaking, educational and writing skills. S/he must be able to travel extensively. The appropriate candidate will have a sense of humor and be able to work both independently and as part of a team. The Organizer must have a solid knowledge of democratic socialist politics and history, and must demonstrate a high level of awareness of feminist, anti-racist and anti-heterosexist principles.

Women, people of color and LGBTQ comrades are encouraged to apply.

Respond by April 30, 2001

DSA Young Democratic Socialists,

180 Varick Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10014 USA

Phone: 212.727.8610

Fax: 212.727.8616

Mobile: 917.662.0276

[www.dsaua.org](http://www.dsaua.org)





# COURT TO DEMOCRACY: DROP DEAD

By Gene Prosnitz

The December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Bush v. Gore*, and the previous December 9<sup>th</sup> injunction to stop the Florida vote count, outrageously handed the election to Shrub. The mainstream press has mostly misled the public into believing that the high court's decision was basically a 7-2 decision. It was not. Justices Breyer and Souter agreed with the five person majority that there were equal protection problems, but they dissented on all other aspects of the case, including the most important aspect, the remedy.

The five member majority, Justices Scalia, Thomas, Rehnquist, O'Connor and Kennedy, wrote a *per curiam* (unsigned) opinion, in which they stressed equal protection, ruling that there were no uniform standards for counting the votes, or for determining which ballots were properly marked. Most important, the five member majority relied on the Dec. 12 "cut off" date, stating that the state legislature intended to take advantage of the "safe harbor "

provision in the law. They suggested that the count had to be completed by that date, and ignored the fact that they had stopped the count three days earlier. The majority also stated that state legislatures control the process of choosing electors and

The majority did concede that once a state legislature has determined that electors shall be chosen by popular vote, (as all state legislatures have, since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century), the election must be conducted in a manner consistent with due process and equal protection.



*I couldn't have done the job better*

don't even have to allow a popular vote. According to the majority, any state legislature can vote to abolish the popular vote in their state, and pass a law allowing the state legislature to choose the presidential electors.

While ruling that the standards for counting the votes were not uniform enough to satisfy equal protection standards, the majority ignored the issue of the disparate types of ballots used throughout Florida. The fact that a significantly higher percentage of ballots were machine rejected in punch card ballot counties, than in counties using optical scanning systems, was ignored by the majority, which failed to see this as an equal protection

problem.

In a concurring opinion, Rehnquist, Thomas and Scalia went even further than the majority opinion. They drew a distinction between the protest



period, before the votes were officially certified by the Secretary of State, and the later contest period. They stated that under Florida law, during the contest period there could not be a recount unless illegal votes were counted, or legal votes were not counted. According to them, very clear instructions were given at the polls, and if the voters didn't follow these instructions, it's the voters' fault, tough luck. Rehnquist, Scalia and Thomas therefore stated that the machines counted the legal votes, and the uncounted votes with hanging chads, etc. were not legal and under Florida law could not be counted during the post certification contest phase.

This reasoning is a bit circular. How would anyone know whether a ballot not counted by the machine contained legal votes, until it was examined and looked at in a manual count? The three justices also ignored Florida law, which states that the legality of a ballot depends upon the intent of the voter, not whether the ballot is punched to perfection. Rehnquist, Thomas and Scalia justified the intervention of the federal courts, and the departure from their usual states' rights philosophy, by stating that a presidential election is of the utmost importance to all citizens, not just the citizens of the state where the dispute takes place. This is one of the few parts of the majority and concurring opinions which makes some sense, hypocritical though it may be.

The dissenters, Justices Stevens, Souter, Ginsburg and Breyer wrote several dissenting opinions. All four of them agreed for the most part, except on the equal protection issue, where Souter and Breyer felt there were substantial equal protection problems, and Ginsburg and

Stevens felt there were not substantial problems in that area. Most important, the dissenters pointed out the fallacy of the Dec. 12 deadline date.

### SAFE HARBOR

Title 3, Section 5 of the U.S. Code establishes what has become known as the safe harbor provision. It provides that the selection of electors by a state shall be conclusive, if it occurs no later than six days prior to the convening of the Electoral College. (This year, that was Dec. 12) That's all. If a state doesn't act by the Dec. 12 deadline, its later certification would be subject to review by Congress and the Supreme Court, as it would have been anyway in a closely contested election. Therefore, the Dec. 12 "deadline" had virtually no legal significance, as the dissenters pointed out. We were grossly misled by the media, and by the talking heads on CNN, who missed this point. Justice Ginsburg further pointed out that Title 3, Section 12 of the U.S. Code provides that on the fourth Wednesday of December (last year, Dec. 27), if Congress has not yet received certified returns from any state, Congress shall direct the Secretary of State of that state to immediately certify the returns and submit them to Congress. Accordingly, even as late as Dec. 27, if the Florida votes were not yet in, all that would happen is that Congress would direct Florida to get its certification in immediately. Ginsburg went on to state that as a practical matter, things would be OK as long as the certification was received by Congress by Jan. 6, when Congress convenes to count the votes. Note that while Breyer and Souter, in their dissent, stated that it was possible that Florida could devise uniform standards

and count the votes by Dec. 18, they never stated that the Dec. 18 date would be an absolute deadline.

All of the dissenters cited the Hawaii example: In 1960 Hawaii certified Republican electors for Nixon on November 28. A recount was commenced on Dec. 13. After completion of the recount, Hawaii certified Democratic electors for Kennedy on Jan. 4, 1961. This certification was received and accepted by Congress on Jan. 6, 1961, when the votes were counted.

The dissenters cited Florida law regarding the intent of the voter, and stated that if there were equal protection problems, the remedy was to remand so that better procedures could be devised. They pointed out that to stop the recount meant that the cure was worse than the disease. As Justice Stevens, with the concurrence of Ginsburg and Breyer, stated in his now famous quote:

*The identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.*

The dissenters went on to point out that the majority was disenfranchising Florida voters whose ballots, with a manual recount, would reveal their true intent.

In discussing the unusual nature of the Supreme Court's decision to reverse the Florida Supreme Court and intervene in a matter of state law, the dissenters pointed out that never before in history has the Supreme Court instructed a state on how to count its votes. The high court has intervened in the past on questions of who has the right to



vote, and on redistricting questions, but never on vote counting. The dissenters chastised Rehnquist for citing civil rights cases from the 50s and 60s to justify federal courts overruling state courts, and protested that the Florida Supreme Court "should not be bracketed with high courts of the Jim Crow South." The dissenters also exposed the hypocrisy of the majority, who usually support states' rights:

*Were the other members of this court as mindful as they generally are of our system of dual sovereignty, they would affirm the judgment of the Florida Supreme Court.*

Equal protection is normally subject to a three tier analysis. The first tier involves strict scrutiny and usually arises in cases of race and sex discrimination. The second tier, mid level scrutiny, usually involves other forms of illegal discrimination, such as age and disability discrimination. The final tier is the rational basis test. Traditionally, liberal public interest lawyers have brought this type of equal protection case into the federal courts, and when appearing before conservative judges, the plaintiffs almost always lose. The conservative judges usually rule that some differences are inevitable, and are not unconstitutional. A fair minded court would have held that since counties with large African American populations for the most part had punch card ballots, while counties with predominantly white populations were more likely to have optical scan ballots, this was a strict scrutiny equal protection violation; while on the other hand, discrepancies in counting involved the less strict rational basis test (no apparent racial discrimination) and therefore

were not unconstitutional. Of course, the Supreme Court's ruling was just the opposite.

## I DISSENT

My main disagreement with the Supreme Court's decision was not the equal protection analysis, but the remedy. Traditionally, when faced with a violation of this nature, courts have done one of three things. (1) The Supreme Court itself could have devised fair and uniform standards, (2) The Supreme Court could have remanded the case to the Florida Supreme Court to devise standards. (the remedy suggested by Breyer and Souter). (3) The high court could have ruled that the imperfect count can continue this time, but must be remedied in the future. Remedy (3) was adopted by the Warren court in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The Court did not order that the schools close immediately, because of the unconstitutional segregation. The court ordered that the schools be desegregated in the immediate future "with all deliberate speed." Similarly, in the recent North Carolina redistricting case, where the same five member majority of the high court held unconstitutional the existing districts, the court did not invalidate the last election, which had been conducted with the illegal districts. Instead, the high court adopted remedy (3), and held that the redistricting must take place before the next election.

As for the Supreme Court decision of Dec. 9, stopping the count on the ground of "irreparable harm," this doctrine is used by courts to preserve the status quo during the course of litigation. In other words, the welfare recipient is allowed to remain on welfare while his or her case is litigated. The tenant is allowed to remain in the

apartment during the litigation (usually on condition that rent payments continue). In *Bush v. Gore*, an injunction was issued to stop vote counting, to stop the gathering of information. I know of no other instance in history where a court issued an injunction to stop the gathering of public information. The real "irreparable harm" was the threat of a continuing count in which Gore pulled out in front, making it harder for Scalia, Thomas, Kennedy, O'Connor and Rehnquist to steal the election.

In a recent article in the *New Republic*, Sanford Levinson pointed out that the Supreme Court frequently engages in "high politics," but seldom engages in "low politics." He defined "high politics" as deciding cases in accordance with your political philosophy, but not necessarily helping your candidate win. In the redistricting case, Conservative judges who philosophically oppose "racial gerrymandering," can eliminate overwhelmingly black districts, which may sometimes help Democrats and hurt Republicans. *Bush v. Gore*, however, was an example of "low politics." The majority, which is usually favorable to states' rights and hostile to equal protection arguments, departed from its usual philosophy, solely in order to help their candidate win.

It was a sad day for American jurisprudence and for the rule of law.

*Gene Prosnitz is a labor and civil rights attorney with expertise in constitutional law. He is an editor of DL, and was DSA's endorsed candidate for civil court judge in NYC.*



## DSA Resolution: Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Since its founding in 1983, DSA has consistently held that peace would only come to the Middle East in a settlement that recognized both the Palestinian and Jewish peoples' rights to self-determination. Whatever one's view of the origins of the conflict, peace can only come if both the Palestinians and Jews of the Middle East live within economically and strategically viable states in which each people feels secure.

Thus we have consistently supported the Palestinian right to a real state that is politically and economically viable *and* Israel's right to retain its character as a majority Jewish state, but one that grants full political and civil rights to its Palestinian minority and to all Jews, secular and religious.

The parties have moved towards such a settlement at an agonizingly slow pace in which rejectionists in both camps have worked to undermine the peace process by means of unrealistic political demands, and the use of violence, including assassination of the peacemakers. Throughout DSA's history we have supported the peacemakers and rejected violence and unrealistic political demands on both sides--whose only purpose is to prevent a peace agreement from being reached. Any viable settlement will require relinquishment by both sides of positions which they hold dear, such as an unlimited right of return for Palestinian refugees, or exclusive control of Jerusalem and Islamic holy sites by Israel. But that is the essence of a compromise settlement, the only kind that can ever exist.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is among the most tragic in the world. In addition to the thousands killed in wars between



the two nations, millions of men, women and children have been cruelly and needlessly dispossessed. These refugees include over 600,000 Palestinians driven out or persuaded to leave Israel during the 1948 war, and a comparable number of Jews who involuntarily came to Israel after their lives were made intolerable in 1948 and thereafter in a variety of Arab countries. Many of these refugees, including their descendants, continue even now to live in squalid conditions.

Ironically while hatred and violence permeate the area, those responsible for the intractable conflict -- various Western powers -- have largely escaped the enmity of their victims who remain absorbed with fighting each other. However, a just settlement will be expensive, and the nations that for centuries have exploited the resources and strategic location of the area will have to provide substantial assistance to overcome this hate-filled legacy. That assistance will be critical in relocating some, and compensating most, of the refugees in the area.

The main work of settlement and

reconciliation will have to be borne by Israelis and Palestinians. The Israeli use of force in response to terrorist attacks is predominantly responsible for the horrible and outrageous escalation in violence since the collapse of the Camp David talks. That over ninety per cent of those killed and injured have been Palestinians, often youth, reflects just how disproportionate that use of force has been. Such violence plays into the hands of the rejectionists and arises from Israel's refusal to withdraw unilaterally from much of the occupied territories, particularly areas with large Palestinian populations. Such an act of good faith might greatly enhance chances for peace.

Peace can only come through the cessation of all new settlements; withdrawal from almost all of the occupied territories; and dismantling of those settlements whose existence prevents an integrated, viable Palestinian state from being formed. In addition, Israel must be willing to cede authority over both Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem and turn over governance and sovereignty of predominantly Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem



to an independent Palestinian state.

A lasting peace can only come to the Middle East if all states and peoples recognize the right of each other to exist within secure, viable, but non-expansionist national boundaries. DSA and peace forces in both Israel and the Arab world oppose rejectionism on all sides. We welcomed the peace treaties between Egypt and Israel and Jordan and Israel, and look forward to the signing of a just peace between a secure Israel and all its Arab neighbors, including a viable, independent Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The economic and political viability of such a state will require diplomatic and economic support from not only the U.S. but also the European Union, Russia, and other international agencies acting in good will.

We look forward to a peaceful, just Middle East that can eventually transcend not only the old hatreds, but also the dependence of any states in the region on external super powers. But such a peace can only come through mutual recognition of both the Jewish and Palestinian peoples of the Middle East of viable states over which they exercise popular, democratic sovereignty.

**Photography by**

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# Daniel Singer

## *A Comrade Departs*



One of the most prolific and untiring international socialist militants, Daniel Singer, died this past winter in Paris. He was a socialist in the tradition of Rosa Luxemburg, like himself a sternly Jewish revolutionary from Poland who spent most of her life outside of her homeland. Daniel came from a distinguished Jewish Socialist Bund family, one of the few that survived the Holocaust. For years he worked with Isaac Deutscher in England, and then as a correspondent for *The Economist*. He made his living as a writer of books and articles in many languages on a broad range of topics. Like Luxemburg, whom he like to cite in his speeches, he was not only a prolific author in several languages, but a superb and moving orator of the old school—passionate, clear and wide ranging. Daniel was for fifteen years one of the most popular speakers at the at the Socialist Scholars Conference. He will be impossible to replace since he represented two things desperately missing from the democratic socialist scene nowadays: a genuine non-parochial internationalism honed by years of militancy against

both U.S. and Soviet imperialism, and an unquenchable belief that socialism will either develop as a genuine alternative to global capitalism, or cease to exist.

Daniel's widow has set up a Daniel Singer Millennium Prize Foundation to help young socialist writers. He was a long time European editor of *The Nation*, and titled his last book, *Whose Millennium?*, a sharp critique of corporate globalism embedded in the hope that democratic socialism remains a viable dream in an unjust and violent world.

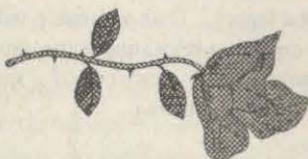
--- BOGDAN DENITCH

*DSA Co-chair Denitch, a close comrade and friend of Daniel Singer, chairs the Socialist Scholars Conference, and is Director of the Institute for Transitions to Democracy.*

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# REAL SPOILER IN ELECTIONS

by Rob Richie and Steven Hill

The equivocal showing of Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader -- falling far short of the five percent threshold for federal funds and splitting the Gore/Nader majority vote in Florida -- poses hard questions about a post-election strategy for a progressive electoral movement, particularly with Nader hinting at more spoilers to come from a nascent Green Party that he promises to keep building.

On the positive side, Nader was on the ballot in 43 states, raised more than six million dollars, drew national attention to the progressive critique of the Clinton-Gore administration, and inspired tens of thousands of enthusiasts in rallies in across the country. But ultimately, under the pressures of the spoiler dilemma posed by our winner-take-all system, Nader's support drained away by Election Day. *The Washington Post* estimated that more than five million would-be Nader supporters voted for a major party candidate after wrestling with the spoiler dilemma.

In reflecting on the Nader campaign, it could not be more obvious that our winner-take-all voting practices help preserve the two-party political duopoly. Voting system reform in the form of proportional representation for legislative elections and instant runoff voting for executive elections must be a cornerstone of any reform movement--both for pro-democracy and practical reasons relating to mobilization of voters, and to avoid split votes in the future.

## IRV

One solution to 'lesser-evil' ballots is Instant Runoff Voting, or IRV. Mary Robinson was elected president of Ireland by IRV, and Labour Party maverick "Red Ken" Livingstone was elected mayor of London. Some Australian legislators have been elected by IRV for decades. IRV works at the polls by allowing voters to select their favorite candidate, but also indicate on the same ballot their second "runoff" choice and subsequent runoff choices. If a candidate receives a majority of first choices, the election is over. If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and in the runoff round each ballot

counts for the top-ranked candidate still in the race. Rounds of counting continue until there is a majority winner. It's like a runoff election, without requiring voters to return to the polls. Imagine this year's presidential race with IRV. Nader would have been freed from the spoiler tag, and could have mobilized a progressive constituency and even gained access to the presidential debates. Rather than fracture a potential majority vote for one party, IRV could have helped forge that majority through mobilizing and informing new voters. The Green Party would have reached the five percent threshold for federal funding, and energies of young activists would have been hugely rewarded. Instead of waking up on November 8 with an electoral hangover, they might have discovered that their runoff choice had boosted Gore to victory -- but with a caveat that said: "Handle with care. Watch your step on trade, political reform and environmental policies."

## GAINING SUPPORT

As passions (unfortunately) cool off after the presidential election, progressive Democrats, strategic DSA electoral agnostics, labor union politicians, and Green Party activists, need to think seriously about forging alliances to usher in electoral reform. In all fifty states, IRV could be implemented right now for all federal elections, including the presidential race, as well as state and local elections, without changing a single federal law or the Constitution. Already, IRV is gaining support in various states, particularly when it solves a problem for a major party, as in New Mexico, where the Greens have siphoned votes from the Democrats. Advocates in Alaska--including leading Republicans--have turned in the requisite signatures to place IRV on the 2002 statewide ballot. Vermont also holds promise, with an impressive coalition supporting IRV for statewide elections. And there are a number of frugally attractive opportunities for city and state campaigns for IRV, since they save campaign cash by avoiding two rounds of elections in the many cities and states with runoff laws. In other words, socialist activists should be exploring ways to work together to enact voting system reform.



**REAL SPOILER (Cont.)**

Other political reforms, notably public financing of elections and fair ballot-access laws, are of critical importance to making democracy work. But these other reforms cannot address the spoiler dilemma, and they can't change the fact that winner-take-all elections shuts out political and racial minorities, since representation is limited to those candidates and parties able to portray themselves as being all things to approximately half the voters.

The Nader candidacy gave us a glimpse of the power of a lasting multiparty politics. But its limitations illuminate the critical need to reform "winner take all" elections. Let's start the legwork necessary to liberate voters from a choice between "spoilers" and "lesser evils." It's time to change the voting system that spoils the game for all of us.

*Rob Richie and Steven Hill, of the Center for Voting and Democracy ([www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org)), are co-authors of Reflecting All of Us (Beacon Press).*



*Renowned Senegalese economist, ABDLOU AZIV KAMARA, father of DSA Coordinator Fatou Camara, is shown the sights of New York by Bob Sarabma of NY DSA.*

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## DSA Elections 2000 Statement (Cont.)

have hired private firms to construct lists of alleged felons and purge those names from the voter list, regardless of whether, in reality, those named individuals have any criminal record at all. And our restrictive immigration and naturalization laws mean that millions who contribute to our nation's economic well-being cannot choose those who make the laws that govern their lives. And many newly naturalized citizens are subject to degrading, intimidating, and illegal identity-checks when they choose to exercise their right to suffrage.

But if conscious acts by state or party officials were not enough to skew the electorate in favor of the white middle class, economic and racial apartheid insures that if the elite crooks don't get you, then their voting machinery probably will. This election has taught us that faulty, outdated electoral machinery (and confusing ballots) are disproportionately found in low-income communities. In Florida, alone, minority communities were 30 per cent more likely to use the infamous punch card ballots that yield a two per cent undercount rate. More affluent communities disproportionately had new, expensive optical scanning machines, which only yield a rejection of one in 500 ballots! A simple reversal of these figures would have yielded a clear Gore victory in Florida. These separate and unequal voting situations thwarted the intent of the massive increase in African-American turn-out in Florida, up an unbelievable sixty-five per cent over the 1996 presidential turnout! The absence of both public financing of campaigns and equitable access for candidates to the mass media reduces electoral campaigns to a horse race between two corporate advertising conglomerates. The quality of deliberation about public policy in our campaigns and legislatures has reached an all-time low. For example, the corporate media and political leaders of both parties trumpet the purging of five million families from welfare as a triumph of the work ethic. Yet initial evidence shows that many, both on and off the welfare rolls, are worse off economically and will continue to be so, absent major investment in child care, health care, transportation subsidies, and job retraining. A nation cannot have a healthy, deliberative democracy if discussion of public policy is overwhelmingly shaped by a corporate-dominated mass media. Thus, we must also campaign for more diverse, democratically-funded forms of mass media.

The control of executive and judicial appointments by George W. Bush poses a greater threat to civil and labor rights and environmental protection than would have an inadequate, neo-liberal, centrist Gore administration. That is why some members of DSA reluctantly worked for a Gore victory. Others chose to protest the corporate domination of the national leadership of both parties by supporting the third party candidacy of Ralph Nader.

The task for DSA now is not to rehash these difficult tactical choices, but to rededicate ourselves to the political strategy of building a vibrant coalition among labor, people of color,

feminists, gays and lesbians, and independent progressives to defeat the right and build a mass democratic left. The tactics we choose, be they protests against the criminalization of inner city youth; community and trade union organizing; electoral work in favor of small "d" democrats are just that: tactics. We occasionally have sororal differences about such means. But we remain steadfastly united in our belief in democracy. True representative democracy will always be one crucial form, among many, of democratic decision-making.

Thus, DSA joins with the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, NOW, the Congressional Black Caucus, the Black Radical Congress and other groups of conscience in protesting the undemocratic outcome of the 2000 presidential election. But we do not solely look backwards in despair; rather, we recommit ourselves to the ongoing fight for radical electoral, campaign finance, and socio-economic reforms. Only if we win those battles will the promise of American democracy be achieved. Thus, DSA will rededicate itself to work for:

- \*Public financing of electoral campaigns.*
- \*Elimination of the undemocratic electoral college.*
- \*Equitable access of candidates to the mass media and the elimination of privately-purchased campaign ads.*
- \*Limits on the size of individual campaign contributions and on total campaign spending.*
- \*The abolition of corporate PACs.*
- \*Same-day registration voter-registration and 24 hour voting on weekends or a national holiday.*
- \*Experiments with proportional representation, electoral 'fusion', and single-transferable and instant run-off voting, so that people may vote for what they believe without fearing their vote will be wasted.*
- \*Equitable financing and provision of crucial public goods – not only standardized, high-quality voting machinery, but also education, child care and universal health care.*

Many DSA members were in Washington DC last January 20th to protest against the inauguration of a president who does not have the support of the majority of the American people, nor the voters of Florida. But the movement for American democracy must go beyond a day or week of protest. DSA rededicates itself from this day forth to vigorous political action aimed at achieving the promise of American democracy. This can only come about through the adoption of the radical reform agenda sketched out above. We remain proud to call ourselves Democratic Socialists of America; for in addition to our steadfast belief in political and civil rights, we also hold that absent social rights and social equality the end to racism, sexism, and class privilege, the promise of democracy will remain unfulfilled. It is to the achievement of full political, civil, and social rights for all residents of the U.S. that DSA rededicates itself in the aftermath of the 2000 elections.





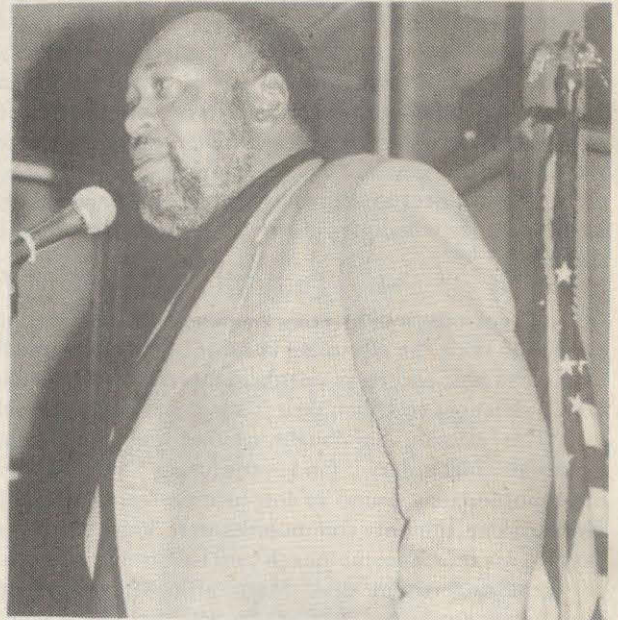
## ORGANIZING AGAINST SHRUB-ERY

### Michael Harrington - Fannie Lou Hamer Institute Launched at New York Gala

**D**SA's new non-profit think tank and training arm, The Michael Harrington-Fannie Lou Hamer Institute, was let loose on the American polity by **Gloria Steinem, Manning Marable** and its director and inspiration, **Horace Small**, at a New York City gala held at the **Service Employees International Union**. Small noted that the GOP convention in Philadelphia inspired the H-HI. "Many Republican delegates took credit hours of **skills training** -- talking to people who don't look, dress or think like them. They even went so far as to send buses into Philadelphia's 'badlands' to go **door to door and to churches**, in neighborhoods so poor the police don't even bother. It's no coincidence that the **fastest growing religious denomination** in some African-American communities right now is the Mormon church. The right is mobilizing, and we are getting creamed on the left at large." Harrington-Hamer was formed to deal with these kinds of dilemmas.

**Manning Marable**, a prominent academic and activist, observed the links between Harrington and Hamer "in an **incomplete democracy**," and invoked the founding spirits as "**two charismatic, thoughtful and principled spokespersons for a new kind of democratic America**." The Harrington-Hamer Institute will be following in their footsteps "as we bring together the many diverse minds of the left and progressive communities who link policy analysis with grassroots work." Marable will be joining **Bill Fletcher** of the AFL-CIO, and the **Haven Center**, in running a **Progressive Summit** in Madison, Wisconsin this year. "We will examine what we do wrong, what's working, and how we train people to go out and succeed," added Small.

Gloria Steinem was introduced as "**America's most talked about newlywed**," a nod to Steinem's recent first marriage. Steinem laughed at this first ever introduction, adding that "of course, my husband has good politics." Steinem observed that we all stand together in the spirit of **Mike and Fannie Lou**: "Since Mike was a writer of some fecundity, we seemed to know him better. He is with us in **spirit** at this meeting, as is Fannie Lou. I remember my first meeting with Hamer, not as a **Mississippi Freedom Democrat**," Steinem reminisced, "but as one of the first African-American advocates against forced sterilization of women--the first issue of the reproductive rights and freedom movement. Hamer had been sterilized during a medical procedure without her consent, and pushed **SNCC**, the **ACLU** and the **National Women's Political Caucus** to pursue the issue," for which Steinem believes "she was not given sufficient **historical credit**." Steinem, who had been active in the national elections in **Florida** and elsewhere, offered eyewitness evidence of Republican and racist attempts at voter dis-empowerment, tampering, **police intimidation** at polls, illegal absentee (in Florida) ballot mailings to GOP voters only, and other faulty electoral procedures. "So many Americans, before and during the civil rights movements, died so that all could vote." Steinem cited the low level of **voter participation** in the U.S as a **project** for the H-HI, and



*Horace Small kicks it off*

*(Photos: Tequila Minsky)*

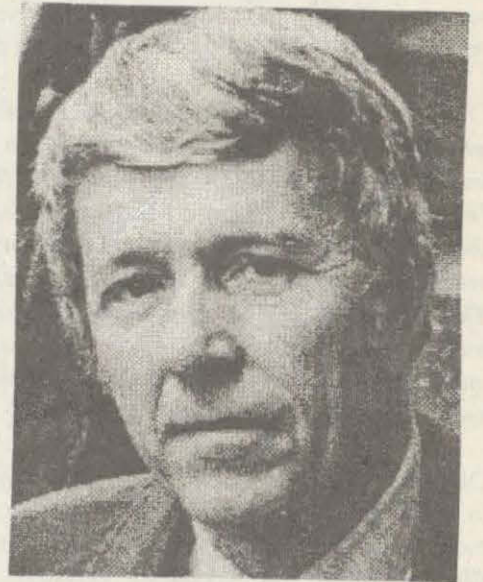
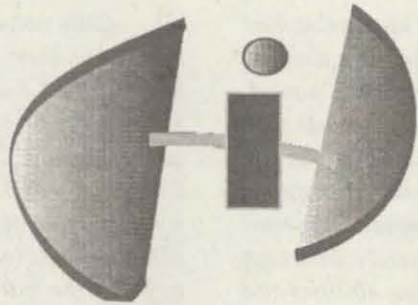
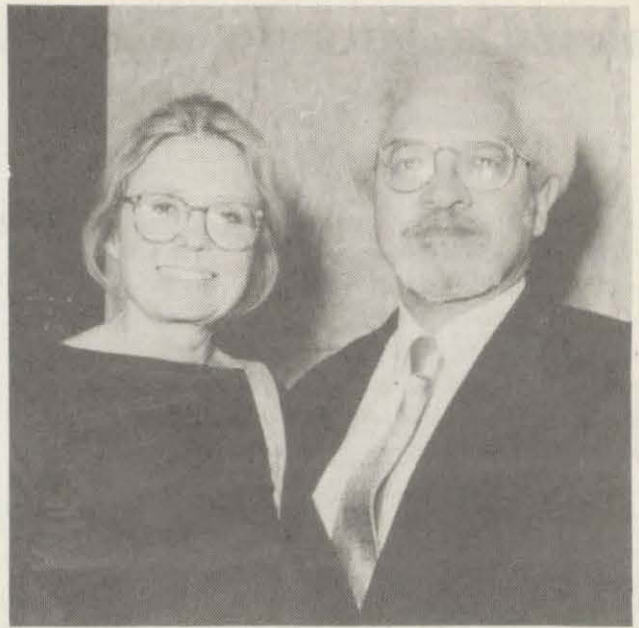
suggested to much laughter and applause that we "import election observers from **South Africa**, where they turn out more than 70% of eligible voters." **Manning Marable** was hopeful that the **Harrington-Hamer Institute** would stand for "**a kind of inclusive politics**" that these vote-stealing tactics were designed to limit: "It is in our **enlightened self-interest**," added Steinem, "as citizens not to wait for a member of a particularly insulted group to tell us how or when to respond, but to **respond on our own behalf**."

The Harrington-Hamer Institute, to Steinem, is an attempt to beat back the coming depredations of the **Bush regime** and **GOP House**. "**All organizers are in the Olympics of optimism** -- you are always trying to take a bad thing and make it good. The H-HI comes at the **exact right moment**. It is a **very good thing**."

**Matthew Jones**, renowned **SNCC** freedom singer and Hamer intimate, reminded everyone of **Michael Harrington's dedication to social change**, and **Fannie Lou Hamer's oft-quoted lament**: "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired." His guitar and voice lifted the crowd in some of the classic and not-so-classic songs of our movements.

**Horace Small** closed by laying out the elaborate upcoming event and work schedule of the HHI, thanked the **Organizing Committee** and donors sponsoring the HHI event. He also graciously thanked the talented **Rebecca Wach**, our staff organizer, designer **Kate Manning**, managers **Marsha Borenstein** and **Frank Llewellyn** and development guru **Sue Karant** of **Karant Associates**, **Hector Figueroa** of **SEIU**, and the tuneful **Nic Hard**, our music man.







# Oskar Lafontaine: The DL Interview



*Oskar Lafontaine has been national chair of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), an influential federal Minister of Finance in the red-green coalition government, and former Prime Minister of Saarland. In the spring of 1999 he resigned from all posts as the government of Chancellor Schroeder seemed to be moving towards the "Third Way." Today, Lafontaine remains one of Europe's strongest advocates of societal modernization that is genuinely social democratic. His latest book, The Heart Beats on the Left, was published last year by Polity Press. This interview was conducted in German and translated into English by Stephen Peter, a leader of Twin Cities DSA in Minnesota, and a member of DSA's International Committee.*

DL: Foreigners visiting the U.S. notice the individualism and economism of almost all spheres of life here. In contrast, you once said that "man needs a shell." What did you mean?

OL: *I meant that, for example, kids growing up develop best when they have a framework into which they can develop independently, however contradictory that may sound. Observations derived from American sociology indicate that this kind of social framework is useful for adults in the job markets as well; U.S.-style job jumping can be very disruptive. That's why I believe that non-market values must be injected into all social debates, why I promote a society in which markets have a serving function in which human abilities and needs are taken into account.*

DL: In Europe, the "Third Way" and "civil society" are dear to the hearts of conservative social democrats. In the U.S. most left-of-center people call themselves "progressives." What actually is "left" in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

OL: *The Third Way in Europe is a sham in which social democratic parties have made their peace with unregulated world financial markets. Former Thatcher advisor John Gray once said that unregulated financial markets make social democratic policy impossible. I quite agree. Third Way-ism leads to unacceptably unequal distributions of wealth where human needs are subjugated to labor market 'flexibility'. European social democracy needs to move away from this approach, and towards a reorientation of financial markets—difficult as that is—towards a recognition that 'required' corporate income from assets, or return on capital, at rates of 1% and upwards, is not as of right as long as employees might in reality increase their incomes by one or two percent, at best.*

DL: Will Europe's social democratic parties move to the left in the near future?

OL: *Only voters can answer that question. In Austria, for example, there was a change of government. Social Democratic Chancellor Klima was called the "Austrian Blair." In Italy the D'Alema government fell even though D'Alema was called the "Italian Blair." After our federal election, Germany's SPD lost votes in every subsequent election, sometimes a lot. So it seems that voters may reject policies tilted towards income from assets to capital, that are not seen to be in the interests of the welfare of the majority—even if those implementing such policies call themselves social democrats.*

DL: Demonstrations here against the WTO and NAFTA left the impression that people know more about what they oppose than what they are for. What positive positions should social democrats then assume in the face of globalization?

OL: *Regulate capital flows, and end free-floating exchange rates; we must again come to a flexible fixed system which challenges international currency speculation. These structural changes would create some political space for social democratic policies. Repeatedly demanded minimum standards in the labor and environmental areas, and in the rights of women, might then become possible. Here the agreement of the United States is critical, because Wall Street so dominates American politics, and because London's City dominates British politics. Those centers of power even repulsed demands to control those famous Hedge Funds. This is why the European left must speak with one voice and assert themselves vis-a-vis the U.S.*



Oskar Lafontaine

(Cont.)

DL: From global to local, here in the upper Midwest there are some cooperatives and employee-owned businesses. There are also such organizational structures in Europe, historically in the old Red Vienna of the interwar years, to the Israeli kibbutz, German co-determination models from the 50s, Ken Livingstone's Greater London Enterprise Board of the early 80s to Mondragon in today's Spain. Where do these models fit into social democratic policies of the future?

OL: *As neo-liberalism became dominant in recent decades, these models were increasingly under stress, or lost altogether. But in the so-called 'New Economy' employee involvement in 'in' again. The well known software firm, SAP, fhas shared the company's success with employees. Some smaller Internet firms have bet on employee involvement to maximize returns through participation or effort. Social democrats should sift out the best of these developments.*

DL: We live in the age of corporate media. A few years ago a British tabloid called you "the most dangerous politician in Europe." How to you respond to these attacks? Can any progressive politician survive such onslaughts?

OL: *It was always obvious that the mass media represents the interests of capital. If you stand up for any sort of egalitarian wage, social or tax policy you will be a target. One can stand this if your own home organization, preferably one's own party, stands firmly behind you and shares your position.*

DL: Top politicians are very busy, barely allowed a private life. When do you have time to think?

OL: *If an elected official is unable to secure some time to think, and for some personal time, in my observation all that they produce may be some superficial headlines. A sustainable politics of the democratic left requires eal reflection, and the ability to stand your ground.*

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## **Bobos in Paradise**

**Scott MacLamee asks why?**

**DSA Locals in Action Report  
...coming, in DL**



# left

for a New Century

## **2001 Socialist Scholars Conference**

**April 13-15**

**The Cooper Union for  
the Advancement of Science and Art**

**51 Astor Place, New York City**

**Why is the left so culturally boring?**

**Cartoonists rip capitalism.**

**Conference Coverage  
Next DL**

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# No Tax Give-away to the Rich!

In response to the Republican plan to give at least 1.6 trillion dollars in tax cuts to the richest and most

powerful taxpayers, too much of the Bush plan.

DSA has launched a post card campaign. Most members will have received a pre-addressed post card in a recent mailing which can be returned by affixing a twenty cent stamp.

Members are encouraged to send in the post cards and to pressure their own Senators and Representatives.

Bulk quantities of the post card may be obtained from the National Office.

Once again the Republicans are trying to starve government so no monies will be left to provide essential programs.

Dear Senator Daschle:

Every news story says that the Democrats have already accepted much of Bush's tax plan. You must fight the tax give-away to the rich with every weapon at your disposal, including the filibuster! It is simply outrageous that the debate has become how much to cut taxes instead of how do we provide real educational opportunity, real health care for the aged and the uninsured, and real jobs for all!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Democratic leaders: Daschle and Gephardt, can also be sent as an email message directly from DSA's

This is a battle that we can not and must not ignore!

Our message is aimed at the Democrats who have accepted far

web site: **ww.dsausa.org**

---Horace Small, National Director

- Yes, I want to join the Democratic Socialists of America. Enclosed are my dues (includes a subscription to *Democratic Left*) of :
  - \$50 Sustainer  \$35 Regular  \$15 Low-Income/Student
- Yes, I want to renew my membership in DSA. Enclosed are my renewal dues of:  \$60 Sustainer  \$45 Regular  \$20 Low-Income/Student
- Enclosed is an extra contribution of:  \$50  \$100  \$25 to help DSA in its work
- Please send me more information about DSA and democratic socialism.

My special interests are:

- Labor
- Religion
- Youth
- Anti-Racism
- Feminism
- Gay and Lesbian Rights

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Union Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

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